



RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Hansard Home Page: <http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/work-of-assembly/hansard>

Email: hansard@parliament.qld.gov.au

Phone (07) 3553 6344

FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT

Thursday, 16 July 2020

Subject	Page
TABLED PAPERS	1717
MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS	1717
Coronavirus, Update.....	1717
Wild Dog Barrier Fence.....	1718
Coronavirus, Tourism Industry.....	1719
Coronavirus, Health Update.....	1719
Resources Industry.....	1720
Regional Queensland, Internet.....	1721
Coronavirus, Training and Skills.....	1722
Building and Construction Industry, Apprentices and Trainees.....	1722
Reef Assist.....	1723
Renewable Energy.....	1723
Maritime Jobs Taskforce.....	1724
Education; Coronavirus, Schools.....	1725
Drought.....	1725
Rural Economic Development Grants.....	1726
SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT	1726
QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE	1726
Government Procurement.....	1727
Hotel Reservation Service.....	1727
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Email, dated 13 July 2020, from HRS Group, titled 'RFP Hotel Programme Queensland Government: you are invited to take part in the next round of negotiations'.....	1727
Torres Strait.....	1728
Public Service, Director-General Appointments.....	1729
Frontline Workers, Safety.....	1730
Child Sex Offenders.....	1730
State Finances.....	1731

Table of Contents – Thursday, 16 July 2020

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Integrity	1732
International Education	1732
Inner City South State Secondary College, Principal Appointment Process	1733
Road Infrastructure	1733
Independent Public Schools	1734
Corrective Services, Jobs	1735
Mackay Base Hospital, Autopsy Services	1735
Manufacturing Industry	1736
Regional Queensland, Health Services	1737
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Letter, dated 10 July 2020, from the Executive Director of Medical Services, Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service, Dr Julieanne Graham, regarding accommodation for doctors.....	1737
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Memorandum, dated 10 July 2020, from the Executive Director of Medical Services, Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service, Dr Julieanne Graham, to medical officers in rural sites in CQHHS and directors of medical services, titled ‘Changes in rural accommodation provisions’.....	1737
Racing Industry	1737
Lady Cilento Children’s Hospital, Renaming	1738
MOTION	1739
Suspension of Sessional Orders	1739
MERIBA OMASKER KAZIW KAZIPA (TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER TRADITIONAL CHILD REARING PRACTICE) BILL	1739
Message from Governor	1739
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Message, dated 16 July 2020, from His Excellency the Governor, recommending the Meriba Omasker Kaziw Kazipa (Torres Strait Islander Traditional Child Rearing Practice) Bill 2020.....	1739
Introduction	1740
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Meriba Omasker Kaziw Kazipa (Torres Strait Islander Traditional Child Rearing Practice) Bill 2020.....	1740
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Meriba Omasker Kaziw Kazipa (Torres Strait Islander Traditional Child Rearing Practice) Bill 2020, explanatory notes.....	1740
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Meriba Omasker Kaziw Kazipa (Torres Strait Islander Traditional Child Rearing Practice) Bill 2020, statement of compatibility with human rights.....	1740
First Reading	1742
Referral to Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee	1742
Suspension of Standing and Sessional Orders	1742
PUBLIC SERVICE AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL	1742
Message from Governor	1742
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Message, dated 14 July 2020, from His Excellency the Governor, recommending the Public Service and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020.....	1742
Introduction	1743
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Public Service and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020.....	1743
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Public Service and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020, explanatory notes.....	1743
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Public Service and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020, statement of compatibility with human rights.....	1743
First Reading	1744
Referral to Education, Employment and Small Business Committee	1744
ROYALTY LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL	1744
Introduction	1744
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Royalty Legislation Amendment Bill 2020.....	1744
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Royalty Legislation Amendment Bill 2020, explanatory notes.....	1744
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Royalty Legislation Amendment Bill 2020, statement of compatibility with human rights.....	1744
First Reading	1745
Referral to Economics and Governance Committee	1745
Declared Urgent; Portfolio Committee, Reporting Date	1745
CORRECTIVE SERVICES AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL	1746
Second Reading	1746
PRIVATE MEMBERS’ STATEMENTS	1759
Palaszczuk Labor Government, Integrity	1759
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Letter, dated 16 July 2020, from the member for Everton, Mr Tim Mander MP, to the Chairman, Crime and Corruption Commission, Mr Alan MacSporran QC, requesting an investigation into an alleged interference with the recruitment process for the role of Under Treasurer by Ms Jackie Trad MP.....	1759
Community Sport	1759
Inner City South State Secondary College, Principal Appointment Process	1760
Drive It NQ	1761
Cairns, Tourism Industry	1761
Community Development Grants Program	1762
Fire Ants	1762
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Bundle of maps relating to fire ant restricted areas.....	1763
Pine Rivers Electorate	1763
Currumbin Electorate, Queensland Border	1764

Table of Contents – Thursday, 16 July 2020

Coronavirus, Response	1764
Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance	1765
Mackay Electorate, Queens Park Redevelopment	1766
Palaszczuk Labor Government, Buy Local Policy	1766
<i>Queensland Times</i>	1767
Lockyer Electorate, Representation	1767
Logan Electorate, Schools	1768
Mooloolaba Spit; JobTrainer	1768
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Nonconforming petition regarding protection of the Mooloolaba Spit from overdevelopment.	1768
Redland City Council	1769
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Letter, dated 30 June 2020, from the Deputy Independent Assessor, Office of the Independent Assessor, Mr Charles Kohn, to the member for Capalaba, Mr Don Brown MP, regarding the conduct of Councillor Williams of Redland City Council.	1769
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Bundle of documents relating to right to information request to Redlands Council relating to Ekka Show holidays.	1769
New Acland Coalmine.....	1770
Townsville Electorate.....	1770
HEALTH, COMMUNITIES, DISABILITY SERVICES AND DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION COMMITTEE	1771
Report, Motion to Take Note.....	1771
STATE DEVELOPMENT, NATURAL RESOURCES AND AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE	1777
Report, Motion to Take Note.....	1777
COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY	1781
Portfolio Committees, Reporting Dates and Transfer of Responsibilities.....	1781
MOTION	1782
Amendment to Business Program	1782
CORRECTIVE SERVICES AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL	1782
Second Reading	1782
Consideration in Detail	1787
Clause 1, as read, agreed to.....	1787
Clause 2 postponed.....	1787
Clauses 3 to 14, as read, agreed to.	1787
Clause 15—.....	1787
Amendment agreed to.	1787
Clause 15 omitted.....	1787
Clauses 16 and 17, as read, agreed to.	1788
Insertion of new clause—.....	1788
Amendment agreed to.	1788
Clauses 18 to 20, as read, agreed to.	1788
Clause 21—.....	1788
Amendment agreed to.	1788
Clause 21 omitted.....	1788
Clauses 22 to 55, as read, agreed.	1788
Insertion of new clauses—.....	1788
Amendment agreed to.	1789
Insertion of new clauses—.....	1789
Amendment agreed to.	1792
Insertion of new clauses—.....	1792
Amendment agreed to.	1793
Clauses 56 to 60, as read, agreed to.	1793
Insertion of new clauses—.....	1793
Amendment agreed to.	1793
Clause 61, as read, agreed to.....	1793
Clause 62—.....	1794
Division: Question put—That clause 62, as read, stand part of the bill.	1794
Resolved in the affirmative.....	1794
Clause 62, as read, agreed to.....	1794
Clauses 63 to 69, as read, agreed to.	1794
Schedule, as read, agreed to.	1794
Clause 2—.....	1794
Amendment agreed to.	1794
Clause 2, as amended, agreed to.	1794
Third Reading.....	1794
Long Title.....	1794
Amendment agreed to.	1794
MINISTERIAL STATEMENT	1795
Minister for Education and Minister for Industrial Relations, Professional Qualifications	1795
MINISTERIAL AND OTHER OFFICE HOLDER STAFF AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL	1796
Second Reading	1796
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Letter, dated 28 February 2020, from the member for Kawana, Mr Jarrod Blejje MP, to the Premier and Minister for Trade, Hon. Anastacia Palaszczuk, regarding resources for non-government members of the Legislative Assembly.	1803
Consideration in Detail	1807

Table of Contents – Thursday, 16 July 2020

Message from Governor	1807
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Message, dated 16 July 2020, from His Excellency the Governor recommending government amendment No. 13 to the Ministerial and Other Office Holder Staff and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018.	1807
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Ministerial and Other Office Holder Staff and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018, explanatory notes to Hon. Yvette D'Ath's amendments.	1807
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Ministerial and Other Office Holder Staff and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018, statement of compatibility with human rights contained in Hon. Yvette D'Ath's amendments.	1807
Amendments agreed to	1807
Clauses 1 to 10, as amended, agreed to	1813
Third Reading	1813
Long Title	1813
Amendment agreed to.	1813
PRIVILEGE	1813
Member for Burnett, Register of Members' Interests	1813
ADJOURNMENT	1814
Everton Electorate, Traffic	1814
Greenslopes Electorate, Energy	1814
Chatsworth Electorate, Small Business	1815
Macalister Electorate, Coronavirus	1816
Gold Coast; Jackson, Ms K	1816
Lytton Electorate	1817
Rookwood Weir	1817
Musgrave Park Hostel; Correction to <i>Record of Proceedings</i>	1818
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Letter, dated 19 June 2020, from the member for South Brisbane, Ms Jackie Trad MP, to the federal Minister for Indigenous Australians, Hon. Ken Wyatt AM, regarding the sale of Musgrave Park Hostel.	1819
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Letter, dated 15 July 2020, from the federal Minister for Indigenous Australians, Hon. Ken Wyatt AM, to the member for South Brisbane, Ms Jackie Trad MP, regarding the sale of Musgrave Park Hostel.	1819
Tinney, Ms S	1819
Redcliffe Electorate, Community Organisations and Sporting Clubs	1819
ATTENDANCE	1820

THURSDAY, 16 JULY 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.

TABLED PAPERS

TABLING OF DOCUMENTS (SO 32)

MINISTERIAL PAPERS

The following ministerial papers were tabled by the Clerk—

Minister for Transport and Main Roads (Hon. Bailey)—

[1180](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (Hon. Bailey), to an ePetition (3342-20) sponsored by the member for Maroochydore, Ms Simpson, from 1,983 petitioners, requesting the House to scrap the proposed M2M cycleway at Alexandra Headland; keep carparks east of Alexandra Parade; improve foot paths for cyclists and pedestrians; consult fully with all beach user groups; and improve the natural environment with better landscaping rather than metal fences

Minister for Housing and Public Works, Minister for Digital Technology and Minister for Sport (Hon. de Brenni)—

[1181](#) Response from the Minister for Housing and Public Works, Minister for Digital Technology and Minister for Sport (Hon. de Brenni), to an ePetition (3332-20) sponsored by the member for Southport, Mr Molhoek, from 2,393 petitioners, requesting the House to address homelessness in the Southport CBD and surrounds

[1182](#) Response from the Minister for Housing and Public Works, Minister for Digital Technology and Minister for Sport (Hon. de Brenni), to an ePetition (3337-20) sponsored by the Clerk under provisions of Standing Order 119(4) from 975 petitioners, requesting the House to legislate to stop the monopoly of television, print and radio by foreign companies

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Coronavirus, Update



Hon. A PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.31 am): Queenslanders continue to remain vigilant in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. Once again I can report that overnight Queensland has recorded no new cases of COVID-19 and our total number of cases remains at 1,071 with four cases remaining active. Additionally, I am extremely pleased to inform the House that 19 people who visited the Crossroads Hotel in Sydney and then crossed our border have all returned negative tests to the virus. That is not only great news; it is a testament to the strengths of our border controls which are critical to stem the spread of this virus.

I understand the frustrations at delays on our borders, but I reiterate again to all Queenslanders and to all visitors to our state that these measures are absolutely vital to protect us all. I thank the police, the emergency services personnel and the SES members who are working so hard to check vehicles entering Queensland, as well as the police who are checking at the airports. It is important that I share the latest information from our border so all Queenslanders are able to understand the scope of this important undertaking and just why we cannot afford to become complacent. Since last Friday, 1,086 people have been turned around at our border and the police have checked more than 23,700 domestic passengers at our airports, with 440 placed into quarantine and 29 turned around. With the COVID-19 situation continuing to evolve in Victoria and New South Wales, these figures alone give a clear indication of the sheer scope of this task and show how vital it is that we continue to monitor and protect our border and protect Queenslanders.

As our state and the nation continue to traverse a path through the coronavirus pandemic, I understand the Prime Minister will today announce, as reported in the paper, a \$2 billion skills package and we welcome that commitment. It has been a long time coming. My government will match the Prime Minister's commitment to Queensland dollar for dollar.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr Dick interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The Treasurer will put his comments through the chair.

Ms PALASZCZUK: We are happy to talk about that later on. My government has already invested close to \$1 billion in skills and training and, additionally, yesterday I announced a \$90 million skills and training package specifically to get Queenslanders back into the workplace focusing on young people in the fallout of COVID-19.

Queensland has not had a case of community transfer since early May. It is because of the great work Queenslanders have done containing the virus that we have been able to proceed with our economic recovery and create jobs. It is also how we are able to host the remainder of the AFL competition in Queensland. I stress again that this can only happen if strict COVID-safe plans are followed. However, not everyone is happy. Western Australia appears very upset at the notion of an AFL grand final being played in an NRL state. Well, I have a few words for the Western Australian Premier, Mark McGowan—

Ms Grace: The Lions will be in the finals.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I take that interjection. To the Western Australian Premier, I say that if Western Australia can host a State of Origin it is only fair that Queensland can host an AFL grand final.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members!

Ms PALASZCZUK: They are not happy over there.

Mr Bleijie: I just love the fact that you don't know what you are talking about.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Kawana—

Mr Dick interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Treasurer, that is the second time you have been directing your comments not through the chair and across the chamber. You are warned under the standing orders. Member for Kawana, you are warned under the standing orders.


Ms PALASZCZUK: Just remember that the member for Kawana was once Queensland's Attorney-General and the Leader of the Opposition was once Campbell Newman's right-hand—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Premier, I will ask you to continue with your ministerial statement.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Thank you. I am being attacked. I hope Queenslanders get behind the AFL, as they do with every other sport. Of course, Queensland hosted the magnificent Commonwealth Games. We can host anything, including an AFL grand final, so let us go for it. Just as we went for gold with the Commonwealth Games, let us go for the AFL.

Wild Dog Barrier Fence

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.36 am): One of my proudest achievements is the construction of wild dog fencing in Western Queensland. It was something we introduced during the drought to inject cash and jobs into remote and western communities. It was an investment when times were tough in the sure and certain knowledge it would pay off when conditions improved.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.


Ms Leahy interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members to my left, if you wish to have conversations have them outside.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Because of that investment, the sheep industry is back. I saw the benefits for myself at Dunblane Station between Longreach and Barcaldine when I attended out there with the Minister for Agricultural Industry Development. David Counsel is a fourth-generation farmer who believes the fences are the difference between having lambs and not, and he shows off a very healthy and impressive flock. There are 7,000 kilometres of fencing that have already been built. Lambing rates have increased to 75 per cent. Sheep numbers have doubled to 720,000. Under our Economic Recovery Plan we are going to extend the wild dog fencing to 10,500 kilometres. We will contribute \$5 million. This is in addition to the \$20 million we have already delivered on this and other feral pest initiatives.

The Remote Area Planning and Development Board has identified that if one million sheep were brought back to the west it would mean 440 new jobs for the region and \$36 million more in wages each and every year. This is just one example of how a government investing in vital infrastructure helps our economy grow, and we are investing more than \$50 billion in infrastructure in Queensland over the next four years. We are also providing a \$12.5 million package to help the agricultural industry develop integrated supply chains, coordinate air freight services and help agribusinesses diversify—because we will always back Queenslanders in the sure and certain knowledge it is money well spent.

Coronavirus, Tourism Industry

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.38 am): Queenslanders have done an outstanding job in our health response to the global pandemic. We have listened to the advice of the medical experts and we have done, and continue to do, what is necessary to keep Queenslanders safe. We have worked hard and we continue to do that. It has been extremely difficult for Queenslanders and businesses, but this hard work is paying off as we focus on our economic recovery. We know the tourism industry has been one of the hardest hit here in Queensland and around the world and we have made sure it has been front and centre of our economic recovery plan.


We have been able to ease restrictions sooner. Our major sporting venues are on the comeback, with up to 25,000 spectators, or 50 per cent of capacity, now allowed. Yesterday's AFL announcement that Victorian teams will be based here for the remainder of the season is worth millions to our state. Concert venues, theatres and auditoriums are also now open and can have up to 50 per cent capacity with a COVID-safe plan. We have welcomed the reopening of the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre after months of closure due to the pandemic, with events to kick off next month. I know the Treasurer was there to open those doors.

Other significant businesses to reopen include casinos, zoos and theme parks, including Movie World just yesterday. While our borders remain closed to visitors from Victoria and hotspots of New South Wales, we have been able to reopen to tourists from other states and territories, bringing with them their tourism dollars to boost our regional cities and towns.

We have announced nearly \$80 million in targeted support for the tourism industry as we unite and recover for Queensland jobs. Our Queensland Good to Go domestic marketing campaign across Australia is expected to generate \$1 billion in overnight visitor expenditure. I say well done to the Minister for Tourism. That campaign has reached 93 per cent of Queenslanders—around 3.8 million people—and nearly 50 per cent are planning a winter getaway. That was up from 30 per cent last year. Regions like Sunshine Coast, Southern Queensland, Agnes Waters, 1770 and Whitsundays are doing well, and the Gold Coast and Cairns are also on the up after the border was reopened. We are also supporting tourism infrastructure—our iconic theme parks and animal parks and our national parks—as well as providing airline route support and tourism marketing.

I am incredibly disappointed that the federal government still has not honoured its deal with our theme parks after promising millions of dollars in loans to help them reopen and recover. This is a massive kick in the guts for our theme park operators and their 5,000 workers. I urge the federal government to reconsider and throw our theme parks a life raft to help them recover. My government will always back the tourism industry and our iconic theme parks and we will honour our commitments. It is only fair that the Morrison government works with us in this respect.

Coronavirus, Health Update

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (9.41 am): The director-general of the World Health Organization has just now released a statement. He said—

Let me be blunt, too many countries are headed in the wrong direction.

...

Mixed messages from leaders are undermining the most critical ingredient of any response: trust.

...

If the basics aren't followed, there is only one way this pandemic is going to go.

It's going to get worse and worse and worse.

On Tuesday we passed another milestone in this pandemic: over 10,000 people diagnosed in Australia. We have over 2,000 active cases in our country, but just four of those are in Queensland. Globally, over 13.4 million cases have now been reported and there have been over 580,000 deaths.


Sadly, we lost three Australians to this virus this week. New South Wales continues to battle the outbreak from the Crossroads Hotel, with 34 cases now connected to the pub. In Queensland, 19 people have come forward to say they visited the hotel and we have now had 19 tests come back negative.

Our successful health response has been the critical first part of Queensland's plan to unite and recover. We are getting Queenslanders back to work by investing in local jobs and infrastructure. We are investing billions of dollars to build new hospitals and expand our existing ones, generating thousands of jobs. That work was already well underway before the pandemic hit, but it has taken on a new urgency as we battle economic headwinds.

The key thing to remember is that this pandemic is not over. Across the world we are still seeing countries recording thousands of cases every day. In some places it has not peaked yet. In others we are seeing second waves. The most difficult thing to manage now is complacency. We are in an enviable position and we want to stay that way, but every Queenslanders needs to play their part. Keep up the social distancing. Keep up the hand washing. Please get tested if people have even the slightest hint of a cold-like symptom and, most importantly, stay at home when they are sick. What we do now will have huge impacts on our future.

In a world post COVID-19, Queensland will have its own share of challenges, but I see some opportunities, too. I have always said that Queensland is the best place in the world to live and work and raise a family. If we stick to Queensland's plan to unite and recover, we will be the safest place, too.

Resources Industry

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Infrastructure and Planning) (9.44 am): Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the Palaszczuk Labor government has worked hand in glove with industries across our state, with companies large and small, to protect and support Queensland jobs and Queensland businesses. Not since the Great Depression has there been a time when government intervention and government investment was so vital to protect businesses not just for today, but to ensure they are well placed to take advantage of opportunities and grow again as we emerge in a post-COVID world.

Queensland's position of global leadership in dealing with COVID, our natural resources and our diversified economy put us in the box seat for private sector investment to take advantage of future opportunities. In doing so, we will build on a five-year history that has brought billions of dollars of private investment and tens of thousands of jobs into our state across industries including renewables, mining resources, defence and agriculture. Since its early days, Queensland has been a mining state and it will be a mining state well into the future. Under our Premier, \$20 billion has been invested in resources projects, supporting 7,000 jobs.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Member for Moggill and member for Warrego, you will cease your interjections or you will find yourselves on my bad side today.

Mr DICK: Under our Premier, \$20 billion has been invested in resources projects, creating 7,000 jobs.

Ms Leahy interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: The member for Warrego is warned under the standing orders. I have made myself clear. I find that to be almost reflecting on the chair given I have just given you some guidance.

Mr DICK: From coal projects like Olive Downs and Winchester South to Glencore's Valeria mine near Capella, Queensland continues to produce the finest metallurgical coal in the world, which is vital to steelmakers in Japan and South Korea, two of our key trading partners. Queensland has overtaken another Q—this time Qatar—to become the world's biggest producer of LNG. That is from an industry that did not exist here just a decade ago, an industry created by Labor. The certainty provided by our new petroleum royalties framework, to be introduced into this House later today, will ensure more investment by more producers for years to come, increasing supply for domestic customers and putting downward pressure on energy prices.

In the north of our state, from Mount Isa to Greenvale, companies are developing mines to produce the metals that will power the renewable energy industry around the world. As the Premier announced yesterday, support through our government's Jobs and Regional Growth Fund will facilitate the development of the \$1.5 billion Sconi mine near Greenvale, supporting nearly 300 jobs once operating. That mine will supply the global market with nickel, cobalt and scandium.

Speaking of renewables, our government has facilitated billions more in committed investment through a pipeline of projects valued at \$5 billion. In the member for Maryborough's electorate, the \$2 billion Forest Wind project will support 440 jobs during construction and supply up to 1.2 gigawatts of power once completed. We are also seeing significant private investment in renewables in the electorates of Southern Downs and Condamine through Acciona's \$2 billion MacIntyre Wind project, in which our own CleanCo is also a participant, as well as Neoen's \$570 million Western Downs Green Power Hub.

Thanks to the Palaszczuk Labor government, Queensland is now Australia's home of defence industries. Rheinmetall's Military Vehicle Centre of Excellence at Redbank in the electorate of Bundamba will be home to the Land 400 Boxer combat reconnaissance vehicle and hopefully—if the Morrison government does the right thing—the Lynx infantry fighting vehicle. The Boxer is already a \$5 billion investment in Queensland. Lynx could bring another \$15 billion in work to our state if, as I say, the Morrison coalition government does the right thing by Queensland. We continue to work with Boeing to develop the company's largest drone program outside the United States—not drones like the member for Glass House, but drones in the sky—right here in Queensland.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DICK: They like to give it, but they do not like to take it. On numbers prepared by the Queensland Major Contractors Association, Queensland has a pipeline of \$50 billion worth of major projects coming to our state. All this has happened under a Labor government. Our door will always be open to private investment, especially now as we work to strengthen our economic recovery from COVID-19.

Regional Queensland, Internet



Hon. KJ JONES (Cooper—ALP) (Minister for State Development, Tourism and Innovation) (9.48 am): Only the Palaszczuk government has a strategy to create jobs, rebuild our economy—

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Ms JONES: I would love to see it—and lead Queensland out of the coronavirus pandemic. With more Queenslanders working from home, it has never been more important for Queenslanders to have access to fast and reliable internet. I think it is safe to say that the NBN has been an utter disappointment for thousands of businesses and locals in regional Queensland. By unlocking more than 6,000 kilometres of state owned optical fibre cables, we are delivering cheaper, faster and more reliable internet for thousands of homes and businesses right across Queensland.

Today I am proud to announce that Goondiwindi locals will soon benefit from some of the cheapest, fastest internet in the country thanks to the Palaszczuk government. As part of a deal done by QCNFibre, Queensland based Channel Wireless and Goondiwindi internet service provider Country Broadband Network will soon provide this service to locals in Goondiwindi.

Ms Palaszczuk: Great news.

Ms JONES: It is great news, and the mayor is very happy. I also am proud to confirm that we have entered into an agreement with Toowoomba's Pulse Data Centre and Queensland internet service provider Over the Wire to provide better internet for thousands of businesses right across the Darling Downs. This week, major Warwick meat exporter John Dee Pty Ltd will have its internet capacity beefed up through a deal with QCNFibre. This will help this important local company to scale up and grow its business. The Palaszczuk Labor government is stepping in where we have seen the federal government fail. Only the Palaszczuk government has the strategy to rebuild Queensland's economy and create—

Opposition members interjected.

Ms JONES: It is actually great news. This is actually awesome.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Ms JONES: We are actually giving viable internet to regional communities.


Opposition members interjected.

Ms JONES: No, I am not.

Mr SPEAKER: Members to my left! Minister, will you please return to your ministerial statement.

Ms JONES: Only the Palaszczuk government has a strategy to rebuild Queensland's economy and create jobs for locals no matter where they live in our great state. We will continue to invest in infrastructure to unite and recover for Queensland.

Coronavirus, Training and Skills

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development) (9.51 am): Queensland is a leader in skills and training. COVID-19 has hit every economy. No-one has been immune, including Queensland, and we know how vital it is to have the skilled workforce needed to help our state recover. Our apprentices and trainees in particular will play a valuable role in this economic recovery. Finally, today we have seen the federal government put some money on the table. We have been waiting some time for this money. The Palaszczuk government has proudly—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!


Ms FENTIMAN: The Palaszczuk government has proudly been doing the heavy lifting here in Queensland, leading the nation when it comes to skills and training and apprentices. Who can forget the record of members opposite? We have been doing the heavy lifting here in Queensland. We lead the nation when it comes to apprentices. One in four apprentices start their apprenticeship here in Queensland. We have more than half the nation's school based apprentices and trainees. How much work have we in Queensland had to do without money from the federal government and cleaning up the mess of those opposite?

Just yesterday, the Premier announced \$10 million to extend our successful Skilling Queenslanders for Work program, the program that members opposite cut twice. It is a wonderful program. Yesterday, the Premier and I met some of the Skilling Queenslanders for Work trainees. There is Jacqueline Rogers, who came in yesterday to Parliament House for the first time, a construction trainee who was assisted by Skilling Queenslanders for Work after she found herself unemployed after COVID.

The Premier also announced a new boost for businesses to take on apprentices and trainees through our successful Back to Work program. A \$70 million expansion will see employers assisted with up to \$20,000 if they hire an apprentice or trainee. This is in addition to our very popular, free TAFE for year 12 and free apprenticeships and traineeships for under-21s. Already more than 21,000 young Queenslanders are being supported to gain a valuable qualification for free thanks to this government.

Like many of my colleagues, I visited the TAFE coffee trailer this morning and met a couple of apprentices. One of them, Brendan, a fourth-year electrical apprentice, told me, 'Free apprenticeships is the best.' After years of calling for additional skills funding, we welcome today's announcement by the federal government. We lead the way and we have been doing the heavy lifting because we know investing in skills leads to jobs.

Building and Construction Industry, Apprentices and Trainees

 **Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (Minister for Housing and Public Works, Minister for Digital Technology and Minister for Sport) (9.54 am): As I outlined yesterday, the Palaszczuk government is leading Queensland's economic recovery, with the construction industry playing a central role. With our \$50 billion infrastructure guarantee and further industry stimulus, we are building Queensland's future and creating jobs. Importantly, not only do we have a plan to create more jobs in the construction industry but also we have a plan to train the next generation of tradies.


The Palaszczuk government is committed to our building and construction training policy to develop the industry and the skills and capability of the next generation. At its core is the requirement to ensure 15 per cent of the total labour hours on major projects are undertaken by trainees and apprentices. My colleague the Minister for Employment, Skills and Training has led the effort to rebuild TAFE and make apprenticeships more accessible—with free apprenticeships for under-21s in block laying, carpentry, plumbing, gas fitting and so much more. Not only do we talk the talk; we walk the walk. We are rebuilding QBuild by directly employing 300 trades staff, including 60 apprentices, to deliver Queensland's vital infrastructure.

Our plan for economic recovery is a plan for all Queenslanders. However, currently only 2.4 per cent of the construction industry workforce are women. That is why the Palaszczuk government has adopted the National Association of Women in Construction target of 11 per cent women in frontline roles to achieve greater equality on construction sites. I am pleased to advise the House that we already are ahead, with 14.5 per cent of QBuild apprentices being women. QBuild apprentices are busy working on our schools, fire and police stations and social housing.

As we deliver our plan to unite and recover for Queensland jobs and invest in new infrastructure, we are making sure that Queensland dollars are invested in Queenslanders. The Palaszczuk government's Buy Queensland procurement strategy means we work hard to extract maximum value from every investment. We are working hard to ensure that every dollar invested by government helps support quality and secure jobs. We are working hard to ensure that our investments support the economic recovery of our regions and the opportunity for local kids to get ahead through training and apprenticeships. In fact, under our plan on major government projects apprentices are already hard at work.

On the Minister for Education's Cooler Schools program we are supporting 226 apprentices to gain the skills they need to set them up for life. On our transformational tourism infrastructure upgrade of the Cairns Convention Centre, we will be supporting 91 apprentices with our \$176 million transformational investment. On our refurbishment project of the new national home of Australian Rules football, the Gabba, we are supporting 27 apprentices, including aspiring electricians like Ethan from Alex Hills. We have a plan to ensure that every Queenslanders who wants a decent and secure job in the construction industry has the skills they need. Our plan to Unite and Recover for Queensland Jobs is a plan for Queensland's future.

Reef Assist

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algera—ALP) (Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts) (9.57 am): Yesterday the Premier announced that the Palaszczuk government is injecting \$10 million into the economy to deliver jobs and priority environmental projects in Great Barrier Reef catchments. As part of our plan for economic recovery, the Reef Assist package will provide environmental benefits and create up to 200 jobs in Northern Queensland.

While our state continues to be affected by the global impact of COVID-19, our government recognises that environmental projects are a great way to support employment and protect our unique biodiversity. This is a great initiative for regional communities and a positive sign that our state is on the road to recovery. Local organisations are being invited to identify shovel-ready projects that will deliver real benefits for the regions. This is about investing in a jobs-rich conservation and land management program that will also leave enduring benefits for communities, businesses and, of course, the environment. I was pleased to see that yesterday's announcement was warmly welcomed by stakeholders. Shelly McArdle from Queensland Water and Land Carers said—


After all that has happened with flood, drought, fire and now COVID, this gives our community a welcome lifeline. This sort of hands-on positive work is exactly what we need, to improve community wellbeing.

Shani Tager from the Australian Marine Conservation Society said—

This is exactly the sort of program that's needed to rebuild regional economies, create jobs and address one of the major threats to our Reef by improving water quality. Boosting programs that create jobs, clean up our waterways and manage our land to make sure that the water that flows into our beautiful Reef is clean, is a win-win.

The Great Barrier Reef contributes \$6 billion to the Australian economy and supports more than 60,000 jobs, and right now our tourism industry is relying on its health more than ever. The Reef Assist program is a tremendous investment for the people of Queensland and for the Great Barrier Reef.

Renewable Energy

 **Hon. AJ LYNHAM** (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy) (9.59 am): In the face of harsh global headwinds Queensland has a firm economic strategy for recovery, and emerging industries like renewable energy are integral to that plan because they create jobs. Queensland's renewable energy revolution is steaming ahead. For the past five years under Labor 39 large-scale renewable energy projects have commenced operations or are financially committed, creating nearly 6,000 jobs.


Queensland now has 6,600 megawatts of renewable generation either operational or committed—the equivalent of taking more than two million cars off the roads—and that includes household rooftop solar. In my electorate of Stafford alone, there are more than 8,000 household

rooftop solar systems and by the end of next month Queensland should have hit more than 600,000 household rooftop systems and 5,000 megawatts of total solar capacity. In fact, when the AFL teams fly into Queensland, they will see solar on one in three rooftops as they fly over.

In five years under this government renewables have grown from next to nothing to a projected 20 per cent this year. Queensland's renewable revolution is now launching into its next 10-year growth phase fuelled by this government's commitment to 50 per cent renewables by 2030. Our new publicly owned clean energy generator CleanCo is building a wind farm near Warwick and has committed to buy 320 megawatts of solar from what will be Australia's biggest solar farm near Chinchilla, and we have strong private sector confidence and investment in Queensland as well. Shell is building the Gangarri solar farm near Wandoan north-west of Brisbane, creating up to another 200 construction jobs. We are seeing the deployment of the technology that will support our transition to a renewable future, with the big battery being developed by AGL and Vena Energy at Wandoan. We have active renewable hydrogen projects in Gladstone, Townsville and the Redlands and a Hydrogen Industry Strategy to position us at the forefront of renewable hydrogen production in Australia by 2030.

Tomorrow I will be attending the official opening of the University of Queensland's Warwick solar farm with my colleague the state development minister. This is a first for Queensland and for the tertiary education sector. This 64-megawatt farm will provide all of the University of Queensland's power needs and make it the first university in the world to generate all of its electricity from its own renewable energy assets. This farm will join other operating renewable power plants—Baking Board solar, Barcaldine, Childers, Clare, Clermont, Collinsville, Coopers Gap, Darling Downs, Daydream, Dunblane, Emerald, Hamilton, Haughton stage 1, Haughton stage 2, Hughenden, Kennedy, and I could go on and on and on with how many renewable energy projects we have in our state. The Palaszczuk government will continue to back the Queensland renewable energy revolution because it will continue to put downward pressure on power prices, reduce emissions and, importantly in our post-COVID world, support jobs and our economic recovery.

Maritime Jobs Taskforce

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (10.02 am): The COVID-19 crisis has devastated the global economy. Queensland's economy has not escaped the impacts of shutdowns and restrictions, and as we manage the health crisis supporting new jobs is critical to Queensland's recovery. Queensland is blessed with an astonishingly beautiful coastline and local waterways that millions of Queenslanders live beside and enjoy regularly. These waterways are also where thousands of Queenslanders go to work every day.


About 2,600 maritime workers, or 22 per cent of all maritime workers in the nation, are employed in Queensland. This government knows there are opportunities to support more maritime jobs, and that is why the Palaszczuk Labor government has established a Maritime Jobs Taskforce. The task force will investigate ways to create new maritime jobs and training opportunities in Queensland's shipping industry. It will also look at new job opportunities in the tourism, fishing and resource sectors.

Chaired by Patrick Quirk, the respected former head of Maritime Safety Queensland, the task force will report its findings to the government in September. Mr Quirk is supported by Pacific Tug CEO, Captain Chris Peters, and Jason Miners of the Maritime Union of Australia. Pacific Tug is a Brisbane based and family owned company with 50 years in the marine services industry. Work will start in the coming months on Pacific Tug's \$35 million marine based investment at the Port of Bundaberg which will support 100 jobs once completed.

Our successful War on Wrecks program, chaired by the member for Redlands, has also created more Queensland jobs. This Palaszczuk Labor government program, launched two years ago, has seen more than 600 sunken or abandoned vessels removed from Queensland waters or made seaworthy. Small marine contracting businesses up and down the coast throughout regional Queensland have been enlisted to haul these wrecks out of the water. Each job has supported crews of local contractors to help clean up our coastline, removing hazards from our pristine environment. They in turn use local suppliers to hire equipment while local scrap yards benefit from dismantling the vessels and boats.

In the coming months we will hold a new round of community forums in Cairns, in Noosa, in Wynnum and in Gladstone. The feedback received during the first round of forums was valuable in helping us identify vessels for removal. Now we want to hear ideas from Queenslanders on what changes could be made to encourage more responsible boat ownership. Every job counts as we navigate the uncharted waters ahead. Our economic plan will give Queenslanders a chance to work and develop new skills so they are prepared for what lies ahead.

Education; Coronavirus, Schools

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Industrial Relations) (10.05 am): Term 2 was an unprecedented time for schooling in Queensland and, indeed, Australia. From transitioning to remote learning for the first five weeks of term and then back into the classroom as restrictions had begun to ease, we have shown how successfully we can pull together to protect our community and adapt to challenging times. Over the past couple of months it has been inspiring to witness the adaptability and creativity of our educators, departmental staff, students and the wider school communities, with no shortage of positive stories to be told. Our long-term investment in high-quality curriculum materials, digital classroom technologies and differentiated teaching and learning has paid off as we have worked to meet the needs of an incredibly diverse state.

As we implement Queensland's plan to recover from the global health pandemic, things are slowly beginning to return to normal in our state schools. However, even as restrictions progressively lessen across the state, it is important that we remain vigilant in what continues to be an ever-changing situation. Here are some of the highlights of the new guidelines for term 3. Excursions and camps will return and be held at locations or businesses that have approved COVID-safe industry plans and Department of Education outdoor and environmental education centres. Formals and graduations are permitted to be held at businesses—


Mrs Frecklington: Hear, hear!

Ms GRACE:—that have approved COVID-safe industry plans—great news for our senior students, and I take the interjection from the Leader of the Opposition. School cleaning will continue to prioritise frequently used areas, with extra attention to high-frequency touch point surfaces such as doorhandles, light switches, desks, toilets, taps and sinks. Additional cleaning funding has been provided to schools and will continue until further notice.

School assemblies may commence, with the principal ensuring that physical distancing requirements are maintained for all adults and other COVID-19 control measures are implemented. Support has been provided to schools to help plan for the return of intra- and interschool sport. Transport arrangements will continue to operate for students, including specialist school transport for students with a disability. Transport operators will ensure buses and surface touch points are cleaned according to COVID-19 cleaning and disinfection recommendations.

Principals may negotiate the use of their facilities for external uses if the external user has met the requirements of the Queensland Health approved COVID-safe industry plans and schools will need to continue to ensure any visitors, including parents, carers, adult volunteers and visiting specialists, entering the school grounds to deliver additional programs at the school comply with the onsite health and safety measures outlined in these guidelines. We are looking forward to a successful term 3 as students were welcomed back this week for the start of the term, with all schools returning closer to normal. A big thanks for the mighty efforts of all our school communities throughout Queensland as we unite and recover.

Drought


 **Hon. CJ O'ROURKE** (Mundingburra—ALP) (Minister for Communities and Minister for Disability Services and Seniors) (10.08 am): Queensland continues to be in the grip of a long and severe drought. In fact, more than 67 per cent of Queensland is drought declared and we know that many of these areas have been in drought for several years. Droughts have a devastating and long-term impact on communities. Many regional, rural and remote areas in our state have been struggling with the impacts of the drought and now with the global COVID-19 pandemic these communities are facing social and economic challenges on two fronts.

Regional Queensland is front of mind for me as a regional minister and for the Queensland government. That is why we are committed to supporting these communities through the ongoing economic impacts as we deliver our plan to unite and recover. Today I am proud to share with the House that 59 organisations right across drought-affected Queensland communities will benefit from around \$5 million in community drought support grants. This is part of the Queensland government's overall \$74.6 million Community Drought Support Package. This \$5 million will be shared between community organisations, school P&Cs, show societies and local councils. These organisations and groups will use the funding in different ways to support drought affected people and families in their communities. For example, school P&Cs will provide families with assistance to help purchase school uniforms. A range of community organisations will distribute Flexible Financial Hardship payments to individuals, families and households impacted by the drought.

Funded organisations can support individuals, households and families who require assistance with their cost-of-living pressures through fuel vouchers, assistance with rates and other bills or vouchers for local shops and businesses. Community events and activities, such as local shows, rodeos, campdrafts and sports, will also be supported to boost social connectedness and wellbeing. These events link local people with support networks and will be organised in a way that adheres to appropriate hygiene and social distancing measures. This funding will support these regional communities to unite, in spirit if not in person, and recover.

Just as we have supported Queenslanders through floods and bushfires, the Queensland government is assisting communities to recover from the impacts of this drought and to build their resilience for future drought events. Although COVID-19 is front and centre for many people at the moment, the drought is still very much on our minds. I say to Queenslanders still experiencing the devastating impacts of the drought that you have not been forgotten and we are here to help you through this.

Rural Economic Development Grants

 **Hon. ML FURNER** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries) (10.11 am): The Palaszczuk government's plan to unite and recover for Queensland jobs would not be possible without the stellar work of our agriculture sector. We were the first state to declare that agriculture was an essential industry to get the state through the COVID-19 crisis. Because of that our farmers have continued to provide fresh, high-quality produce to our supermarkets, our homes and right across the country. By supporting Queensland farmers we are also supporting a sector that is creating more jobs, which is what Queensland needs right now.

The Rural Economic Development Grants scheme is a prime example of how the Palaszczuk government is supporting local businesses and local jobs. Our over two rounds have helped 29 businesses and 1,200 jobs right across regional Queensland. These grants contribute up to \$250,000 in matching funding to agricultural businesses to help them expand and create new jobs. Earlier this month I had the absolute pleasure of visiting some of the RED grant recipients on the Sunshine Coast. Plants Direct Queensland at Eumundi has been supplying the landscape industry for almost 40 years. They are an amazing operation already, with around 50 hectares under production. Plants Direct will use the RED grant on a purpose-built facility to supply plants in biodegradable pots, a project that will support up to 17 new jobs.


I also dropped in to Kenilworth Dairies, recipients of a RED grant in round 1.

Mr Hunt: Great cheese!

Mr FURNER: Absolutely! It is a great business. It is wonderful to see what the owner has done with their grant. They are weeks away from flicking the switch on their new bottling plant. That means jobs for about 24 people in the local community directly and along the supply chain. This is yet another sign of how our plan to unite and recover for Queensland jobs is delivering for communities on the Sunshine Coast.

Expressions of interest for round 3 of the RED grants scheme closed last Friday. Expressions of interest amounted to about 148. The Queensland Rural Economic Development Grants scheme is a high job-creating scheme with high yields yet to be seen. We will work with QRIDA to make sure we work with those applicants and deliver. I look forward to announcing the next round of recipients in the weeks ahead. Agriculture is one of the key pillars of the Palaszczuk government's plan to unite and recover for Queensland jobs and RED grants will be critical to build an even brighter future for Queensland's regions. Like always, we will stand shoulder to shoulder with our Queensland farmers to get us through this COVID-19 pandemic.

SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (10.14 am): I move—

That the House, at its rising, do adjourn until 9.30 am on Tuesday, 11 August 2020.


Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

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

Government Procurement

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (10.15 am): My first question is to the Premier. The Queensland government has paid over \$1.2 billion to interstate and foreign companies, including for mattresses, milk and, most recently, \$10 million to foreign owned Dimension Data for a simple IT project for Queensland Health. With over 200,000 Queenslanders desperate to get a job, why is the Palaszczuk Labor government giving billions of taxpayers dollars to foreign companies, seeing jobs and profits go overseas instead of Queensland?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I am more than happy to check out those details. The Leader of the Opposition made some grand statements. We will have a look at that. We very much in this state support Buy Queensland. We have in place a procurement policy which we are going to strengthen.

Mr Dick: No government has done more.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right. I will take that interjection. No government has done more when it comes to procurement. We want to make sure that local people get the local jobs. I have made that very clear.

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The Premier indicated that she will look into the matter that the opposition leader raised. I am seeking whether the Premier is taking that on notice under 113.

Ms PALASZCZUK: No, I am not.

Mr SPEAKER: The Premier has indicated she is not.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I said I would look into it. I will give members a stark contrast: on this side of the House we kept Queensland assets in Queensland. The member for Nanango was part of a government that wanted to flog off our assets to overseas—billions and billions of dollars. They wanted to sell to overseas the whole of our energy assets. No, Leader of the Opposition, we will be keeping our Queensland assets in public hands. Those opposite, the LNP, wanted to sell the assets to overseas. As the Minister for Energy said yesterday, all the profits would have gone overseas as well, into the hands of shareholders. Now we have the dividends being returned to Queenslanders on their bills, making sure that they get a share of that dividend back.

We will not be wasting \$100 million on Strong Choices like the LNP did—a waste of taxpayers money. We will not be paying out money like those opposite did to Michael Caltabiano, a handpicked director-general: \$600,000 of taxpayers money.

Mrs Frecklington: You can't answer the question.

Ms PALASZCZUK: All relevant, Leader of the Opposition; all relevant, Mr Speaker, because we will stand on our record here and the LNP will stand on its record, which was about selling assets overseas and sacking workers. That is the record of the LNP. We will back procurement, we will back Queensland jobs. Only one side of the House, this side of the House, a Labor government, cares about people's futures and people's work. That is what we will continue to do, unlike those opposite. All they want to do is cut, sack and sell. They are the three fiscal principles of the LNP the Treasurer mentioned yesterday. On this side of the House it is jobs, jobs and jobs.

(Time expired)

Hotel Reservation Service

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: My second question is to the Premier. I table a deidentified email from a regional Queensland motel operator.

Tabled paper: Email, dated 13 July 2020, from HRS Group, titled 'RFP Hotel Programme Queensland Government: you are invited to take part in the next round of negotiations' [[1183](#)].

They have been a longstanding accommodation provider for government workers. Recently they were told by the state government's booking service, Germany's HRS, that they had to cut their rates by 10 per cent or be cut off from more work. They were told that they could respond to the email in English or in German. How is it fair for the Palaszczuk Labor government's multimillion dollar foreign owned booking agent to shake down Queensland mum-and-dad businesses so that they can pocket bigger fees?

Ms PALASZCZUK: We back Queensland businesses. I have been telling Queenslanders to travel in Queensland and I cannot be any clearer than that. I want to ensure that as many businesses as possible get the work that they need. I say very clearly: there has been a cut down on state government travel because we are in something called a 'COVID-19 pandemic'. Obviously, the LNP

have not caught on to that. They would have put all of Queensland at risk. Again I put it on the public record: there is only one side of this House that continuously called for the opening of the Queensland borders and it was the LNP. How many times did the LNP call for the opening of the Queensland borders? Sixty-four times! How embarrassing for the Leader of the Opposition. They should go out and talk to the people of Queensland. They should go and talk to people in the streets. They will tell them their views about the borders. They will tell them to their face.

What has happened? The LNP want to put it all at risk. Everyone has seen what has happened in Victoria and because of our strong health response the AFL is now moving to Queensland. Queensland will become the home of the AFL.

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance under the standing orders. The question was not about the AFL but about small business operators doing it tough in Queensland.

Mr SPEAKER: Premier, under standing order 118(b) I ask you to come back to the question as it was asked.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Let us think about the opportunities for small business with AFL teams based in Queensland. Hotels will benefit from the number of people going along to the matches—

Mrs Frecklington: How out of touch.

Ms PALASZCZUK: We are in touch with Queensland backing sport, the economy and the business that it brings. Ours was the first government that put in place an assistance package when we declared COVID a state health emergency. At that time, no other state or territory took it seriously. We will continue to back small business. That is why we announced \$100 million worth of grants for small business and we have extended that by another \$100 million, because we know that small businesses have been hit hard. Only one side of the House backs small business and it is this side of the House. If we had opened up the borders as the LNP had asked us to do, the opposition would have put at risk all of our health response and all of small business in Queensland. We stood strong. We backed Queenslanders. We will continue to support them during our economic recovery.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, I have given you some guidance. You continue to not put your comments through the chair. You are warned under the standing orders. I remind every member who is under a warning that there will be no interjections from those members.

Torres Strait

Ms LUI: My question is of the Premier and Minister for Trade. Will the Premier update the House on the government's commitment to the Torres Strait, including election commitments?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Cook for that very important question. Of course our government is very much committed to the people of the Torres Strait. I am very proud that our first member from the Torres Strait is a member of the Labor government, that is, the member for Cook. I thank her for her great advocacy. Every time the member for Cook and I have been to the Torres Strait, I have been welcomed. It is wonderful to visit with people firsthand and listen to the needs of the community. Those needs include extra health facilities on Mer Island, upgrades to the Thursday Island health centre and upgrades to the community centre. Of course, we know how important water is to those communities. We went with the mayor to look at the water infrastructure. Water is vital to communities across Queensland, but when you live on a remote island it becomes even more critical, especially as you get further from city centres.

Through Works for Queensland we have given the Torres Strait Regional Council \$2.9 million and the Torres Shire Council \$1.4 million. Through Building our Regions, the Horn Island Affordable Housing Project will receive \$960,000, Saibai Island will receive \$827,000 and the Thursday Island helipad will get \$565,000. We will continue to show our great commitment to the Torres Strait Islands, thanks to the great advocacy of the member for Cook.

One issue that we made an election commitment on was to provide legal recognition for Torres State Islander traditional adoption. I know that this is an issue close to the heart of the member for Cook. The member for Cook has invited me to meet with local families, and Minister Fentiman, the member for South Brisbane and Minister Enoch have also been involved in those lengthy discussions. I am very proud to say that, following question time today, the government will honour the commitment that we made to the people of the Torres Strait. The member for Cook will be making further announcements in this House following question time.

Today is a very proud day because what we are planning to do is not only nation leading; it is world leading. I put on the public record my thanks to the member for Cook for her advocacy. This would never have happened if it were not for the fact that the first Torres Strait Islander has been elected into this chamber. Today is an incredibly proud day. I congratulate the member for Cook. This would never have happened without you. This is a day that every single person on this side of the House is going to recognise and remember for many years to come.

(Time expired)

Public Service, Director-General Appointments

Mr MANDER: My question without notice is to the Premier. In 2014 and 2015, the Premier repeatedly promised to have all director-general level positions appointed through independent and merit based recruitment processes. Given Rachel Hunter's rushed appointment to the position of Under Treasurer and the allegation that Frankie Carroll was not the independent panel's first pick until the member for South Brisbane intervened, can the Premier explain why her integrity promise now lies in tatters?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Everton for that question. The member for Everton likes to quote Paul Keating. He was saying some things across the chamber the other day. Being attacked by the member for Everton is like being attacked by a wet lettuce leaf. In fact, it is worse than that. It is like being attacked by the marshmallow man from *Ghostbusters*. That is what an attack from the member for Everton is like.

Mr Mander: That's not an attack; it's a serious question.

Ms PALASZCZUK: And here is a serious answer. My government set in place a couple of things. Firstly, we axed the LNP's bonuses to directors-general. That was No. 1. Do members remember that under the LNP government, in which the member for Everton was a minister, in fact? We axed the LNP bonuses.

Secondly, we put in place a merit based process. Let us contrast that with the LNP. They want to talk about integrity. What was the process for the appointment of directors-general under the LNP? There was no process, because they were just hand-picked. How did Michael Caltabiano become the director-general of the department of transport? How did Michael Caltabiano get paid around \$600,000 of taxpayers' money for sitting at home and not doing any work? I ask that of the member for Everton. Under my government there is a merit based selection process for the appointment of directors-general. We put in place that process and it is in stark contrast to the process of the LNP, where people were hand-picked. If members do not recall it, they should go back to the estimates hearing when Mike Caltabiano was questioned time and time again. Eventually, he no longer held that position.

I will back my government against the LNP Campbell Newman government of which the member for Everton was a part. The member for Everton can always thank me for keeping a school open in his electorate that he wanted shut down.

Ms Grace: He was wanting to sell it.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right. That is the record—selling schools. We build schools; they sell schools.

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order under standing order 118 on relevance. The question was around the merit based selection processes, not what the Premier is speaking about now.

Mr SPEAKER: Premier, I think you have strayed somewhat from the original question. Please come back to the question as asked.

Ms PALASZCZUK: We will not talk about the member for Kawana's process for the Chief Justice. I am glad the member for Kawana pops up, because there is nothing like the member for Kawana to remind us of all the integrity issues that the LNP government had because he was Campbell Newman's right-hand man.

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order again.

Mr SPEAKER: Premier, resume your seat. I now ask, before hearing the point of order, that if you have anything further to add it needs to be related to the question asked, not about the member for Kawana. Do you have anything further, Premier?

Ms PALASZCZUK: Sorry, he is on his feet.

Mr SPEAKER: I know what the point of order is. I am pre-empting the point of order. Do you have anything further to add as it relates to the question?

Ms PALASZCZUK: No.

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Speaker, thank you for sufficiently dealing with my point of order.

Mr SPEAKER: Sometimes I am ahead of the game, member for Kawana.

Frontline Workers, Safety

Ms HOWARD: My question is of the Deputy Premier and Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services. Will the Deputy Premier update the House on the government's plan to ensure the safety of our frontline workers?

Dr MILES: I thank the member for Ipswich for her question. As she knows, Queenslanders have done very well in preparing for the COVID-19 pandemic. We prepared ourselves for 20 times more deaths than we have had total cases here in Queensland. In fact, we prepared ourselves for more cases a week in Queensland alone than we have seen in Australia so far. Our reality could have been quite different. We could have seen the full hospitals and intensive care units that have been experienced worldwide. We know that this virus can re-emerge quickly. It is why our border protections and our other initiatives are so important, to keep Queenslanders safe and to make sure we can continue with Queensland's plan to unite and recover for Queensland jobs.

Queensland's health workers—our doctors, our nurses, our allied health professionals and their support staff—go to work every day to take care of us, and the Palaszczuk government is determined to take care of them. Not only did we rebuild frontline services after the cruel cuts by those opposite but also we are now acting to ensure that they always have the equipment that they need to do their job to take care of Queenslanders. We discovered during the pandemic that there are weaknesses in the global medical supply chain. One of the reasons we had to suspend elective surgery was that we could not assure ourselves of the level of PPE. That is why the Palaszczuk government will create a clinical stock reserve, so that never again do our nurses have to worry if there will be a mask when they need one, never again will a doctor need to worry about getting the right size of glove, and never again will Queenslanders need to fear that there may not be enough ventilators in their hospitals.

We prioritise patient safety and staff safety. Those opposite sacked the entire patient safety unit—cut the entire unit responsible for safety in Queensland Health. That is their shameful record. We have rebuilt the frontline services and now we are making sure that each and every one of them have what they need each and every day to take care of Queenslanders.

Child Sex Offenders

Mr PURDIE: My question is to the Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services. I refer to the Palaszczuk government's decision to allow a convicted child sex offender, who openly told the media he was on drugs and is a dangerous and violent person, to live in a house right across the road from a school. Will the minister explain why the Palaszczuk Labor government allowed a dangerous sex offender to live across the road from a school?

Mr RYAN: When it comes to protecting our community, it is our government which has a proven track record. We have the strongest laws in the nation, and we back those laws up with additional resources for our police to keep the community safe. When it comes to offenders who are on the Child Protection Offender Register, we have a very robust system of monitoring and supervising those offenders. The commissioner knows where these offenders are.

Mr Mander: Make it public.

Ms Bates: So it's the commissioner's fault for putting them next to a school?

Mr RYAN: Every time I talk about the good work that the police do, they attack them.

Mr Mander: Make it public.

Mr RYAN: They attack them every time I talk about the good work.

Mr Hunt interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Nicklin, you will put your comments through the chair.

Mr RYAN: The commissioner knows where these offenders are, specialised police know where these offenders are, and the police monitor those offenders. Where action is needed, the police take action.

Mr Mander interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: The member for Everton is warned under the standing orders.

Mr RYAN: We strengthened the laws last year to give the police extra powers to seek orders from the court to ensure that the police can direct where those offenders can and cannot live, so that they can seek orders around GPS trackers, and so that they can seek other orders around those offenders' liberty. We are very proud of those laws. Those laws are the strongest in the nation. We also backed up those laws with an added boost in funding—

Mr Hunt interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: The member for Nicklin is warned under the standing orders.

Mr RYAN:—for dedicated surveillance and monitoring of those offenders. That amount of money, \$27 million, supported the establishment of a number of teams. These teams have had a direct result in catching over 100 offenders charged on hundreds of charges. More importantly, those teams have directly contributed to saving 16 kids in need. Sixteen kids have been saved as a direct result of our extra funding and tougher laws.

Just last week, alongside the commissioner, I was very proud to announce that we would be boosting those resources even further—an additional 18 specialist Child Protection Offender Register coordinators. These coordinators work alongside CPIU officers right across the state—other specialists, other intelligence officers—and, quite frankly, every police officer, to ensure there is stringent monitoring of offenders on the Child Protection Offender Register.

Our Police Service is world-class. They are backed up by additional resources from our government as well as the toughest laws in the nation. Our police are well resourced and well supported by our government, and it is about time the opposition supported them as well.

State Finances

Mr KELLY: My question is of the Treasurer, Minister for Infrastructure and Planning. Will the Treasurer advise the House on the strength of Queensland's balance sheet compared to other jurisdictions, and is he aware of any alternative approaches to financial management?

Mr DICK: I thank the member for Greenslopes for his question. Can I say there is arguably no area of government where the LNP has done more to deliberately mislead Queenslanders than when it comes to debt. Let's set the record straight. General government net debt at the Mid Year Fiscal and Economic Review was \$7 billion. That was \$5 billion below New South Wales, \$31 billion below Victoria and \$385 billion—\$385 billion—below the Morrison government. At MYFER, non-financial public sector debt was less than what was forecast under the LNP government for 2017-18. Under the LNP, Moody's downgraded Queensland's ratings outlook from stable to negative. That is what happened under the LNP with their management of debt.

Ms Bates interjected.

Mr DICK: In government the LNP set themselves a target of a fiscal surplus, member for Mudgeeraba, but they failed to deliver a single one. By contrast, we set ourselves a target of delivering operating surpluses, and the Palaszczuk Labor government delivered five in a row.

In a post-COVID-19 world Queensland faces incredible economic challenges. As I said last week, our revenues are down, our federal GST payments will be down and we have borne the cost of rightly supporting businesses, workers and families through the restrictions where they have done so well in limiting the spread of COVID. The reality is that Queensland will have to borrow more to invest in infrastructure, to support frontline jobs and to create jobs. That means the achievement of fiscal principle 1 and fiscal principle 2 will be delayed for a period of time. In particular, it is unlikely that fiscal principle 2 will be achieved in the 2021-22 financial year. These remain important principles and we remain committed to their achievement over the economic cycle.

The member for Everton said that it is irresponsible and irrelevant to have a debt plan. Our government has released its sensible Queensland savings and debt plan. We will have a Future Fund and responsible savings. What is the LNP's plan? Now is the time for the member for Everton to stop hiding behind bluster and bravado and stop blame-shifting. The member for Everton has not announced one single policy in 944 days as the shadow Treasurer. He has not announced one single policy to address the fiscal position of the state.

Now is the time for the member for Everton to man up. He needs to man up and not hide anymore. He has been hiding for almost 1,000 days, members of the opposition. What is their plan for debt and deficit? They need to release that and finally be honest with Queensland.

(Time expired)

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Integrity

Mr BLEIJIE: My question without notice is to the Premier. The CCC said, 'Setting a high standard for behaviour of public servants must start at the top echelon of every public sector agency.' The CCC found the education department has serious ethical problems. We have had questions as to ministerial qualifications, the former deputy premier resigning and a former chief of staff now under investigation by the CCC. When will the Premier acknowledge the old adage that a fish rots from its head and accept responsibility for the failures of the government she leads?

Mr DICK: I rise to a point of order, Mr Speaker. That question clearly contains imputations and inferences which is contrary to the standing orders.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Kawana, I think you need to rephrase that question without the imputations.

Mr BLEIJIE: When will the Premier accept responsibility for the failings of the government she leads?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I am proud of the government I lead. We are tackling the COVID-19 pandemic. We have an economic plan to get people back into work and back into jobs. If the opposition had listened this week, we outlined investment of over \$340 million in schools in growing parts of South-East Queensland. We announced yesterday \$90 million for skills and training. I also pledged in the House today that we would match dollar for dollar the funding the federal government will provide for skills and training. That is something that the CBRC has endorsed.

I think the member for Kawana should take a good long hard look at himself. The member for Kawana, the man—

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Members to my right.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I take that interjection. The man who was responsible for the pink jumpsuits. The man who was responsible for the chief justice. The man who was responsible for sacking the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee in this House in the middle of the night. The man who had the Auditor-General's report about the boot camps.

Mr BLEIJIE: I rise to a point of order, Mr Speaker. I take personal offence at everything the Premier has said and I ask her to withdraw.

Mr SPEAKER: Premier, the member for Kawana has found those comments offensive. Will you withdraw?

Ms PALASZCZUK: Thin skinned.

Mr SPEAKER: Premier!

Ms PALASZCZUK: I withdraw.

Mr SPEAKER: I also ask you to make sure that you come back to the question asked.

Ms PALASZCZUK: The list for the member for Kawana is endless. The member for Kawana should take a good long hard look at himself before he comes into this chamber and starts asking those questions. The other person who contributed to the downfall of the Newman government other than Campbell Newman himself was the member for Kawana.

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

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

Ms PALASZCZUK: The member for Kawana continues to be the brains trust of the LNP. Is it any wonder they do not know where they are going, do not know what they are doing, do not know the questions they are asking and have no plan for Queensland.

International Education

Mr HEALY: My question is to the Minister for State Development, Tourism and Innovation. Will the minister update the House on the government's strategy to rebuild Queensland's international education sector?

Mr SPEAKER: Members, I have asked for silence during questions being asked. There was not silence when that question was asked. That will be the final warning today.

Ms JONES: I thank the member for Cairns for the question. As you know, like yourself, Mr Speaker, he is a tireless advocate for the Cairns community. He has been working hard with me and all members of the Palaszczuk cabinet to rebuild the Cairns economy. We know that it is one of the ones that has been hit hardest through COVID-19. Like you, we were very pleased to join with those from Advance Cairns yesterday. We advance Cairns and advance the whole of Queensland. It is lovely to see some people from the Torres Strait in parliament today—a shout out to you all.

It is an important region as part of the rebuilding of the Queensland economy. International education is one area where we chose not to turn a blind eye when we saw the federal government walk away from its responsibilities. We have around 80,000 international students in Queensland right now. After listening to the concerns of our university sector and our English language schools, we stepped up with a \$10 million support package.

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

Ms JONES: I take the interjection from the member for Broadwater. He will be aware that a number of Gold Coast businesses as well as those in Cairns have been hit hard by the federal government completely walking away from supporting international students who are stranded in Australia because they could not get flights home. There is nothing more insulting than the Prime Minister saying, 'They should just go home,' when there were no flights to get home. We stepped up. I thank the member for Cairns for his advocacy in that regard.

With regard to the work we are doing in Cairns, it was great, along with the local members, to yesterday meet with members of Advance Cairns to talk about some of the ways we can kickstart the economy up there. There are the new flights that are going back into Cairns as part of our unite and recover package. There is \$10 million for flights and there will be a further \$15 million. We are working closely with the Cairns airport and airlines to get flights back into Cairns.

The latest discussions the Premier has had with the CEO of the AFL is to see whether we can have some of the AFL games played in Cairns. I know that this is something that everyone would love to see. It would be great to see some of those events and spending occur in other economies. It does not just have to be in South-East Queensland that it happens. When we have 10 Victorian teams for the first time relocating in Queensland, we have options. We can send them to the Gold Coast, to the Sunshine Coast, to Cairns, to Brisbane—

A government member: Townsville.

Ms JONES:—to Townsville. You name it.

Mrs D'Ath: Redcliffe.

Ms JONES: Redcliffe. They could even play at Suncorp. I am sure they could play around.

This is a serious matter. We are working on all fronts to see how we can rebuild jobs and the economy in Cairns. This stands in stark contrast to what we are seeing from those opposite who are sniping from sidelines, do not support us and have not been supporting us when it comes to theme parks. They have put no pressure on the federal government when it walked away from the theme parks. We have stepped up and will continue to step.

(Time expired)

Inner City South State Secondary College, Principal Appointment Process

Mr HART: My question without notice is to the Premier. The Crime and Corruption Commission found that the member for South Brisbane also met with another MP at Parliament House who suggested a candidate for the position of principal in between the two recruitment processes, even though the member for South Brisbane was not part of the recruitment process for the inner-city south school principal. What action did the Premier take to identify the third MP involved in this affair and who is it?

Ms PALASZCZUK: The CCC did a thorough investigation and they tabled their report.

Road Infrastructure

Mrs McMAHON: My question is to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. Will the minister update the House on major road upgrades between Logan and the Gold Coast, including the Coomera Connector, and how they are supporting Queensland's plans for economic recovery and jobs?

Mr BAILEY: I thank the member for Macalister, who has an ongoing strong commitment to roads and the M1 and new roads in her area. The impact on our Queensland economy means that we have seen a \$1 billion road stimulus package over the last three months in Queensland, working with the federal government. It is an essential part of our plan for economic recovery. That means that we support local businesses and jobs wherever we can. That includes more than \$2.3 billion on the M1 upgrades and on planning for the Coomera Connector.

I am pleased to advise the House that, after gazetting the corridor for the Coomera Connector and starting the business case, planning works are happening on stage 1 of the Coomera Connector between Nerang and Coomera. The environmental impact statement has been finalised and is now with the federal government and undergoing consultation. That means jobs for engineers, for planners, for scientists, for surveyors, for communication staff—to name but a few.

We know that the LNP blocked the Coomera Connector when they were in power. They delayed the project. Now they have a come up with a half-baked policy that they cannot even agree on themselves. Under the LNP pledge, stage 1 of their version of the Coomera Connector would only go from Shipper Drive to the Gold Coast Highway—a 6.5-kilometre road to nowhere. Under the Palaszczuk Labor government's plan, stage 1 is 14 kilometres long and will take people all the way from Coomera to Nerang near the Metricon Stadium—the temporary new home of the AFL for the 2020 season.

The LNP cannot even agree on what their road to nowhere would look like. The member for Mermaid wants it to be a toll road. The member for Theodore, however, wants it to be an 80-kilometre road. The Deputy Leader of the LNP says it will be a 100-kilometre road. The LNP's confusion and conflict when it comes to the Coomera Connector show that that they cannot be trusted on this issue. They talk big but when they get into government they cut big. That is what they did before. That is what they will do again.

Not one new dollar went to the M1 under the LNP when it was in power. Under the Palaszczuk Labor government, five major M1 upgrades have been delivered, are underway or in planning, and two interchanges are either done or nearly done with two more to come. You see the investment. You see the jobs for roads under us. The Coomera Connector was cut from long-term plans under the LNP. It has been left to us to gazette all three sections of the corridor.

We have a plan for economic recovery. The Palaszczuk government has a plan for Queensland infrastructure and for jobs. We have to plan for the Coomera Connector as well. Gold Coast residents have a clear choice. They can have roads, rail and jobs under Labor or they can have cuts, cuts and cuts under the LNP. They did it before and they will do it again.

Independent Public Schools

Mr LANGBROEK: My question without notice is to the Premier. Will the Premier confirm that Labor's announcement that Queensland's 250 independent public schools could be cut is payback to the Teachers' Union and has nothing to do with improving educational outcomes for Queensland's children?

Ms Grace interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for McConnel, you are warned under the standing orders. I have asked for silence. It is not a time for commentary.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for the question. There has been no such announcement. I do not know what the member is in particular referring to.

Mr Crisafulli: Rule it out: 'I guarantee independent public schools will remain.'

Ms PALASZCZUK: I do not need your help, member for Broadwater. I really do not need your help.

Mr SPEAKER: Through the chair, Premier.

Ms Jones: Deb doesn't want your help either.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right. I do not think she does. We will see what transpires there. Let me say that we will always back education in this state. We are the government of education, of making sure we have the new schools, the expanded schools, the new halls, the infrastructure—

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: The member for Broadwater will cease his interjections.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That has been our track record. It is ironic that the member for Surfers Paradise asked the question when he was the minister for education under the Campbell Newman government—

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK:—that produced the list of cutting and axing schools.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Broadwater, I did not want to interrupt the Premier but it seems that that is what you are aiming to do with your interjections. You are warned under the standing orders.

Corrective Services, Jobs

Mr MADDEN: My question without notice is to the Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services. Will the minister update the House on how the Palaszczuk government is supporting jobs in Queensland prisons?

Mr RYAN: I thank the member for the question. He knows full well about our government's investment in infrastructure in correctional services facilities because he has the Borallon correctional centre in his electorate—a centre that we recommissioned. It involved significant investment in capital which contributed to jobs in his community. Also, as an operational prison, it has made a significant contribution to economic activity with hundreds of jobs. Jim, I know you are a very proud local member when it comes to that prison. I acknowledge your strong advocacy of all the workers at the Borallon correctional centre.

We know that people are doing it tough right across the state at the moment. We know that through investing in jobs and economic activity we can help get our economy back on track. We can help our economy recover from the impact of COVID-19. It is all part of our plan for economic recovery. Part of that plan is creating good, stable jobs in public safety roles, because it is those jobs that also help keep our community safe.

If the privateers over the other side had their way, those jobs would not exist. Recently the Queensland Corrective Services Academy hosted its largest ever group of graduates. These 156 new officers have begun working at the newly and proudly publicly-run correctional centre, Arthur Gorrie Correctional Centre, and other Queensland prisons right across the state.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr RYAN: Here we go: the privateers are at it again, already acknowledging that they do like Public Service workers in our corrective services industries. We are very proud of that commitment that we have made to have publicly operated prisons in our state. Not only does that support better outcomes in prisons as foreshadowed by Taskforce Flaxton and the CCC—they hate recommendations from the CCC—but it also supports good, stable jobs in our economy which help boost our economy.

We are also investing in new infrastructure. Construction will start this year on our new prison at Gatton—a thousand-bed correctional facility, more than \$600 million in infrastructure. It is a project which is actually supported strongly by the LNP local member, the member for Lockyer, as well as the local mayor and the community around Gatton.

The reason why they support that project, a Palaszczuk Labor government project, is that it will deliver more than 400 jobs during construction and hundreds of extra jobs—full-time permanent jobs—once the project is completed. We are proud of our commitment to boost the economy. It is a plan that will help our economy recover from COVID-19. It is about jobs, economic activity and a safer Queensland.

Mackay Base Hospital, Autopsy Services

Mr COSTIGAN: My question is to the Deputy Premier and Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services. Will the minister explain why state-of-the-art facilities for autopsy services at the Mackay Base Hospital have never been used even in a pandemic and why dead people have been transported more than 1,000 kilometres so pathologists can carry out their work?

Dr MILES: I am more than happy to look into that question from the member for Whitsunday and provide him with some information. The services that are offered at each individual hospital are determined by each hospital and health service. They have long-term plans about when services come online. Sometimes they construct facilities to deliver services that are in their future plans. To answer the member's question about why autopsy services were not activated during the pandemic, I suspect

it is probably because no-one died of COVID during the pandemic in the district of that HHS. However, with regard to the broader question of when those services will come online, I am happy to look into that and get back to him.

I think it is ironic to have a member who was repeatedly elected as a member of the LNP come in here and try to lecture us about health services. This is a member who consistently voted to cut back health services—

Mr Costigan: This is a member who's been set free from those muppets!

Dr MILES:—and consistently opposed Labor's plans to invest in more and bigger hospitals

Ms Grace: Take that interjection!

Dr MILES: I missed the interjection, member for Whitsunday. Perhaps you could repeat it for me.

Mr Costigan: Go see a hearing aid specialist.

Dr MILES: Sorry?

Mr Costigan: Beg your pardon?

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Whitsunday will cease his interjections.

Dr MILES: It is good for the member for Whitsunday to be set free from the LNP. I know there are many fellow travellers who have enjoyed being set free from the LNP. The former member for Currumbin really seems to be enjoying being set free from the LNP. I suppose that since the Clive Palmer takeover of the LNP many people are looking for the chance to be set free. There are a few liberals around Brisbane who wish there were still a Liberal Party for them to join, but unfortunately there is not. The member for Whitsunday came in here and consistently supported the LNP's cuts to nurses, cuts to health services—

Mr COSTIGAN: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I ask you to rule on relevance. Rather than a history lesson, I wanted to talk about pathology services.

Mr SPEAKER: The minister has given a commitment to look into the matter, as I heard it. However, Minister, this is not an opportunity to debate the member; it is an opportunity to answer the question.

Dr MILES: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I will take that guidance from the member for Whitsunday and return to pathology services, because of course we are very proud of our pathology services. They are one of the crucial components that has kept us safe during COVID-19. Those opposite cut pathology services, cut scientific services and cut staff from those areas that have been so crucial, including in the Mackay-Whitsunday region.

(Time expired)

Manufacturing Industry

Ms BOYD: My question is to the Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing. Will the minister outline for the House how the Palaszczuk government is supporting manufacturing in Queensland, and is he aware of any alternative approaches?

Mr BUTCHER: I thank the honourable member for the question. I know how important manufacturing is to the member for Pine Rivers, as we went on a trip Wednesday morning and had a look at one of the wonderful manufacturers in her electorate. As we continue to battle the global economic turbulence that COVID-19 leaves in its wake, Queensland's manufacturing industries continue to play a critical role in the state's economy. Labor has consistently supported Queensland's manufacturing sector, and in these difficult times we are seeing the benefits of that ongoing support.

A prime example of how the Palaszczuk government is backing this vital sector in Queensland is Brendale electronics manufacturer Elexon Electronics. Elexon manufactures, supports and exports high-tech electronic products for the defence, medical and mining industries throughout Australia and the world. It received more than \$890,000 from the Made in Queensland program last year to introduce leading-edge manufacturing equipment into its business right here in South-East Queensland. CEO Frank Faller called the funding a game changer for the business. It has helped them double their productivity while also reducing their costs, enabling them to stay competitive in these global markets. The Made in Queensland grant has helped it create new full-time jobs, upskill six existing workers and retain its full workforce during the global crisis. Crucially, the company has kept its manufacturing production here in Queensland rather than sending it offshore.

Our government's commitment to manufacturing is clear, whether through the \$46 million Made in Queensland program, the \$30 million regional Manufacturing Hubs Grant Program or the recently announced \$50 million Essential Goods and Supply Chain program. Everywhere I go in Central and regional Queensland, manufacturers tell me that direct state government support into their operations is helping them to expand their businesses and employ more staff.

What commitment to Queensland manufacturing do we see from those opposite? Their only suggestion is a marketing campaign. Forget providing real support and investing in real outcomes in business. The LNP wants to give \$20 million in advertising to companies, and to fund the \$20 million handout to advertisers you can bet the LNP will cut our programs that deliver real benefits to manufacturers. The only party with a plan to back manufacturing in Queensland is the Labor Party. Our priority is supporting businesses to move into advanced manufacturing in Queensland, to expand their operations, create jobs and build international competitiveness.

We know that in order to recover from the global economic impacts of COVID-19 we have to invest in the future for Queenslanders, and that is exactly what this Palaszczuk Labor government is doing.

Regional Queensland, Health Services

Mr MILLAR: My question is to the Deputy Premier and health minister. I table a memo and a letter from Queensland Health management telling Central Queensland clinicians that their government provided accommodation will be withdrawn 31 December. Why is the government risking health services for regional Queensland by kicking clinicians out of their homes over Christmas?

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 10 July 2020, from the Executive Director of Medical Services, Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service, Dr Julieanne Graham, regarding accommodation for doctors [1184].

Tabled paper: Memorandum, dated 10 July 2020, from the Executive Director of Medical Services, Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service, Dr Julieanne Graham, to medical officers in rural sites in CQHHS and directors of medical services, titled 'Changes in rural accommodation provisions' [1185].

Dr MILES: Again, I am happy to take that document tabled by the member for Gregory and provide advice back to him. I remind him that the structure of Queensland Health, where decisions about services and staffing are devolved to each individual HHS, was largely implemented by the LNP and that under that structure those decisions remain the purview of those statutory authorities in each HHS district. I am happy to seek that information for him from the HHS and provide it to him. Again we have an LNP MP who has consistently supported the cuts, the sacking of health services that those opposite consistently pursue—

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I ask whether the minister, who said he would look into it and provide details, is taking that on notice pursuant to standing order 113.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, is that what you are endeavouring to do?

Dr MILES: No, Mr Speaker, I will correspond with the member to advise him of that information. I will organise a face-to-face briefing for him also. The LNP has no record to be proud of when it comes to medical services, whether in the city or the regions. They cut back medical services right across this state. They sacked nurses. They sacked pathology workers. They sacked support staff. They consistently cut health services to Queenslanders.

Opposition members interjected.

Dr MILES: Those opposite do not like to be reminded of their record here in this House, but rest assured we will continue to do so.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, I have given you a little bit of latitude. I was hoping you would come back to the question. You have not done so. You have answered that you will take that under consideration but, as I said previously, it is not an opportunity to debate the member; it is an opportunity to answer the question.

Dr MILES: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Again I undertake to provide the member for Gregory with all information available to me and with a briefing from the health service.

Racing Industry

Mr POWER: My question is for the Minister for Local Government, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs. Will the minister update the House on the state of the racing industry in Queensland, and is he aware of any alternative approaches?

Mr HINCHLIFFE: I thank the member for Logan for the question. Like him, I am very thrilled that we see a strong and vibrant racing industry in this state—one that has endured and charted a course to see its way through. It has been a bit of a rough ride at times, but it has charted a course through the impacts of the pandemic.

The Palaszczuk government has achieved much in the racing portfolio not only during these last difficult few months since 2015 and with more to come; we have delivered on reforms to the integrity system based on the recommendations of the MacSparran report. We saw the introduction of QRIC and the vitally important separation of integrity from racing operations. We have delivered the signature country racing package, a \$70.4 million commitment to ensure the long-term operation and viability of racing in the bush. The latest round of the package delivered \$2.6 million to 32 race clubs right across the state, supporting or creating almost 100 jobs. This is no small feat at a time when Queensland is dealing with the economic fallout of a pandemic that has hit economies across the world.

It is a commitment that sits very well, alongside our Unite and Recover for Queensland Jobs plan which is already helping workforces recover across the state. I can tell the House that everywhere I travel across the state people recognise how vital it is to racing and the regions. We have delivered infrastructure with major developments at new facilities and track work at the Ipswich Turf Club, and that will see great action this Saturday. There is progress also in the replacement of the synthetic track at the Sunshine Coast. This is in addition to the announcement of the Greater Brisbane Greyhound Centre and the \$6.5 million worth of infrastructure upgrades to country racing facilities announced so far.

The Palaszczuk government has provided extra money for prize money. Since 2018 we have delivered an additional \$34 million to boost prize money across all three codes. Make no mistake, additional prize money is reinvested in the industry and as a consequence reinvested in communities right across the state. It means more participants and more jobs right here in Queensland.

I am asked about alternatives. To be honest with the House, there really do not appear to be too many. The opposition is conducting policy development via gossip columns and floating thought bubbles that do not really say much of anything. Vague statements that an eye will be cast over things are not going to give anyone who has any connection to the racing industry great comfort. Reading statements such as these is doing nothing but sending an icy wind through an industry that was mishandled so badly the last time the LNP were in government. The Palaszczuk government has been a great boon and a great support to the racing industry in this state.

(Time expired)

Lady Cilento Children's Hospital, Renaming

Ms BATES: My question is to the Minister for Health. Can the Minister for Health confirm that, as part of the government's policy to rename the Lady Cilento children's hospital, Queensland Health paid \$400 to replace a sticker on a Lego model of the hospital on display in the foyer?

Dr MILES: Again, I am happy to get back to the member offline about that question.

Mrs Gerber: The third question he can't answer!

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Currumbin, that is completely disorderly. You are warned under the standing orders.

Dr MILES: She is only new, Mr Speaker. You know the opposition are in the weeds when they are dredging up questions they wrote two years ago.

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The minister indicated that he would get further information. I ask through you, Mr Speaker, whether the minister has taken that on notice pursuant to standing order 113.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, are you taking that on notice under the standing orders?

Dr MILES: I am not. Those opposite are so devoid of something to contribute, so lacking in a plan other than cutting health services, that they come in here in the weeds. They are literally not only out of ideas for the economy and ideas for jobs; they are out of ideas for questions. We are at the end of the sitting week and they have nothing left. They are in here talking about Lego. We are in the middle of the biggest health crisis the world has ever seen and they are not asking questions about that. They are not asking questions about our plan to unite and recover for Queensland jobs. They are asking—

Mrs Gerber interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Currumbin, you can leave the chamber for one hour under standing order 253A.

Whereupon the honourable member for Currumbin withdrew from the chamber at 11.13 am.

Ms Jones: I am happy to mentor her, if you like.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Cooper. We do not need any guidance.

Honourable members interjected.


Mr SPEAKER: Order! Clearly, there are members who have been asked to withdraw from the chamber over the last few days. If some of the disorderly behaviour does not improve, I will start naming members and there are further consequences other than withdrawing from the chamber for one hour.

Dr MILES: It is disappointing that, instead of coming in here and working constructively with us in response to both the health and economic crisis, working with us on the plan to get Queenslanders into jobs, the members opposite, including the member for Mudgeeraba, are not in touch with the concerns of Queenslanders. While we remain focused on our plan to unite and recover for Queensland—a plan that starts first with a health response and then with an economic response to get Queenslanders into jobs—those opposite have done nothing this week other than muckrake. Last sitting, all they talked about was borders. This sitting they are just all over the shop, trying to get up every bit of dirt and smear they can. Well, it is not working. Look at the faces of their backbench. They know it is not working. We will continue to spend our time focusing on the jobs of Queensland while they can go on talking about Lego.

Mr SPEAKER: The period for question time has expired.

MOTION

Suspension of Sessional Orders

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (11.16 am), by leave, without notice: I move—

That so much of the sessional orders be suspended to enable the member for Cook to immediately introduce a private member's bill during government business.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

MERIBA OMASKER KAZIW KAZIPA (TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER TRADITIONAL CHILD REARING PRACTICE) BILL

Message from Governor

 **Ms LUI** (Cook—ALP) (11.16 am): I present a message from His Excellency the Governor.

Mr SPEAKER: The message from His Excellency the Governor recommends the Meriba Omasker Kaziw Kazipa (Torres Strait Islander Traditional Child Rearing Practice) Bill. The contents of the message will be incorporated in the *Record of Proceedings*. I table the message for the information of members.

MESSAGE

MERIBA OMASKER KAZIW KAZIPA (TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER TRADITIONAL CHILD REARING PRACTICE) BILL 2020

Constitution of Queensland 2001, section 68

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


A Bill for an Act to provide for the recognition and acceptance of traditional child rearing practice in the Torres Strait community, and to amend this Act, the Adoption Act 2009, the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 2003, the Criminal Code, the Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012, the Domicile Act 1981, the Evidence Act 1977, the Guardianship and Administration Act 2000, the Industrial Relations Act 2016, the Integrity Act 2009, the Payroll Tax Act 1971, the Powers of Attorney Act 1998, the Public Service Act 2008 and the Right to Information Act 2009 for particular purposes

GOVERNOR

Date: 16 July 2020

Tabled paper: Message, dated 16 July 2020, from His Excellency the Governor, recommending the Meriba Omasker Kaziw Kazipa (Torres Strait Islander Traditional Child Rearing Practice) Bill 2020 [[1186](#)].

Introduction

 **Ms LUI** (Cook—ALP) (11.16 am): I present a bill for an act to provide for the recognition and acceptance of traditional child rearing practice in the Torres Strait community, and to amend this act, the Adoption Act 2009, the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 2003, the Criminal Code, the Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012, the Domicile Act 1981, the Evidence Act 1977, the Guardianship and Administration Act 2000, the Industrial Relations Act 2016, the Integrity Act 2009, the Payroll Tax Act 1971, the Powers of Attorney Act 1998, the Public Service Act 2008 and the Right to Information Act 2009 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: Meriba Omasker Kaziw Kazipa (Torres Strait Islander Traditional Child Rearing Practice) Bill 2020 [[1187](#)].

Tabled paper: Meriba Omasker Kaziw Kazipa (Torres Strait Islander Traditional Child Rearing Practice) Bill 2020, explanatory notes [[1188](#)].

Tabled paper: Meriba Omasker Kaziw Kazipa (Torres Strait Islander Traditional Child Rearing Practice) Bill 2020, statement of compatibility with human rights [[1189](#)].

I rise today as a proud lamalaig woman of the Kulkalgal Nation of the Torres Strait and a member of the Torres Strait community in my capacity as a member of parliament. I acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we meet today for this historic moment in Queensland's history. Koeyma eso and au esoau—which means thank you—for allowing us to be here on your beautiful and sacred country and I pay my respects to your elders past, present and emerging. I would also like to acknowledge those Torres Strait Islander elders in our communities who have worked tirelessly in the pursuit of legal recognition of Torres Strait Islander child-rearing practice, and our respected elders, members of the Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal communities and our non-Indigenous friends tuning in online to bear witness to this important and historic event in Queensland's history. I especially want to acknowledge the work of the late Uncle Steve Mam, whose courageous heart led the Kupai Omasker Working Party to advocate for legal recognition for over 30 years.

I pay my respects to those elders who are no longer with us but whose spirit is still strongly felt and has guided us to this momentous occasion. I acknowledge the ongoing work of the Kupai Omasker Working Party and eminent panel members, some of whom are able to join us for this significant event. I note that Auntie Ivy and Auntie McRose and the rest of our guests here in the gallery this morning are standing as a mark of respect to those elders who have been integral to this recognition but are no longer with us. This has been an incredibly long journey for Torres Strait Islander peoples to see this traditional practice legally recognised in Queensland law. The introduction of this bill today puts us one step closer to realising this long-fought-for recognition.

It is my great privilege to introduce the Meriba Omasker Kaziw Kazipa (Torres Strait Islander Traditional Child Rearing Practice) Bill 2020. This bill provides legal recognition of an ancient, sacred and enduring child-rearing practice, an integral part of Torres Strait Islander cultural fabric since time immemorial. This practice sits on the foundations of Torres Strait Islander culture and cultural decision-making processes in Torres Strait Islander community and family life. It promotes inclusiveness by allowing children the ability to grow into their full potential without doubt or questions about their identity.

I acknowledge the many generations of Torres Strait Islander children who have been raised under this traditional practice—a practice that protects a person's cultural right and identity and their position in the family, kinship and community structure. As a child, I wondered why, as Torres Strait Islanders, we do not publicly discuss our traditional child-rearing practice. Today, I speak my cultural truth that children who are raised under this practice deserve only love, respect, dignity and acceptance, and the questions about who they are and where they come from are irrelevant. This practice ensures that the child's cultural right is treated with the utmost respect and dignity it deserves.

In keeping with the Torres Strait Islander community feedback and acknowledging Queensland's diverse cultural landscape, it was a significant decision to ensure the short title of the bill contained Torres Strait Islander languages. Derived from Eastern and Top Western languages, Meriba Omasker Kaziw Kazipa translates to 'for our children's children', holding significant meaning of the recognition of traditional child-rearing practice for all posterity. The phrase also pays homage to the legacy of the Kupai Omasker Working Party, formed in 1990 by the late Uncle Steve Mam.

The Kupai Omasker Working Party held steadfast and resilient as they advocated for the legal recognition of Torres Strait Islander traditional child-rearing practice for over 30 years. I acknowledge Ms Ivy Trevallion; the Hon. Alastair Nicholson, former chief justice of the Family Court of Australia; and Mr Charles Passi as members of the eminent panel who were instrumental in guiding community consultations on this legislative framework and providing valuable feedback on the proposed legislation.

I would also like to acknowledge and thank the Premier of Queensland, the Hon. Annastacia Palaszczuk, and my parliamentary colleagues who have worked alongside the Torres Strait Islander community to advance the recognition of Torres Strait Islander child-rearing practices including: Hon. Yvette D'Ath, Attorney-General; Hon. Shannon Fentiman, ministerial champion of the Torres Strait Islands; my Aboriginal sister and brother, the Hon. Leeanne Enoch and Mr Lance McCallum MP; the Hon. Curtis Pitt; and, of course, Jackie Trad MP whose commitment to this work has brought us to this historic moment in our combined history. I especially want to acknowledge and thank the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, the Hon. Craig Crawford, and the Minister for Child Safety, Youth and Women, the Hon. Di Farmer, for supporting me as the first Torres Strait Islander member of this House to introduce this bill which is of such significance to all Torres Strait Islander people.

This bill is the first of its kind in Australia and delivers on the government election commitment to introduce new laws that recognise the outcomes achieved by Torres Strait Islander families' continued use of the Torres Strait Islander traditional child-rearing practice. Further, the new law will be based on three guiding principles: consent of biological parents, suitability of cultural parents, and the rights and best interests of the child throughout their life.

This bill is about the preservation and survival of ailan kastom by providing a legal framework to support the recognition of Torres Strait Islander traditional child-rearing practice, which has occurred since time immemorial. In accordance with international and Queensland human rights standards, this bill therefore honours ailan kastom and promotes Torres Strait Islander cultural rights, including the right to practise their own laws, customs and traditions, and the right to self-determine their own identity.

If passed, the implementation of this very important legislative reform will resolve longstanding issues faced by Torres Strait Islanders whose legal identity does not currently reflect their cultural identity and lived experience. Legal recognition of the traditional child-rearing practice will allow Torres Strait Islander people to access fundamental human rights, for example, important identity documents, such as a birth certificate, which allow for easy access to government services such as financial support and school enrolment benefits that most Queenslanders take for granted.

This sacred cultural practice supports the permanent transfer of parentage for a child from the biological parents to the cultural parents in accordance with ailan kastom. It is a consent based verbal agreement that usually occurs within an extended family. Under the practice, the child's biological parents are never lost to a child as the child is usually placed within the family network. The child continues to have a relationship with them and can recognise them as aunt, uncle or another familial relationship. A cultural recognition order made under this bill will result in a new birth certificate being issued to the person who is the subject of the application. Being able to obtain a key identification document like a birth certificate which reflects a person's cultural identity will result in many positive flow-on effects, such as access to government services and school enrolments.

Consistent with community feedback from the consultations, the bill creates a framework that is accessible and affordable for community, confidential to honour the secret and sacred nature of the practice and culturally appropriate by not interfering with the cultural practice as occurred. Also consistent with community feedback, an appropriately qualified Torres Strait Islander person will be appointed under the bill to the role of independent commissioner to make decisions on applications for cultural recognition orders. All decisions under the bill, including deciding to make a cultural recognition order, must be for the wellbeing and best interests of a person who is the subject of an application for a cultural recognition order, either children or adult children applicants.

The bill sets out a voluntary, opt-in, consent based process. In the case of a child who is the subject of an application, consent for legal recognition must be provided by the biological parents and cultural parents where reasonably and appropriately available. In the case of adult applicants who were once children under the practice they, too, must provide consent in the application.

Suitability of the cultural parents means that the cultural practice has occurred and has been verified by persons with knowledge and understanding of the cultural practice specific to the community. The verification process is part of the application and it allows for those informed persons to verify that the practice has occurred. The commissioner will also have discretion to seek criminal history

information about the cultural parents if required. This is to ensure an appropriate level of safeguards is in place and is consistent with other legislative frameworks which consider the best interests and wellbeing of children.

The bill will commence on a day to be fixed by proclamation, and implementation work is currently underway and scheduled for operation in the first half of 2021. Koeyma eso, au esoau. Thank you.

First Reading

Ms LUI (Cook—ALP) (11.29 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 Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee

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

Suspension of Standing and Sessional Orders

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (11.30 am), by leave, without notice: I move—

That—

1. the House note that the member for Cook has consented to the Meriba Omasker Kaziw Kazipa (Torres Strait Islander Traditional Child Rearing Practice) Bill being treated as a government bill; and
2. so much of the standing and sessional orders be suspended to enable:
 - (a) the bill to be treated as a government bill for its remaining stages; and
 - (b) the Minister for Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships to take carriage of the bill.


I apologise for my poor pronunciation of your beautiful language.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

PUBLIC SERVICE AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Message from Governor

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (11.31 am): I present a message from His Excellency the Governor.

Mr SPEAKER: The message from His Excellency recommends the Public Service and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. The contents of the message will be incorporated in the *Record of Proceedings*. I table the message for the information of members.

MESSAGE

PUBLIC SERVICE AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2020

Constitution of Queensland 2001, section 68

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


A Bill for an Act to amend the Industrial Relations Act 2016, the Public Interest Disclosure Act 2010 and the Public Service Act 2008 for particular purposes

GOVERNOR

Date: 14 July 2020

Tabled paper: Message, dated 14 July 2020, from His Excellency the Governor, recommending the Public Service and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020 [[1190](#)].

Introduction

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (11.31 am): I present a bill for an act to amend the Industrial Relations Act 2016, the Public Interest Disclosure Act 2010 and the Public Service Act 2008 for particular purposes. I table the bill, the explanatory notes and a statement of compatibility with human rights. I nominate the Education, Employment and Small Business Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Public Service and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020 [[1191](#)].

Tabled paper: Public Service and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020, explanatory notes [[1192](#)].

Tabled paper: Public Service and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020, statement of compatibility with human rights [[1193](#)].

I am pleased to introduce the Public Service and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020. Restoring fairness in public sector employment has been a key commitment and priority of my government since we were elected in 2015. My government values public servants and the work that they do. As our public servants have recently demonstrated during the COVID-19 crisis, without their tireless efforts it would not be possible to deliver the infrastructure and the services that our state needs.

We want to ensure that Queensland has the most responsive, consistent and reliable Public Service possible. At the beginning of 2018, my government commissioned Professor Peter Coaldrake to conduct a review into public sector workforce reporting to improve the quality of public sector information and to understand the implications of the rapidly changing nature of public work. To build on these actions, in September 2018 I commissioned Mr Peter Bridgman to conduct an independent review on how Queensland public sector employment laws could best meet the objectives of fairness in the employment relationship, responsiveness in providing services to the community and to the government, integrity and impartiality, and inclusiveness of public sector employment.

The Bridgman review made 99 recommendations on improving public sector employment in Queensland including improvement to the Public Service Act 2008 as the main statute for the Public Service. The Bridgman review also made recommendations on employment practices which are intended to drive culture and behaviour change whilst remaining true to the fundamentals of Westminster government and contemporary conventions of distributed authority and management.

This bill progresses the priority first stage of public sector management reforms arising from recommendations of the Bridgman review. It also complements the recommendations of the Coaldrake review. It achieves this by progressing priorities in two main areas: (1) giving full effect to the commitment to maximise employment security in public sector employment; and (2) providing for positive performance management of public sector employees.

The bill amends the language in the Public Service Act 2008 to state that permanent employment is the default basis for public sector employment and that other non-permanent forms of employment should only be used when ongoing employment is not viable or appropriate. This will make clear in legislation the government's existing commitment to maximise employment security. In further support of this commitment, the bill provides clear criteria for the employment of fixed-term temporary employees and casual employees and changes the definition of 'temporary employee' to 'fixed-term temporary employee'. The bill preserves in legislation the current requirement based in directive to review the status of employment for casual and temporary employees after two years of continuous service. The bill also introduces a right for public servants employed on a temporary or casual basis to request a review of their employment status at 12 months. This will foster good workforce planning practices and ensure regular reviews are conducted in fairness to employees.

The bill will also introduce positive performance management principles to promote regular and constructive communication between managers and employees and ensure they work together to support the government's productivity and quality of service delivery. This will ensure that good work is recognised and that public servants have feedback on how their efforts are contributing to Queensland and will help drive public sector capability development.

The bill will also clearly delineate performance management and development from disciplinary and corrective action. The bill also clarifies the threshold for disciplinary action where there is a breach of the code of conduct and enables correction of performance and behavioural issues early through local action. To support these changes, the bill also provides for new directives to provide clear guidance for the consistent and efficient management of disciplinary procedures, investigations, suspension and positive performance management.

The bill also makes amendments to Public Service appeals, which are currently heard by the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission under the jurisdiction of the Public Service Act 2008, to now be heard under the jurisdiction of the Industrial Relations Act 2016. This will ensure transparency and increase consistency in appeal decisions.

The bill also amends citizenship requirements for employment in the Public Service so that a person who has permission to lawfully work in Australia can be employed as a public servant for as long as they have that permission. This addresses potential inconsistencies with the Multicultural Queensland Charter and the Human Rights Act. The bill provides that a special commissioner may be appointed to undertake administrative inquiries, to provide advice about areas of public administration, and to promote effectiveness and efficiency by facilitating the development of government policies. Together these amendments provide a strong legislative basis to deliver greater consistency in the employment experience and drive the high-quality governance of Queensland's Public Service.

The recommendations of the Bridgman review and the contents of this bill were subject to extensive consultation with Queensland government agencies and with public sector unions through meetings of a joint advisory committee. We want the Queensland Public Service to be an employer of choice and a leader in public administration. We want to ensure that we are making the right investments in public services in order to keep delivering for Queenslanders with a highly skilled Public Service. We want the Queensland Public Service to be empowered to be fair and responsive and to visibly demonstrate a culture that values high ethical standards and behaviour. That is why this bill will be complemented by stage 2 of the public sector reforms which will implement the remaining Bridgman review recommendations and include a new public service act and code of conduct. I commend the bill to the House.

First Reading

Hon. A PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (11.36 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 Education, Employment and Small Business Committee

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Education, Employment and Small Business Committee.

ROYALTY LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Infrastructure and Planning) (11.36 am): I present a bill for an act to amend the Betting Tax Act 2018, the Judicial Review Act 1991, the Mineral Resources Act 1989, the Mineral Resources Regulation 2013, the Payroll Tax Act 1971, the Petroleum Act 1923, the Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004, the Petroleum and Gas (Royalty) Regulation 2004, the Taxation Administration Act 2001 and the Taxation Administration Regulation 2012 for particular purposes. I table the bill, the explanatory notes and a statement of compatibility with human rights. I nominate the Economics and Governance Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Royalty Legislation Amendment Bill 2020 [[1194](#)].

Tabled paper: Royalty Legislation Amendment Bill 2020, explanatory notes [[1195](#)].

Tabled paper: Royalty Legislation Amendment Bill 2020, statement of compatibility with human rights [[1196](#)].

I am pleased to introduce the Royalty Legislation Amendment Bill 2020. Queensland Labor governments have long championed the petroleum industry in this state. As recently as a decade ago, Queensland exported no LNG. Thanks to the initiative of the then Bligh Labor government, today we are an LNG powerhouse, exporting nearly \$16 billion worth of LNG each year—an industry strongly supported by the Palaszczuk Labor government.

Labor governments have welcomed the LNG industry to Queensland and have nourished the industry's growth, but we recognise that Queensland's LNG resources belong to the people of Queensland and we are ensuring that Queenslanders will get a fair return on those resources. The bill I introduce today implements a new basis for imposing petroleum royalty following recommendations from a recent review of Queensland's petroleum royalty framework. Additionally, the bill reforms royalty administration by implementing the Royalty Administration Modernisation Program.

The Petroleum Royalty Review was announced in the 2019-20 Queensland budget and was chaired by the Hon. Jay Weatherill. This review found that the current petroleum royalty regime in Queensland, designed more than 10 years ago, is not suitable for the existing configuration of the Queensland gas industry and recommended adoption of the volume model.

On 8 June 2020, the government announced that the existing petroleum royalty regime which levies royalties on the value of gas as the wellhead, less certain deductions, would be replaced with a model based on the volume of gas produced. The volume model proposes tiered rates, similar to the current royalty regime for coal. The proposed rates and benchmarks will be frozen for five years to give certainty to industry and government.

The bill amends the Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004, the Petroleum and Gas (Royalty) Regulation 2004 and the Mineral Resources Regulation 2013 to change the basis for imposing petroleum royalty from 1 October 2020. The volume model proposed by the review will apply to all petroleum produced in Queensland—LNG, coal seam gas, and oil and condensate.

The benefits of the volume model are in providing equity, simplicity and transparency for all producers. Specifically, it encourages efficient, low-cost production of LNG; it provides greater certainty of royalty revenue for industry and government; and it removes a raft of deductions, the complex issues about producers selling to related parties, and costly petroleum royalty decisions which often take years to litigate. Importantly, the volume model does not increase royalty rates. Instead, the volume model levels the playing field among producers, chiefly by no longer allowing deductions for specific capital costs. Under the volume model, industry will pay its fair share and Queenslanders will see a fair return for the resources that belong to them.

Industry has been consulted at every step of the process, including over the past month of implementation consultation. Our government has accommodated a number of industry requests while preserving the intent of the volume model, including providing lower royalty rates for domestic gas, relative to gas produced for export LNG projects; ensuring royalty rates for tiers are GST exclusive; exempting gas swaps from royalty; and continuing to exempt flared and vented gas to a volumetric limit.

Many petroleum producers in Queensland support the volume model or its elements. Industry also supports the provisions of the royalties administration program, which adopts the Taxation Administration Act's framework for mineral and petroleum royalties, improving royalty administration and delivering a comprehensive and consistent administrative framework for the state's revenues.

This bill delivers on this government's commitment to reform the state's petroleum royalty regime, thereby ensuring an appropriate and equitable return to Queenslanders from their valuable non-renewable resources. The bill also delivers a modern, efficient and comprehensive legislative framework for the administration of the state's mineral and petroleum royalties. I commend the bill to the House.

First Reading

Hon. CR DICK (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Infrastructure and Planning) (11.42 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 Economics and Governance Committee

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

Declared Urgent; Portfolio Committee, Reporting Date

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Infrastructure and Planning) (11.42 am), by leave, without notice: I move—

That, under the provisions of standing order 137, the Royalty Legislation Amendment Bill 2020 be declared an urgent bill and the Economics and Governance Committee report to the House on the bill by 7 August 2020.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.


Motion agreed to.

CORRECTIVE SERVICES AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from 15 July (see p. 1710), on motion of Mr Ryan—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mr PURDIE** (Ninderry—LNP) (11.43 am), continuing: In picking up where I left off last night, prison overcrowding does not just mean more assaults; it means prisoners will be returned to the streets without being rehabilitated and more violent than ever. This was confirmed by the Queensland Corrective Services Commissioner, Peter Martin, who in his submission to Taskforce Flaxton said—

Due to the increased prisoner population there are reduced opportunities for prisoners to access necessary rehabilitative programs and services.

I take it that prisoners are still not receiving the full benefits of rehabilitation. The six recommendations of the CCC report being implemented under this bill include authorising the chief executive to require QCS staff to submit to alcohol and drug testing; granting broader powers to search staff working in corrective services facilities; improving property and exhibit management policies and practices to decrease corruption risks; broadening the remit of the ethical standards unit to provide prevention and early intervention, professional standards, integrity policy framework, complaints management, investigation and discipline system; reviewing the service delivery model used to investigate criminal offences in prisons; and addressing the risk of inappropriate relationships between staff and prisoners or offenders. I support the amendments to implement the CCC's recommendations, but these could have come sooner and more still needs to be done.

One of the most contentious parts of this bill is the regulation of gel blasters, which is why the LNP opposes clause 62. Under the bill, Labor proposes to regulate the gel blaster industry by classifying a gel blaster as a restricted item under section 9 of the Weapons Categories Regulation 1997. This means it will be an offence pursuant to section 67 of the Weapons Act to acquire or possess a gel blaster without a reasonable excuse. A person will have a reasonable excuse if they are a member of an association and if the person possesses the firearm for the purpose of taking part in activities of that club. Although the provision does not exclude other circumstances which may constitute a reasonable excuse, the restrictive provisions make it virtually impossible for anyone who is not participating in a club activity to lawfully own a gel blaster.

Before I go on, I reiterate that in 2017 the Magistrates Court in *Comptroller-General of Customs v Clark CFP Pty Ltd* ruled that gel blasters are toys. The magistrate went on to say that, despite their appearance, gel blasters are only capable of firing a water based pellet and should be classified as projectile toys. This means that once these laws are enacted children who live out west on rural properties or in suburbs across Queensland will be criminals for merely possessing a toy. The Palaszczuk Labor government and the police minister have a lot of explaining to do to the families and children of remote and regional Queensland who currently possess gel blasters but who will have to give up the hobby or sport they love. I query whether the police minister even had this conversation with rural and regional Queenslanders. I also query what the Labor government expects owners of gel blasters to do with their gel blaster given that there is estimated to be around 600,000 gel blasters in Queensland and no mention of any proposed buyback scheme.

In a recent answer to a question on notice I asked about gel blasters, the minister admitted that there is no offence for drive-by shootings. They were unable to identify how many drive-by shootings were occurring and if gel blasters were used in any of these crimes or if there was an increase in these offences. A quick Google search failed to identify any media reports of instances of a gel blaster being used, but it did uncover a much more pressing issue. In February 2017, a house at Bethania was fired at with a real gun to intimidate Rebels gang members. In March 2017, a house at Calamvale was peppered with multiple bullets. In July 2018, two Rebels bikies fired a gun at a man outside Woolies at Currimundi Shopping—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Order! Pause the clock. I ask the member to come back to the long title of the bill.

Mr PURDIE: While Labor chooses to pick on innocent children who own toys, the LNP has chosen to pick a fight worth having, that is, to crack down on hard and organised criminals who are violently terrorising this state. The QPS has been lobbying the Labor government for years since COAG acknowledged in 2013 that organised crime and firearm related issues were of considerable concern to all governments and the community and agreed that each state and territory would consider the implementation of additional firearms search powers to target repeat offenders.

Mr RYAN: I rise to a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. There is currently a bill before the House—in fact a bill introduced by the LNP—which is on this subject matter. I put it to you that the member is breaching the standing orders by anticipating debate on that bill.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will take some advice in relation to that. Yes, there is anticipation, so I ask the member to return to the long title of the bill.

Mr PURDIE: Unlike Labor, the LNP consider real guns with real bullets in the hands of real criminals the problem. The LNP and the gel blaster industry agree that some regulation may be necessary, but the LNP is satisfied that the current laws offer adequate punishment to those who misuse gel blasters. There is a long list of current legislation that police actively use in controlling the misuse of gel blasters. A short list of these examples includes serious offences in the Criminal Code like going armed to cause fear, threatening violence or assault, and more minor offences like public nuisance in the Summary Offences Act.

We know that from December 2017 there have been only 85 offences recorded and 89 persons charged with offences relating to the misuse of gel blasters in Queensland. This represents an extremely small number of those who offend when compared to the estimated 600,000 of those who have bought gel blasters. This takes me to my next point about how this strict regulation will likely cause a significant reduction in revenue to the 150 gel blaster shops across Queensland which would be driven out of business under Labor's changes. Under Labor's laws, there will be less demand for gel blasters.

I am aware that the public consultation on the Queensland government's Have Your Say website ended on 12 March this year. Those results have never been made public, but I am told by the Gel Blaster Association that it was informed the day the consultation period ended that the government had already formed a view. To me it is apparent that Labor did not even bother considering the views of those heavily invested in the industry such as the Gel Blaster Association, which represents over 10,000 members in this state. Stakeholders are clearly upset by the lack of consultation. The Gel Blaster Association commented—


We don't appreciate Minister Ryan and his staff using terms like 'well Nathan and Peter are happy' when that quite simply is not true. We feel as though Mark Ryan has been playing us this whole time and we are not a fan of that at all. We will be fighting his decision.

A petition to parliament titled 'Stop the regulation of gel blaster toys' also highlights the pushback from industry. This petition attracted an outstanding 11,049 signatures. It is obvious this regulation came from the police minister himself and not the Queensland Police Service, like he suggested at every opportunity. The police minister referred to implementing the QPS policy on replica firearms in his explanatory notes. However, in the police minister's ministerial statement this year on 6 February he said—

Last year we witnessed a number of incidents involving the misuse of gel blasters. This concerned many people in the community, so I asked the commissioner to look into what steps could be taken to enhance community safety.

I acknowledge that in his contribution yesterday the minister also acknowledged that these recommendations came at his request. The recommendations, which have subsequently come from the police, are at the direction of the police minister full stop.

I now turn to clause 15. As it stands at the moment, this clause proposes to insert new section 110A into the Corrective Services Act 2006 to provide that the chief executive may order that a prisoner be released from custody within seven days immediately before the day on which the prisoner is to be released on parole. Labor showed its true colours when back in May it attempted to let prisoners out early on parole as part of its Justice and Other Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Amendment Bill 2020. However, after hours of the *Courier-Mail* making inquiries into the proposed changes, Labor did a complete backflip and announced that it would be scrapping the unpopular policy. This get-out-of-jail-free pass was officially scrapped during consideration in detail, but the LNP had already signalled that it would oppose the amendments. I note and welcome the minister's amendments which will omit this unpopular policy. I thank the minister for listening to the community and the LNP and omitting this clause from the bill.

 **Mr MADDEN** (Ipswich West—ALP) (11.53 am): I rise to speak in support of the Corrective Services and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020. As the Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services said in his introductory speech on 19 March 2020—

For our government, the safety and security of the community is an utmost priority. This bill supports the government's key objective to keep communities safe in Our Future State: Advancing Queensland's Priorities. The bill supports a resolution of the Ministerial Council for Police and Emergency Management to establish a permanent national firearms amnesty ...

After the first reading the bill was referred to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee and in its report the committee recommended that the bill be passed. As detailed in the explanatory notes for the bill, the objectives of the bill are to respond to the immediate risks identified in the Crime and Corruption Commission's *Taskforce Flaxton: an examination of corruption risks and corruption in Queensland's prisons*; support the government's implementation of the recommendations of the Queensland parole system review; and improve operational efficiencies for Queensland Corrective Services and the Parole Board Queensland. The bill also includes amendments that support the implementation of the Queensland Police Service policy on replica firearms and gel blasters.

With regard to the contribution by the member for Ninderry, all legal opinions seem to agree that if you intend to use a gel blaster as a toy—that is, your intended use is not unlawful, dangerous, irresponsible, alarming to the public or threatening toward any person—then that is a reasonable excuse. The member for Southern Downs can tell his children that this bill will not stop them from enjoying gel blasters, but he might want to keep them out of sight if the Leader of the Opposition visits. In 2017 the State Coroner recommended the Queensland government consider a scheme for the regulation of replica firearms. The Police Commissioner supports the regulation of replica firearms and gel blasters that look like the real thing. It is clear that the LNP has its head in the sand on this matter.

I am also concerned by the contribution to the debate by the member for Currumbin, who made a number of questionable statements last night regarding prison overcrowding. I know the member is relatively new to the House, so perhaps she is unaware of this Palaszczuk government's good record of investment in new prison infrastructure in Queensland. Had she spoken to her own colleague the member for Lockyer, he could have told her of our investment of approximately \$622 million to expand the Southern Queensland Correctional Centre. Like me, the member for Lockyer is excited about the jobs that this project will bring to his electorate, with many of those workers living in my neighbouring electorate of Ipswich West. If the member for Currumbin had listened to the contribution by the member for Mirani, then she would know about the great job this government is doing with the Capricornia Correctional Centre expansion which is going to increase the number of cells in the centre by 348. This is our response to prison overcrowding. The LNP has no response.


In November 2019 the Ministerial Council for Police and Emergency Management passed a motion agreeing to the establishment of a permanent national firearms amnesty. Amendments contained in the bill give effect to this resolution in Queensland. The aim of a permanent firearms amnesty is to improve public safety by reducing the number of unregistered firearms and firearm related articles in the community. Allowing people to hand in such items without fear of prosecution removes a significant barrier to firearms and other related items being relinquished, resulting in fewer of these items in the community.

As I said previously, the bill implements the recommendations of the Taskforce Flaxton report—all 33 recommendations of the report. Taskforce Flaxton was commissioned by the Crime and Corruption Commission in March 2018 to identify corruption and risks of corruption in Queensland prisons; features of the legislative, policy and operational environment that enable corrupt conduct to occur; and reforms to better prevent, detect and deal with corrupt conduct. The 33 Taskforce Flaxton report recommendations involve a wide range of legislative amendments to improve the operations of Corrective Services.

Periodically, I have the honour of representing the Minister for Corrective Services at the Queensland Corrective Services custodial officer entry program graduation ceremonies at the Queensland Corrective Services Academy at Wacol. Under the direction of Alan Butler, the academy is a world-class custodial training facility. Many of these graduates go on to be appointed to the Borallon Training and Correctional Centre which is located in my electorate of Ipswich West. The centre was recommissioned by the Palaszczuk government in April 2016 as a contemporary earning and learning centre, with the aim of the centre to provide prisoners with Queensland TAFE training qualifications that assist with their transition into society following their release, including workforce participation.

Borallon is the first Queensland correctional centre to have a TAFE facility on-site. TAFE first began working with Queensland Corrective Services to establish a training facility and training model in 2015. I thank Brent Kinnane, General Manager TAFE South West Region, for his hard work in developing this program and his ongoing support for the Borallon Training and Correctional Centre. The current general manager is Peter Henderson and I acknowledge his excellent stewardship of the centre. With the global economy being hit hard by the COVID-19 crisis, the Queensland economy needs more jobs. We need to work together to unite in the COVID recovery process.

In closing, I thank the Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services for tabling the bill, the members of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee, the committee secretariat, the submitters and Hansard. I commend the Corrective Services and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020 to the House.

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (12.00 pm): There are so many unparliamentary words that I could use—but I will not use—to describe the elements of this bill, including the amendments in relation to gel blasters, those very dangerous weapons that fire water, and, of course, the amendments protecting the CFMMEU in Queensland which I will get to. These are typical Labor amendments. Those opposite are out of touch. They are making this a nanny state, but that is the Labor way. They are the fun police. I would expect more from this Minister for Police, who has a young family of his own and should know what a toy is.

When the government first announced it was going to regulate gel blaster toys in Queensland I recall interjecting on the Premier saying that I had about 15 of these gel blaster plastic toys. I recall the Premier was aghast, in disbelief that I would admit that I had these highly weaponised, plastic, water-shooting pistols and rifles. It occurred to me at the time that she had no idea about these plastic toys.

Some bureaucrat has told the Minister for Police about these weapons that are doing all this damage across Queensland. This Minister for Police has taken that advice, without independently looking at it or researching it or asking anyone about these toys. He went straight to the Premier's office to say that we have a very dangerous situation in Queensland. Let us not talk about the highest crime rates we have seen, the explosion of youth crime, people's homes being broken into, cars being stolen right around Queensland. No, 10-year-olds firing water pistols is the big issue in Queensland. That is what we are debating.

I have 15 gel blaster toys. When the Labor Party passes this legislation, which it will with its numbers, are we seriously going to send police to knock on the doors of kids of five-, six-, seven-year old kids—or 10-year-olds like my son, Jasper, who owns some gel blasters, although I will say that the majority are mine—and arrest them for possessing gel blasters? Is this the world we live in now in the state of Queensland under the Labor Party?

The health minister talks about the obesity rates of kids across Queensland. We have seen the dilemma we have in Queensland with many young kids so attached to their devices that they will not get off. We tell our kids to go and enjoy the outdoors, get outside, get off your computers, phones, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat. Go outside and enjoy life. Run around. When I was a kid I would run around with a water pistol. We played cops and robbers. Are kids allowed to play that anymore? Is that a politically incorrect term that we are not allowed to use any more? Are kids not allowed to play cops and robbers in the street for fear of a Labor minister thinking the world will end because kids are playing cops and robbers?

We played cowboys and Indians. We had cap guns, we had spud guns. My brother and I—and it helped he was a fitter and turner in the army at the time—made a potato canon out of an air compressor and did a lot of damage to the neighbour's roof. We did that when we were kids and now we are legislating to stop kids playing with toy gel blasters that fire water bullets that you ordinarily would put on your garden bed to keep your plants moist. The Orbeez that you have in these gel blasters you can buy from a nursery and put them on your pot plants to ensure that if you go on holidays your plants do not die or in a drought it keeps the plants moist. They hit you and they burst. This minister and this Labor government have a problem with safety when it comes to these kids running around with toy gel blasters.

There are hundreds of thousands of toy gel blasters in our Queensland community now. My kids were playing with them on the weekend in the forest behind our house. When this legislation goes through we are going to make it illegal for that to happen. It gets worse in this Labor nanny state we live in. I have a gun safe at home for the appropriate storage of appropriately regulated dangerous metal weapons. If I join a toy gel blaster club, after I have a round of shooting water at my son and my girls and they shoot water bullets back at me, we are going to have to carefully take our plastic water guns, go in and unlock the two locks on my gun safe and carefully place my plastic toy water pistols next to my highly dangerous metal weapon and then I am going to have to get the water Orbeez, which are the gel blasting bullets, and I am going to have to unlock the second storage compartment in my gun safe and put these highly dangerous water blobs next to my rightfully highly dangerous brass bullets for my highly regulated dangerous weapon.


Members may laugh, but that is how stupid and serious this is. This is what we are debating. We are taking toys off kids. We tell kids to go outside and enjoy life but we are now regulating that. I suspect we are regulating it because no Labor member, not even the Labor minister, would have gone into a gel blaster business, of which there are hundreds in Queensland—not just in regional Queensland, I might add, but all around Brisbane; I bought the majority of my toy guns from Brisbane—and asked them how this is going to impact them. How ridiculous is it that we have a situation in Queensland where you can go to a gun club and fire a category H weapon handgun and have all the regulations around it and I will have to now join an association for my highly regulated toy water pistols and if I do not, if my 10-year old boy, my 17-year old girl and 15-year old girl draw these out in our backyard they can be put in prison for using toy water pistols. This is ridiculous, out of touch and arrogant. It gets worse. Yesterday in her contribution the member for Mansfield said—

The other concern that I have is the number of women and children who are dying in Australia as a result of domestic violence, so any opportunity we have to remove some of these replica weapons from the streets is important.

Is she seriously suggesting that people like me who have 15 plastic toy water guns are committing domestic violence against our wives, our spouses, our partners just because we have a toy water pistol in our home? Is that what she is seriously suggesting? Labor, under the weak Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk, have lost the plot. They have completely lost the plot when we are regulating toy water pistols.

Here is another acknowledgement—I am afraid to tell the minister this because he might send the cops over to arrest me and my family: I have Nerf guns at home! Big, powerful Nerf guns. But guess what? If I line up my toy water pistols and my boy's toy Nerf guns, the Nerf guns hurt a heck of a lot more than the toy water pistol Orbeez and the projectile shoots a lot further. Are we going to ban Nerf guns in Queensland? Are we going to say they are a regulated weapon? If you paint them black they look like a weapon.

I would love any Labor member to come to my house and have a toy war game in my backyard any day. I guarantee that, other than a few little red spots—because I am a good shot; I am a good aim—they will survive. I guarantee that if they get shot by my water pistol they will live to tell the tale of being shot by a toy water pistol. Laugh as we may, this regulation is seriously ridiculous. For the minister to move this legislation with a straight face is a disgrace. He is a father. His kids should be out using toy water pistols and enjoying life as all kids should.

 **Mrs MULLEN** (Jordan—ALP) (12.10 pm): I thank the member for Kawana for the invite. Maybe I can come over and have a little dance, as well. There are so many words that I could use to describe the member for Kawana's contribution, but most of those—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Weir): Member for Jordan, you have the call. I ask you to address the bill.

Mrs MULLEN: There are so many words that I could use to describe the contribution of the member for Kawana, but most would be unparliamentary and, frankly, I am a lady. I did enjoy the member's trip down memory lane, where we all played cowboys and Indians, mum stayed at home and the Queen reigned supreme. That was a return to the 1950s, which is where the LNP really belong.

I rise to make a contribution on the bill. As a member of the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee, I will focus my comments on aspects of the bill that deal specifically with our government's response to Taskforce Flaxton. The Crime and Corruption Commission undertook that operation in response to a number of issues, including increases in the number of allegations made to the CCC about corrupt conduct involving staff working in Queensland prisons and the outcomes of a number of CCC investigations that identified possible systemic issues. Taskforce Flaxton sought to identify corruption and risks of corruption in Queensland prisons and to identify the legislative, police and operational environments that enable corrupt conduct to occur. It was a thorough investigation. The commission received 33 detailed written submissions and heard from 34 witnesses during the 16 days of public hearings. They heard from Queensland Corrective Services staff and just over one-third of current Queensland prisoners who shared their views via a voluntary and anonymous survey. The CCC also consulted with QCS staff to better understand the existing operational environment.

Taskforce Flaxton identified that there are significant corruption risks in Queensland prisons and that the existing anti-corruption framework is not effectively preventing, detecting or dealing with them. The final CCC report, tabled in December 2018, identified 33 recommendations that sought to improve the performance of the QCS and the external oversight mechanisms. Our government has supported, or supported in principle, all 33 recommendations made in the report.


A number of amendments to the Corrective Services Act 2006 have been identified as immediate priorities to assist the QCS to execute its duties to address corruption within the organisation. Those include amendments authorising the chief executive to require Corrective Services staff to submit to alcohol and drug testing. The CCC reported that prison staff with drug or alcohol problems present a very real corruption risk and it was important to identify staff with substance abuse problems as they were more likely to engage in problematic decision-making and behaviour, such as excessive or unreasonable use of force. The bill proposes to insert new part 9A, Alcohol and drug testing, into chapter 6 of the Corrective Service Act to support that recommendation. Part 9A provides significant detail. Amongst other things, it imposes alcohol limits on Corrective Services persons and requires a Corrective Services person to submit to alcohol and substance tests at certain times. A number of other amendments were recommended, including granting broader powers to search staff working in Corrective Services facilities and improving property and exhibit management policies and practices to decrease corruption risks.

In its Taskforce Flaxton report, the CCC acknowledged that the QCS had improved the performance of the function of the ethical standards unit since the machinery of government changes in 2017 and the establishment of the ESU, now the Professional Standards and Governance Command in the QCS. Nevertheless, the CCC recommended that the QCS broaden the remit of the ethical standards unit to provide the following functions: prevention and early intervention, professional standards, integrity policy framework, complaints management, investigation, discipline system, witness support, critical incidents, covert operations and risk management.

The bill before us proposes to amend the CS Act to increase the functions of an inspector to include investigating alleged misconduct or alleged corrupt conduct of a staff member; widen the circumstances in which an inspector can require information from a person performing a function under the CS Act to include alleged misconduct or alleged corrupt conduct of a staff member; allow an inspector to enter a Corrective Services facility or a community corrections office at any time; and require an inspector appointed to investigate an incident, alleged misconduct or alleged corrupt conduct of a staff member to give a written report to the chief executive stating the results of the investigation and any recommendations. These are particularly important changes. An effective ESU promotes an integrity culture, discipline and professional practice across the agency and is necessary to prevent, detect and deal with corruption risks in prisons. It is also necessary for staff and public confidence in the QCS discipline process.

Our government has also acknowledged the corruption risks that overcrowding in prisons presents, which was raised in the Taskforce Flaxton report and, of course, has been raised by a number of members in the House during the debate on the bill. Our government has committed significant funding to deliver stage 2 of the Southern Queensland Correctional Precinct, which will deliver an extra 4,000 beds by 2023. That will be particularly important for our economic recovery, as well. The project is expected to create more than 400 construction jobs over the three-year build and over time will deliver more than 500 permanent jobs, as well as ongoing opportunities for local businesses to supply goods and services.

The task force also observed that Queensland's hybrid prison system, with its mix of public and private operational responsibility, was not optimal. That is something that our government is responding to by committing \$111.4 million over five years to transition the Arthur Gorrie Correctional Centre and the Southern Queensland Correctional Centre to public operation. Importantly, the Palaszczuk government has committed \$25.2 million over four years to implement the recommendations of Taskforce Flaxton. This shows the regard that we have for the recommendations and the seriousness of the findings and our government's commitment to ensuring the reforms will improve safety for staff and prisoners, ensure decisions are ethical and impartial, enhance accountability and transparency, and raise performance standards. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr MILLAR** (Gregory—LNP) (12.17 pm): I will make a short contribution on the Corrective Services and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020. I will focus on the crackdown on plastic water guns—fair dinkum, the crackdown on plastic toys! People may be amazed, but I am not surprised, that the Labor Party have come into this place to crack down on something such as plastic water pistols or toys. They should be coming into the parliament to strengthen legislation to crack down on increased violence with intruders entering people's houses, crime rates going up and cars being stolen. That is what they should be doing, not cracking down on plastic water pistols. It is absolutely ridiculous.

Water pistols are toys that are used by law-abiding people. However, because the Labor Party thinks that we need to crack down on them, law-abiding people will not be able to use gel blasters. As the member for Kawana pointed out, the kids and adults who play with gel blasters are law-abiding

people, but the Labor Party wants to ban those items. Under this Labor Party we are becoming an absolute nanny state. I would welcome legislation in the parliament that cracks down on increasing violence and car theft in Central Queensland. That is what we should be doing, not taking gel blasters away from law-abiding people. The Gel Blaster Association has 10,000 official members.

On 14 December the Magistrates Court ruled that gel blasters are toys, but we want to crack down on that because we do not want Queenslanders to have them. What about the impact on small businesses right around this state that sell these gel blasters? The impact on them is more red tape and more restrictions, making it harder for them to earn a crust. Gel blasters are popular amongst law-abiding kids and adults who just want to go and have some fun, like the member for Southern Downs. There are plenty of people in this state who do the right thing, but the Labor Party want to crack down on something that people enjoy doing—going out and having some fun.

I will take the comment from the member of Kawana when he said we are doing our best to get our kids off Xbox, off PlayStation, off Instagram, off social media and being bullied on social media. Go out and interact with the kids, go out and run around, enjoy what we have here in Queensland which is beautiful weather, plenty of playgrounds and an opportunity to have some fun. That is not the case with the Labor Party. It is about cracking down on that by saying that you cannot have gel blasters.

What is even more ridiculous is that, if you own a gel blaster, under this legislation—and this legislation will get through—you will have to lock up a plastic water gun in a secure gun safe next to what does need to be locked up: the real guns. My concern is that something which allows people to have some fun will be taken away because we have regulated that they cannot have it anymore.

The other matter of concern is that the legislation requires people who own a gel blaster to be a member of a gel-blasting club and to use the gel blasters in gel-blasting areas. What about regional and rural Queensland, where people just want to have a bit of fun, where the kids want to go out down the paddock and have a bit of fun? No, the Labor Party wants to lock up these plastic water pistols and regulate them. I think it is absolutely ridiculous.

Mr Russo: I think it is ridiculous that that is the only thing you can talk about in the bill—water pistols.


Mr MILLAR: Well, that is what they are. They are not dangerous weapons! We will regulate this, taking away from small businesses that sell gel blasters and people who want to have gel blasters will have so much regulation over them that they will not bother using them anymore. They will say, 'That's it. I can't do it.' Rural and regional Queensland, along with small businesses and people who use gel blasters, are being penalised by a state government that wants to be a nanny state. This is absolutely ridiculous. I call on the minister to have a good think about this and reverse this decision.

 **Hon. AJ LYNHAM** (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy) (12.22 pm): I rise in support of the Corrective Services and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020. Today I will speak to the amendments to be moved in consideration in detail related to the ability to appoint authorised officers under the Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004.

When the Resources Safety and Health Queensland Act 2020 commenced, it established Resources Safety and Health Queensland as an independent statutory body separate from the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy. The establishment of RSHQ delivers upon this government's commitments to strengthen worker safety, ensure independence and transparency and achieve increased accountability and oversight of regulatory performance. The Resources Safety and Health Queensland Act 2020 amended the authorised officer provisions of Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act to ensure that the chief executive of RSHQ could appoint authorised officers to carry out the resources safety and health functions under the Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004.

However, drafting choices meant that the department's chief executive could not appoint authorised officers to administer the other non-health and safety amendments of the act. Obviously the chief executive of the department must be able to appoint authorised officers to perform a range of duties unrelated to health and safety, for example, tenure administration.

The amendments being moved today will rectify any issues arising. RSHQ is now operating as an independent entity. This government is committed to working with employers, unions and peak bodies to continue to improve protections for our workers. There is no day and no opportunity that should be lost when it comes to improving safety. I thank the Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services for progressing these important amendments on my behalf.

 **Mr McDONALD** (Lockyer—LNP) (12.24 pm): I take this opportunity to offer my contribution to the debate on the Corrective Services and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. This one is certainly an interesting read and well suited for some lively commentary, but I will do my best to keep it civil. When Labor use their numbers to push this bill through the House, there are going to be hundreds of thousands of Queenslanders who will be disappointed.

This bill proposes a range of reforms across the corrective services portfolio. This includes introducing some of the recommendations made by the Crime and Corruption Commission's Taskforce Flaxton report, regulating Queensland's gel blaster industry and finalising the state's participation in the establishment of a permanent national firearms amnesty. Just like my colleagues in the LNP, I will not be opposing the bill in its entirety. I will, however, oppose its clauses which perfectly show this Labor government has complete disregard for common sense and proactivity and an apparent lack of care for Queensland's safety.

Before I do so, I would like to pass on my thanks to the members of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee, its secretariat and the submitters to this bill for their input. Special mention must go to the members for Southern Downs and Currumbin for their sensible statement of reservation on this bill which has informed much of the debate and criticism of the bill.

Let's get the joke out of the way early. I am sure every member of this House will have heard the common criticism that politicians can act like children. I must say: looking back at some of the antics in this House, I can understand that criticism on many occasions. In light of this criticism that politicians are children, it seems very fitting that we are here today talking about toys. Clause 62 of the bill intends to regulate gel blasters and narrowly define who in Queensland can own one. Is that what we have come to, defining who can and who cannot own a toy? Do not let their appearance fool you; gel blasters are not firearms.

On 14 December 2017 in the case of Comptroller-General of Customs v Clark CFP Pty Ltd, the magistrate ruled that gel blasters are nothing more than a water based, pellet-firing toy. Unregulated in Queensland and attainable by anyone, these devices have exploded in popularity to the point where it is estimated that 150 gel blaster businesses are operating across Queensland and they supply around 50,000 gel blasters every month. Safe to say, these are toys for kids young and old.

While many have raised concerns over the resemblance to firearms and highlighted stories of their misuse, only 89 individuals in Queensland have been charged with offences relating to their misuse since December 2017—only 89 in nearly three years. Nonetheless, this Palaszczuk Labor government sees it as a priority to crack down on these toys and cripple the small businesses that prosper from their sale. Some might say: look out for the fun police! This government has its mind set on heavily restricting the sale and ownership of toys while its members turn their backs on the LNP's real plan to crack down on organised gangs and illegal firearms which terrorise this state.

Under this clause, the only individuals able to own a gel blaster would be those members of a gel blaster association or club. This restriction disproportionately affects Queenslanders in rural and remote areas who simply do not have access to an approved club or association. It is time this government got its priorities in order. It is time for it to stop the attacks on law-abiding Queenslanders who purchase toys for recreation and instead start to get tough on the real criminals roaming the streets or terrifying Queenslanders with illegal firearms.


At time when the COVID pandemic is threatening so many aspects of our economy, here is one that is going okay. With this bill, the minister is going to single-handedly shatter it. In the minister's contribution yesterday he mentioned that this bill is good for business, good for community safety and good for the users. I can tell the minister that this bill might be better than something else proposed, but it is not better for any business, for community safety or for the users as it currently stands.

I have spent much of my life implementing appropriate control mechanisms to risks that are presented. The risk from gel blasters at worst is the potential fear that someone may experience. We have laws in place for those exact circumstances—offences of going armed to cause fear and a range of assault offences from grievous bodily harm through to common assault depending on the threat that is presented. This bill is complete overkill. I sincerely ask the minister to remove these clauses and leave the gel blaster businesses, their customers and those who legitimately own toys alone.

I must also take issue with clause 15 of this bill. Upon reading the bill the first time, this clause stood out as strangely familiar. After a brief think, it struck me that this clause is virtually identical to the one which forced the government backflip in May. The Palaszczuk Labor government could not face the criticism they received then, so they are having another crack now. You have to admire their tenacity. Luckily for Queenslanders the LNP who opposed this 'get out of jail free' pass in May will be opposing it once again.

Wasn't the message clear enough the first time? Queenslanders will not be taken for fools and they will not accept a government that puts the freedom of criminals ahead of the safety of Queenslanders. It is time this policy is scrapped once and for all. Anyone convicted of a crime in this state should serve the time for the offence—no more, no less. If you do the crime, you simply do the time. If the government persists in trying to force through this ill-advised policy, it will be another reason this Labor government will find itself in opposition and government members looking for jobs after 31 October.

Overall, this bill is simply an exercise in ticking boxes. Most of these boxes need to be ticked, changes need to be occur and improvements need to be made in our corrections system. I will not oppose the elements of this bill which achieve this goal. As for the failures I have highlighted, I will not be supporting them. Gel blasters are not firearms and those who own them are not criminals in the making. Queenslanders will not stand and allow this government to attack other law-abiding Queenslanders and they will not approve of Labor's plan to put criminals back on the streets. If Labor persist, they might just find themselves sentenced to a minimum of four years in opposition, while a Deb Frecklington led LNP government gets on with the job of getting Queensland working again.

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Local Government, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (12.32 pm): I rise in support of the Corrective Services and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020. The bill includes amendments to the Racing Integrity Act 2016 to relocate section 98A. I thank the Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services for allowing the bill to carry this important clarification. Section 98A allows the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission, QRIC, to enter into information-sharing arrangements with other relevant agencies to assist with investigation and compliance activities.

The current location of this provision may be interpreted as being restricted to information only about racing bookmakers and associates. However, the intent of this provision was for it to apply to all functions of QRIC. I think it is very important that we have that capacity in the legislation. This vital amendment clarifies this intent and removes any doubt or confusion.

The amendments contained in this bill give me the opportunity to speak about the exemplary work that QRIC have undertaken since the commission was established by the Palaszczuk government in 2016. Those opposite have been very quick to criticise QRIC but do so while being very selective about the facts. This gives me an opportunity to clarify some of those.

The member for Surfers Paradise tells all and sundry that QRIC's budget is far too big and that money is not being spent effectively. I can inform the member and the House that the reason QRIC has the budget it does is that the amount of work and the responsibility of QRIC are larger and broader than comparative jurisdictions. Doing comparisons with other jurisdictions is meaningless because they do not have the structure that we currently have.

Take, for example, the stewards on race day. In other states the stewards are not employed and paid for by the integrity arms. Comparing Victoria's racing apples with Queensland's racing oranges is not the way to do it. In 2018-19, QRIC staff supervised 1,571 meetings around Queensland. QRIC staff conducted nearly 20,000 animal samples over the same period. Are the opposition suggesting that we run unsupervised meetings or would the opposition, if in government, sharpen the LNP's axe and cut the number of meetings and cripple country racing? That seems to be the logical conclusion you would reach.

I also take this opportunity to bring to the attention of the House some of the figures that show how effective QRIC is in terms of the decisions it makes. The statistics for 2018-19 show that 1,525 decisions were made by QRIC staff. Of those, only 102 were subject to internal review. That is 96 per cent of original decisions standing as they were made. Only 40 of those 1,525 decisions were subject to an appeal to QCAT. Twenty-seven matters were finalised and QCAT found in favour of the applicant six times—so six out of more than 1,500 decisions were altered. Those opposite claim that there is some sort of crisis or failure of decision-making, yet that is 0.39 per cent of decisions being altered by QCAT!

The opposition need to come clean on a few things. What is their plan? What are they funding? Are they planning on dismantling QRIC or cutting their funding? Will they explain to Queenslanders in the racing industry how they plan to supervise their race meetings or is the real plan just to have fewer race meetings to supervise in the first place?

The last time those opposite were in power they left the racing industry in an appalling state, resulting in Eagle Farm being put out of action, the greyhound live-baiting scandal, the dissolution of all the racing boards and the control body being placed under administration. As the 2015 MacSparran

inquiry into live baiting in the greyhound industry showed, the control body could not adequately assess and deal with risks to integrity and animal welfare and a new distinct authority needed to be established. This resulted in the creation of QRIC in 2016. Perhaps this is why the member for Surfers Paradise so fiercely attacks the good work of QRIC, as QRIC's successes are a continual reminder of the many failings of the Newman government.

As I have outlined, the Racing Integrity Act 2016 established the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission with the responsibility of imposing a strict integrity regime and implementing an agenda to keep racing animals safe on and off the track—a key recommendation of the 2015 MacSparran commission of inquiry into greyhound live baiting. When the act was first introduced into parliament, the government committed to review the act in response to the agriculture and environment committee's report on the Racing Integrity Bill 2015. The review was to include consultation with control bodies and industry regarding implementation issues associated with the new legislative regime.

I am pleased to advise the House that the racing industry and the community have had the opportunity to have their say through a public discussion paper, *Racing integrity reforms: review of the Racing Integrity Act 2016*. Consultation closed in August 2019. The discussion paper was viewed 746 times with 27 online responses, and seven written submissions were received. Shortly after the consultation on this discussion paper closed in October, the ABC 7.30 program aired 'The final race', outlining animal welfare practices on the after-career care of racehorses. The Palaszczuk government takes the responsibility for the welfare of animals at the heart of the three racing codes very seriously.

On 22 October the Premier acted immediately and announced an independent inquiry into the operations of abattoirs and other facilities accepting horses for slaughter and the management of retired racehorses in Queensland. The inquiry, known as the Martin inquiry, was headed up by retired District Court judge Terry Martin SC, with the support of equine veterinary surgeon and Australian Veterinary Association representative Dr Peter Reid. The final report of the Martin inquiry has been considered by the government, and all 55 recommendations have been fully supported, supported in part or supported in principle.


The Palaszczuk government has provided almost \$6 million to support the implementation of the recommendations. Racing Queensland and the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission are working to implement the Martin inquiry's recommendations into the management of retired thoroughbred and standardbred racehorses, including collaborating with QRIC to establish and govern a Queensland Off the Track program to retrain and rehome retired racehorses.

This is a new chapter in the racing industry for its 40,000 participants and the more than 830,000 people who go to the races each year. On 1 January 2020, Racing Queensland began implementing a one per cent prize money levy on thoroughbred and harness racing that will build better futures for Queensland's retired racehorses. This is vital to the continuing success of the racing industry, which pumps \$1.5 billion into the Queensland economy and sustains almost 11,500 jobs. Findings from the Martin inquiry that affect the Racing Integrity Act will also be addressed when changes to the Racing Integrity Review are considered.

QRIC has continued compiling those two significant pieces of reform work through the COVID-19 pandemic whilst also performing increasing compliance checks to help enforce the vigorous restrictions that Racing Queensland and QRIC put in place to enable patron-free racing to continue through the lockdown. I want to acknowledge and thank both Racing Queensland and QRIC for the amazing work they have done to support the industry through this challenging period. I am committed to ensuring that the commission's legislative powers are efficient and effective in delivering a robust integrity scheme for the Queensland racing industry. The amendment to the Racing Integrity Bill in this legislation will assist the ongoing and invaluable role the commission performs in overseeing integrity and welfare standards for racing animals and racing industry participants in Queensland.

While I am on my feet and we are hearing the debate going on around a range of other matters that are dealt with in the Corrective Services and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, I want to come to the matter of gel blasters. In the contribution prior to mine we heard the member for Lockyer say, 'Don't let their appearance fool you.' That is the very point. The grave danger, the great risk with this is that the very appearance of some of these gel blasters can fool people and cause great concern and great fear. In his contribution the member for Lockyer said, 'Don't criminalise people who own these products by having a system of regulation around how they are kept and how they are held by people in the community.' If you use the same logic he would be saying you should dismantle the Howard legislation in relation to firearms, because I am absolutely certain that the owners of firearms in our communities are not all criminals. He has said that the fact there is a regulatory provision in place is making criminals

of those people. That is clearly not the case and clearly not the intention of the government. I urge people to support the legislation before the House in the way that it supports and sustains public safety in our community.

 **Mr CRANDON** (Coomera—LNP) (12.42 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Corrective Services and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020. Broadly speaking, the LNP does not oppose the bill with exceptions, as we have heard throughout the debate. I note that the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee recommended that the bill be passed. The LNP members of the committee submitted a statement of reservation to highlight concerns around the regulation of gel blasters.

In December 2018 the Crime and Corruption Commission released a report titled *Taskforce Flaxton: an examination of corruption risks and corruption in Queensland's prisons* which focused on identifying corruption and risks of corruption in Queensland prisons. As a result of the investigation, the CCC held there were significant corruption risks in Queensland prisons and the existing anti-corruption framework is not effectively preventing, detecting or dealing with them. The objectives of the bill are to: respond to the immediate risks identified in the Taskforce Flaxton report; support the implementation of recommendations from the Queensland Parole System Review report; and improve operational experiences for QCS and the Parole Board Queensland.

In response to the Taskforce Flaxton report, Labor announced that it supports in principle all 33 recommendations. The bill adopts six of the recommendations, including: authorising the chief executive to require QCS staff to submit to alcohol and drug testing; granting broader powers to search staff working in corrective services facilities; improving property and exhibit management policies and practices to decrease corruption risk; broadening the remit of the ethical standards unit to provide prevention and early intervention, professional standards, integrity policy framework, complaints management, investigation and discipline systems; reviewing the service delivery model used to investigate criminal offences in prisons; and addressing the risk of inappropriate relationships between staff and prisoners or offenders. Other amendments include the appointment of inspectors to investigate alleged corruption of staff; however, unlike the investigation of an incident, there is no requirement for one of the two inspectors to be independent of the QCS.

Given that corruption is rife in Queensland prisons, it is paramount that investigations of prison staff are transparent and unbiased. While this provision is a step in the right direction, it does not go far enough in mitigating corruption. The new offence of prohibiting intimate relationships between staff members and offenders includes: sexual conduct or other physical expressions of affection or sexual contact; or the exchange of written or other forms of communication of a sexual nature. There is a maximum penalty of 100 penalty units or three years imprisonment. Persons registered on the victim register are allowed to apply to the Parole Board for an extension of time to provide a submission when parole is being considered by a prisoner.

I note that the Bar Association of Queensland raised concerns about the appointment of inspectors to investigate alleged misconduct or alleged corrupt conduct of a staff member, reinforcing the need for an independent entity with no professional ties to QCS to conduct an unbiased investigation. I think that is a very worthwhile suggestion by the Bar Association.

As noted earlier, the CCC made 33 recommendations to improve the performance of Queensland Corrective Services to: improve safety for staff and prisoners; ensure decisions are ethical and impartial; enhance accountability and transparency; and raise performance standards. In its submission, the CCC was critical about the bill failing to adopt recommendation 33 of the Taskforce Flaxton report, which would require the implementation of an independent inspectorate model to provide adequate oversight of QCS functions and activities, thus decreasing the risk of corruption in Queensland prisons. The report notes that the current QCS prison inspectorate model does not meet recognised international standards of independence. One would wonder why we would not want to go to that level of independence.

Queensland prisons are bursting at the seams and our prison officers being treated as punching bags, as has been noted in very recent times. Labor's only solution to prison overcrowding is to double up, but this is only exacerbating the violence and corruption. Indeed, I recently heard they are tripling up in some prison cells at the moment because of additional loads. The Crime and Corruption Commission's Taskforce Flaxton report, which was published in 2018, highlighted the risks associated with this and warned that overcrowding only exacerbates assaults in prison. The CCC has continuously warned that overcrowding can increase prisoners' anger and frustration and increase the risk of conflict, violence and serious assaults against prisoners and staff, and warned that overcrowding is related to decreases in prison time out of cell, which was also related to more prisoner-on-prisoner assaults, self-harm incidents and incidents requiring the use of force.

The Palaszczuk Labor government claims they have zero tolerance for violence in Queensland's correctional facilities, but their inaction clearly shows they do not have a plan to fix it. Overcrowded prisons means that prisoners are returning to our streets more violent than ever. If Labor cannot control our criminals in prisons, how do they expect to rehabilitate them? The LNP believes in delivering the rehabilitation and resources our prisoners need to reduce the risk posed by recidivist offenders to community safety.

In that regard, I have done quite a bit of work around Australia. I have been to many prisons and many organisations that are providing services to prisons and prisoners both here in Australia and in New Zealand. There are some excellent programs out there. As a result of this research, I now use an adage to help me explain these issues to people and it answers all of the issues on a broad basis. I refer to it as the AEIOU of the issue.

The 'A' stands for accommodation. If we expect prisoners to be released from prison—whether it be at the end of their sentence or on parole—and simply go back to where they came from and end up in the same place they were before they went into prison, then we are going to continue to see recidivist behaviour. We have to deal with the issue of appropriate accommodation for prisoners on release from prison. Without that, it is almost guaranteed that these prisoners will go back to prison. Depending on what research we look at, we see that anywhere between 45 per cent and 65 per cent of prisoners reoffend within just two years of returning to the streets. Much of that has to do with their accommodation situation in the very first place.


I then go to the training and education programs that we deploy whilst in the prison system, and the 'E' is for education. We need to provide our prisoners with appropriate opportunities for education, but I can say from my research that we are only delivering a small fraction of the programs we need to deliver, given the large number of prisoners who are incarcerated at this time. Something like 25 per cent of prisoners enjoy some form of education program. There is not enough budget to provide anything further than that. Education is the second point.

The 'I' is for integration and putting programs in place to show prisoners what is expected of them out in the community. Integrating into the community is important and we can only do that really well in the prison system.

The 'O' is for occupation. If we do not have employment opportunities for them outside the prisons and proper training for them inside the prisons to give them the skills they need, what chance have they got of getting gainful employment when they leave the prison system?

The 'U' is for understanding—that is, for them to understand what is expected of them in our communities and also for communities to understand that where they came from is not where we have necessarily come from in our lives and they may have had a tough life in the past. That is the AEIOU of the issue. We do have solutions available to us in reducing recidivism.

(Time expired)

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (12.52 pm): I rise to support the Corrective Services and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. In particular I would like to speak in support of amendments to be moved in consideration in detail to the Public Health Act 2005 and the Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011. These amendments are integral to Queensland's effort in limiting the spread of COVID-19 and strengthening our resourcing of the public health response.


We take the health of Queenslanders very seriously, and our public health directions are in place to limit any potential spread of COVID-19. Queenslanders are working hard in following restrictions and health advice, and we currently have only four active cases. We do not want to see all our hard work undone, and we are very serious about enforcing our public health directions. We are increasing the penalties for breaching any public health directions and implementing a penalty of six months imprisonment. A jail term can be imposed by a court and will only be used in the most serious of breaches. Currently, the penalty is a maximum of a \$13,345 fine. It is very important that people comply with public health directions and do not provide false or misleading information on their border declaration pass or they could face heavy fines or even now a jail term.

The amendments also include allowing the Chief Health Officer to delegate some of her emergency powers under the Public Health Act 2005 to the Deputy Chief Health Officer and other suitably qualified medical practitioners employed by government or a health service. As we all know, Queensland's Chief Health Officer, Dr Jeannette Young, has been working tirelessly since the start of this pandemic in January in what is a very demanding role. On 29 January 2020 a public health

emergency was declared under the Public Health Act for COVID-19. On 19 March 2020 the Public Health Act was amended to include powers for the Chief Health Officer to make public health directions to assist in containing or to respond to the spread of COVID-19 in the community.

Since then, the Chief Health Officer has made over 60 public health directions, considered many individual requests for exemptions to the public health directions, approved plans and checklists, and declared numerous COVID hotspots. This amendment will allow Queensland's Chief Health Officer to share her considerable workload during the pandemic response with suitably qualified medical practitioners.

An amendment will also be made to enable Queensland's contact tracing officers to assist Victoria or other jurisdictions that might experience a COVID-19 outbreak if required. Queensland is currently in a good position and we are proud to be able to help Victoria respond to their COVID-19 emergency. We have already deployed 27 nurses to Victoria to assist with testing, with another 13 to be deployed soon. The changes proposed here will increase the number of staff able to help other states deal with the COVID-19 pandemic. I commend the bill and these proposed amendments to the House.

 **Mr MOLHOEK** (Southport—LNP) (12.56 pm): I rise to speak on the Corrective Services and Other Legislation Amendment Bill before the House. One could be forgiven for believing that this should be called the potpourri bill because the explanatory notes state that we are dealing with matters that affect Corrective Services, there are some amendments proposed to the Weapons Act and there is a small paragraph about changes to the Racing Integrity Act, and then in the last day or so we have been advised of further amendments to other acts, like the Summary Offences Act, the Work Health and Safety Act and, as we just heard from the Minister for Health, the Hospital and Health Boards Act.

What we have on the other side of the House is a government that operates under chaos. Instead of bringing these various issues before the House in a sensible and structured manner—perhaps actually having amendments to the Weapons Act dealt with as a completely separate piece of legislation—the government keeps putting all these things on the back of other bills. What we have had is two years of guillotined debate and having to rush things through to accommodate family-friendly hours. Now we find just a few months out from the election that all these last-minute changes are being rammed through. I note that there is a fairly long speaking list today, with members from both sides of the House, so there may not be an opportunity to speak to some of the amendments in detail.

Government members interjected.

Mr MOLHOEK: I am not taking interjections. The amendments in regard to work health and safety will provide unfettered access to the unions to enter job sites without any fear of recrimination or prosecution or having to abide by normal rules and decency. That is just being slipped through this afternoon in the House which is Labor's way of—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Weir): Member for Southport, I would ask you to come back to the long title of the bill. I think you are speaking to another bill.

Mr MOLHOEK: I will come back to the long title of the bill. I want to speak in support of the comments by the member for Kawana earlier today in respect of gel blasters. I understand that there are concerns about people carrying replica weapons, but as a father of four sons what I am concerned—

Mr Power interjected.

Mr MOLHOEK: I am not taking interjections, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Logan, I notice you are on the list so you will have your opportunity but at the moment it is the member for Southport who has the call.


Mr MOLHOEK: As a result of the concerns raised about gel blasters, I decided to visit a few of the stores in my electorate that sell them, and there are a number of them. I recently visited TacToys in Scarborough Street, Southport and I caught up with one of the owners, Corey. He was quite happy to demonstrate how these gel blasters work, and he actually suggested to me that I hold my hand out in front of me and shot my hand. I was a little bit apprehensive about that, understandably, but I was pleasantly surprised that at that range, apart from a little bit of a sting, it really was not all that dangerous and it really was not the concern that many have sought to represent gel blasters as being.

Debate, on motion of Mr Molhoek, adjourned.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.00 pm.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Integrity

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (2.00 pm): Another day, another integrity scandal for the Palaszczuk Labor government. This is a government for which bending and breaking integrity rules is now the norm. As usual, who is at the centre of these scandals but the member for South Brisbane. It is the member for South Brisbane who is the real powerbroker in Queensland Labor, not our weak Premier.

A whistleblower, a very reliable source, has contacted the LNP to say that the member for South Brisbane, the former treasurer, had overruled the independent panel to choose Queensland's Under Treasurer. The panel chose Leon Allen, a former CommBank executive, but they were overruled by the former treasurer. She instead installed her own choice, Frankie Carroll, and ignored the independent panel. It is more proof that the Palaszczuk Labor government does not understand the meaning of integrity, and Labor once again has serious questions to answer.


In 2014-15 the Premier was very proud to announce that all of the positions at the director-general level would be merit based and independent. We would contend that that is definitely not the case and that this shows we cannot trust the Palaszczuk government. Yesterday in question time we asked the Premier to release the selection panel report, but she has refused. The Premier is too weak to act, so the LNP has. Today I have referred this matter to the Crime and Corruption Commission. I table a copy of that letter because this type of behaviour cannot be tolerated.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 16 July 2020, from the member for Everton, Mr Tim Mander MP, to the Chairman, Crime and Corruption Commission, Mr Alan MacSporran QC, requesting an investigation into an alleged interference with the recruitment process for the role of Under Treasurer by Ms Jackie Trad MP [\[1197\]](#).

This is another in a long list of Labor integrity scandals. Only this week we have seen the Minister for Education, at best one could say, misrepresent her qualifications. As education minister, for her to suggest that she has a qualification at masters level because she attended a 10- to 12-week course with no exam and all she received was a certificate of completion is an absolute outrage. Many people have contacted my electorate office about that. Of course, we also had the member for South Brisbane's property deals and the member for South Brisbane's involvement in the selection of a school principal. There is also the former chief of staff of the Premier who is still under investigation by the CCC. We have seen that the Minister for Transport and the Minister for Health have been under a cloud. Of course, the Premier herself has been found—and she is the only Premier in the history of the Australian parliament to be found—in contempt of the parliament. It is certainly not good enough.

(Time expired)

Community Sport

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (2.03 pm): As Queensland unites and recovers, a key piece of the puzzle has been missing for our community until recently and that is community sports. I was proud as punch to join our Premier and Minister de Brenni at the mighty Jindalee Jags a few Sundays ago to see the girls team beat the boys team in a fabulous match in our beautiful Queensland winter sunshine. We launched the next round of FairPlay vouchers for families doing it tough during COVID. We do not want kids to miss out on the joy of playing sport because mum and dad have lost their job or have lost some hours due to COVID-19. I encourage all Mount Ommaney families—indeed, all Queensland families—to look into FairPlay vouchers and grab one if they can. It really helps to take the pressure off at this time.


Last Saturday morning I was on hand at Grindle Road, Wacol to blow the air horn on the very first kids fixtures for the fantastic St Cats soccer club. I thank president Anthony for extending that invitation. It was really exciting for me, and the kids were excited. I have to say that what really struck me was the mums and dads who were absolutely beside themselves to get their kids out of the house and onto the playing field for what felt like the first time in months so they could get some of that creative energy out. My little fellow Heath has his first game with the Oxley United under-8 Glory mixed boys and girls team tomorrow. He is the most excited that I have ever seen him. There has been no problem getting him to training at all this year.

The Palaszczuk government knows that community sport is absolutely vital for the health and wellbeing of our kids, not to mention their mums and dads, many of whom play on the adult teams. That is why recently we gave all eligible community clubs a \$2,000 grant towards their COVID-safe equipment and planning. I know that it went a long way in my local community.

Of course, none of this would be remotely possible without the dedication of our amazing community club sport volunteers. Our coaches, our referees, the grants writers—the list goes on and on. Can I please take a moment to recognise the work that has been put in by the community clubs in Mount Ommaney and right around Queensland? There are the volunteer club presidents and of course the committee of volunteers that backs them up. I will recognise just a few here in this House today for the amazing work they have done in the last few months: Anthony on the St Cats team; Russell, Helen and Claire from Oxley United; Bill, Wayne and the gang who welcomed us that morning at the Jindalee Jags; and Simon, Belinda and the Centenary Stormers team. I note that the summer sports are gearing up as well with Rodney and the Western Bulldogs—they are hard at work already with the new batting cages that the Palaszczuk government funded—and Kay and the Little Athletics as well who are still playing on the Centenary Stormers' fields.

Many workplaces have worked hard to pivot and reorganise to unite and recover, but these amazing clubs and volunteers have done it for free.

Inner City South State Secondary College, Principal Appointment Process

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (2.06 pm): Let me start where I finished on Tuesday with respect to the principal selection for the Inner City South State Secondary College. Concerningly, at paragraph 365, the CCC report said—

According to the Panel Chair:

...

If the process of meeting with the Deputy Premier had not occurred, Principal A would likely be the Band 11 Foundation Principal—

of the school. Paragraph 375 of the report states—

One of the panel members stated ...

I can recall the impression I had at the time was that the Deputy Premier wasn't happy with Principal A as the principal ... and ... the Deputy Premier wasn't happy or wasn't impressed.

Paragraph 471 of the CCC report said—

The next part of the media statement is false and was designed to mislead ...

The Minister for Education tabled a press release in this House from her director-general which verified that the numbers of the school justified making it an executive principal position. This was to ensure that principal A, Tracey Cook, did not get the job. She tabled that media statement in the parliament and the CCC said that the media statement was false and was designed to mislead. Paragraph 514 of the report states—

Instructions were given to falsify the numbers and to delete official documents

Paragraph 543 states—

Although the email had been deleted it was recovered from the DoE server as part of this investigation.

Not only were press releases made that had been falsified and numbers also falsified; they then deleted an email so the CCC could not find it. However, the CCC did find it as part of their thorough investigation into this sorry saga. In paragraph 615 the CCC states—

The Deputy Premier should not have proceeded with the meeting once she knew Principal A had not been advised she had been appointed.

Then it talks about the then deputy premier's meeting with potential applicants. A member of the Labor government introduced a potential applicant after the recruitment process of principal A to the then deputy premier and then that person applied for the job in the final round. The former deputy premier, the member for South Brisbane, did not learn her lesson from the first incident of the sorry saga. The report goes on to say—


The CCC considers the decision to mention the potential applicant in a telephone conversation with the Vice-Chancellor was unwise and entirely inappropriate.

A couple of days ago we saw the director-general of education issue a statement to all the staff at the education department. He said, 'The CCC report reinforced that we need to do things better.' I say to the director-general: no, because 99.9 per cent of the staff of the education department are doing the right thing, our wonderful teachers, principals, cleaners—everyone who works in our schools. It is the upper echelon, including the director-general, who have not done the right thing who should be held

accountable, including the minister. The director-general should not say, 'We're all in this together,' because the majority of staff are doing the right thing. He said, 'We need to make sure staff understand the accountability framework.' Again, it is the upper echelon and the minister's office that need the lessons in integrity and accountability, not the hardworking staff.

(Time expired)

Drive It NQ

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (2.09 pm): In responding to COVID-19, we must unite and recover for Queensland. As we have heard said many times in this House, we have had an outstanding health response due to our early actions and good leadership by our Premier and this government. Now we must help our economy in finding job-generating infrastructure projects that will boost job creation and help boost struggling local economies like ours in Townsville.


In Townsville I have been a strong advocate for and strong supporter of the Drive It NQ project, which I know you, Mr Deputy Speaker Stewart, and the member for Mundingburra also strongly support. Drive It is a motorsport and driver education precinct that has been allocated land via a peppercorn lease with the Townsville City Council at the Lansdown industrial precinct in the Woodstock area at Calcium, just west of Townsville. The Lansdown precinct is also the site for the proposed battery manufacturing plant, which our government is backing through investment in the feasibility study, by investing in the North West Minerals Province through our backing of \$10 million in exploration for rare earth minerals required and, finally, through our commitment of \$16 million supporting CopperString 2.0. Lansdown will be the industrial site supporting thousands of jobs in Townsville, helping pave the way out of COVID-19.

In terms of Drive It, in Townsville we have a massive motorsport following, demonstrated by 150,000 fans backing the Townsville 400 for over a decade. I am certainly one of those motorsport enthusiasts. Historically in Thuringowa we have lost speedway and the dragway, and events at the karting track have been restricted due to residential development in the area. Last year, after lobbying Minister Bailey for assistance, I was able to announce \$5 million towards the upgrade of the intersection at Woodstock required to safely get people to and from the precinct which houses Drive It, which has begun stage 1 of its development. I thank Minister Bailey for his steadfast support of this project and road safety by investing money into the upgrades required. Pat Driscoll, chair of the Drive It group, said at the recent sod turning, attended by Deputy Speaker Stewart, that the \$5 million of state funding was as good as money for the project.

The Drive It facility will deliver an estimated \$35 million worth of economic benefit to Townsville through holding events and could also deliver driver training at the facility for our emergency services personnel, of whom there are over a thousand between fire, SES, QAS and police. It could also deliver this for the military. Proudly, Townsville has the largest defence base in the nation. Of course, with the Singapore deal there will be more people coming over—once we have moved through COVID and the international borders are reopened. That could be some time off, though.

The opportunities are endless. I am warmed by the positive support I have received from Minister Kate Jones in relation to Drive It. The minister knows how important this project is to Townsville. My message to Townsville is: let's go racing.

Cairns, Tourism Industry

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (Broadwater—LNP) (2.12 pm): Yesterday in my contribution to the debate of the Treasurer's motion, where we had the pile-on of Canberra—the Morrison government bash-a-thon the likes of which we had not seen since the week before the federal election when the Shorten sycophants lined up preparing for the incoming Labor government that was 'inevitable'—I said that this parliament should be focused on controlling the things we have a say on and that it was incumbent on this parliament to find ways to stimulate our economy. I thought I would have a look at what other states are doing and report to the House.


In Victoria a task force has been established with the clear mandate to get planning and development going. In New South Wales there are three programs: planning system acceleration—67 projects since April valued at \$17 billion ready to go because the government wants things to occur; deferral of infrastructure charges; and catalytic infrastructure. What could Queensland do, rather than Morrison bashing? What about delivering Build-to-Rent, which was announced with much fanfare at the end of December 2018? That was a year before we heard of COVID, yet nothing has happened. What about getting that going? What about the catalytic infrastructure of our own through EDQ? These are

the things that can unlock private sector funding at a time that it is needed. No industry needs that more than tourism, the sector that I have the great honour of representing for the LNP. The attitude towards not allowing things to occur, particularly in our beautiful natural environment, is thwarting this state.

Today I want to make the House aware of a project that could create some magnificent ecotourism jobs—that is, SkyTrails in Cairns. It builds on the existing Smithfield bike tracks. I mention the member for Lockyer, who is a great fan of mountain biking. There are three stages comprising 120 kilometres of mountain bike trails. This proposal is led by Tony Trafford and Gus Soper, who I had the pleasure of meeting the other day. I inform the House that a petition that has been led by these people, with the support of the candidate in Barron River, Linda Cooper, has amassed over 5½ thousand signatures to get this vital project up and running. All it needs from this place is the attitude to make it happen, a government to get out of the way and work with the council—I acknowledge Councillor Brett Olds—and a little bit of funding to undertake a feasibility study.

Rather than come in here and play political games, belt Canberra and say what other people are doing, members of parliament should unlock an opportunity to create an ecotourism venture that could make Cairns the Derby of Queensland. People will come to this magnificent city and help it get off its knees in its hour of need. This is an opportunity for the far north.

Community Development Grants Program


 **Mr RUSSO** (Toohey—ALP) (2.15 pm): At the last sittings in June I spoke briefly about the federal coalition's Community Development Grants Program. A whopping 75 per cent of grants provided under this program in 2019 was rolled out to coalition held or desired seats across Australia. On 15 June this year the Australian Senate agreed to an order requiring the minister for infrastructure, regional development and cities to table documents relating to this program. It took longer than the two days specified under the order, and when it was finally responded to on 26 June it was not really any surprise that in the response the minister claimed he could not provide the details requested due to public interest immunity to protect the privacy of individuals and organisations or because of commercial confidentiality.

I want to make it perfectly clear: I fully support funding our community organisations. Community organisations are the backbone of our communities. These organisations are mostly run by volunteers who give gladly of their time to help kids through sporting and other activities, or maybe by helping seniors by arranging social activities such as ballroom dancing, bridge or other activities, or maybe the community organisations are, like the wonderful Country Women's Association. The one thing that these community focused groups have in common is that they are doing the best for their communities.

The Commonwealth development grants scheme is not about community but about blatant misuse of taxpayers' money. It is also money given to what are clearly business enterprises under the guise of developing communities. How is it a fair and just process to have taxpayers' money targeted towards LNP or coalition seats at the expense of needy and deserving community organisations? Clearly, this is just another way to manipulate voters.

The coalition government's largesse towards its own held seats is at a cost. The cost is further cuts to our ABC. By the way, the ABC has been running since 1932. Who knows what the cost is under COVID-19, with such a dramatic increase in the number of people needing help? The cost is cutting public sector regional jobs and closing regional offices. The cost is the implementation of appalling programs that suit their ideological focus such as Robodebt, which we now know was illegal. The focus of this coalition federal government remains very much on business rather than workers and definitely not on Australia's most vulnerable people. This is not the Australia of the Labor Party. Whilst the Palaszczuk Labor government is delivering jobs in industries as part of Queensland's COVID-19 recovery plan, where is the federal government? It is missing in action.

Fire Ants

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Scenic Rim—LNP) (2.19 pm): The Scenic Rim electorate is on the front line of the battle against fire ants. Unfortunately, this program appears to be failing dismally as ants continue to be found in new places. The Ombudsman is now investigating the program of its own initiative, which is remarkable as it does not do that that often.

Today I place on the public record several very serious claims made to me by former and current employees of the program who have contacted me because the culture of fear and intimidation within the program means they cannot speak up without fear of losing their job. I have often observed that

there is not enough urgency in responding to fire ants. Just two weeks ago, I exposed the situation of fire ants at Ripley that had been highlighted on ABC News 12 months ago. This week, an insider told me that they were never treated even after they were exposed on the news. What does it take?

I am told that it is common for people to work fewer hours than required, with some downing tools regularly at least two hours prior to the end of the work day. Even more concerning are claims that baiting records are falsified to show more areas being treated with bait than would be possible with the amount of bait taken from storage. It is claimed that on occasions bait was simply thrown out of vehicles because there was no willingness on that day to treat an assigned area, but the areas were in fact recorded as having been baited. In a similar vein, falsified records of attending and treating properties for ants were shown to be false just two days later when dozens of nests were found by another team as untreated, but this saw no disciplinary action taken of any type.


'Putrid' and 'toxic' are words continually used to describe the workplace. I have been told of inappropriate relationships being carried out between employees in a supervisory relationship, with inappropriate conduct between employees taking place on work sites of the program and also of one incident outside of work hours but in a public place and of no action being taken against those involved despite the obvious workplace issues that arose, including acts of vandalism and graffiti connected to those relationships and their breakdown.

The impact of these inappropriate relationships on other employees is devastating. It is toxic. Claims of nepotism abound, including in relation to people involved in inappropriate relationships. It is claimed by one person that he would be told to stop work after baiting 20 hectares a day as it was too much. The entire workplace employment culture needs to be changed from one of some—and I emphasise 'some'—managers and team leaders seeking the most out of the public purse to one of nurturing teams focused on and accountable for the eradication of fire ants.

I have heard allegations of drug and alcohol affected employees. I have heard allegations of racism where the target of the racism was transferred to another work site. I have heard allegations from residents about inappropriate and unauthorised entry into sheds and garages on people's property and the taking of photos and property that has nothing to do with fire ants. All of this diminishes greatly the public confidence in the program. There also have been claims of inappropriate recording of people's conversations on mobile phones through the installation of apps that should not be on government phones. The program needs reform.

Tabled paper: Bundle of maps relating to fire ant restricted areas [\[1201\]](#).

Pine Rivers Electorate

 **Ms BOYD** (Pine Rivers—ALP) (2.22 pm): As we unite and recover in taking action as a government from the public health crisis into economic recovery, I am so overjoyed to update the House on some of the critical works happening in my community of Pine Rivers. We have seen the fast-tracking of projects under the Works for Queensland umbrella. I put on record my thanks to the member for Sandgate, the minister in this portfolio. What this means for my community at Rob Akers Reserve is that the AFL club there will receive a major upgrade to its change room facilities. That building upgrade will more than double what council had already planned there. I thank Councillor Mick Gillam for his strong advocacy in this space. I know that the elevation of this work will also floodproof it.


I have been working with Councillor Darren Grimwade as well in relation to the Private Percy Cash Crossing at Samford. For too long it has had no infrastructure for pedestrians to cross, so we are creating a pedestrian causeway which will allow pedestrians to cease walking on the road and will provide them with a safer avenue. This is a project that the councillor and I have been working away on since the redistribution brought this community into the electorate of Pine Rivers. I am so pleased that we have found an appropriate way to address it—only under the Works for Queensland initiative. It is a fantastic program delivered by the Palaszczuk Labor government. The program delivers for our local economy, provides more local jobs and also fast-tracks that essential infrastructure that our community will rely on well into the future.

I should put on record my thanks to our new mayor, Mr Peter Flannery. I know he has been absolutely working in with the Palaszczuk Labor government and all levels of government to deliver for our community. Although he has only been in the job for a couple of months, already we see the fruits of his labour.

Additionally, we have made some great announcements around improving safety outside our schools, in particular for the school communities of Bray Park State School, which will see some flashing light infrastructure put into Hopetown Street at Bray Park, and Mount Samson State School, which is

on a fairly rural road but will see some flashing light infrastructure on Wynn Road at Mount Samson and also on the historic Spitfire Avenue at Strathpine. We will see some flashing light infrastructure which will make it safer both for the Pine Rivers State High School community and for Strathpine State School. These are fantastic initiatives being delivered by the state Labor government as we unite and recover.

Currumbin Electorate, Queensland Border

 **Mrs GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (2.25 pm): Today I rise in this chamber to talk about something that I have raised before, something that should have been fixed already. Yes, I am talking about the Palaszczuk Labor government's border blockade and the havoc that the border checkpoints continue to wreak on my border community. I have consistently asked for the Palaszczuk Labor government to fix the border checkpoints. We all understand the importance of these checkpoints in keeping Queenslanders safe. I am calling for the implementation to stop disadvantaging my border community. I call on the Palaszczuk Labor government to implement a dedicated locals-only border pass and to implement dedicated lanes for locals. I call on the Premier, please, to open the hard closures such as Tomewin Mountain Road so that my locals can get to their schools, hospitals and trade.

Today I had a heartbreaking conversation with a mum. She was in tears by the time she got to the border checkpoint. She was in tears because she had just spent four hours sitting in traffic just to try to get her young children home from school, her young children that were crying in the car for four hours.

Ms Richards: Oh, stop it.


Mrs GERBER: Do not tell me to stop it; this is a mum. This is important. This chamber needs to hear this. This is a border community. I have constituents who send their children to school across the border. Their local roads are still closed. I have tradies who need to cross the border for trade. They cannot do that. I have frontline workers who need to get to hospitals. The traffic queues are reaching the point of insanity and preventing my community members from going about their daily lives. Just yesterday, we heard the Premier say that she would make no apologies for delays at the border. I would like her to apologise to that mum who was stuck in traffic for four hours listening to her babies scream.

Mr Power interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stewart): Order! Member for Logan.

Mrs GERBER: No-one is asking this Labor government to put Queenslanders at risk. We all understand the importance of monitoring the borders. All I ask is that this Labor government does its job and implements a solution that means border residents are not slogged with unsustainable traffic. Implement a locals-only border pass, implement dedicated lanes for locals, and please open Tomewin Mountain Road so my mums can get to their school.

Coronavirus, Response

 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (2.28 pm): Queensland's response to the global coronavirus pandemic has been nothing short of outstanding, but the Queensland economy has been hit hard. I take this opportunity to assure the people in my electorate of Ipswich that this Palaszczuk Labor government has their back and has in place an economic recovery plan to help Queensland get back on its feet.

As a Queenslander, I am proud of our strong health response to COVID-19. People can see that it has worked and that communities and businesses have recovered more quickly, but there is more to do. Through our unite and recover plan, we are supporting Queensland's economic recovery by investing in futureproofing infrastructure. This means more jobs for Ipswich locals and more opportunities for local small businesses. For example, the newly announced East Ipswich Fiveways intersection upgrade being funded by the government's accelerated works program will support up to 15 jobs. Last week, I sat down with Transport and Main Roads to look at the plans for the upgrade and I am excited to see this project progressing.


I am also excited to see our government deliver \$4.4 million to the Ipswich City Council to help it carry out 18 infrastructure projects across the Ipswich region. This investment will generate 173 new local jobs and include projects such as the new amenities building for Ipswich's SES depot and footpath upgrades for the Ipswich CBD. These projects are vital for futureproofing Ipswich, and the time to do them is now so that we can get Ipswich back on the road to recovery.

I have recommenced mobile offices in my electorate and everyone I speak with is very happy with Queensland's response to the pandemic and acknowledge the Premier's great job steering Queensland through this turbulent time. Getting out into the electorate and meeting constituents is something I have missed and I want to thank those constituents who have visited my mobile offices over the past few weeks. Their perspectives on the big issues that affect Ipswich are the most important thing for me. One issue frequently raised at my Ripley mobile office is the offensive odours coming from Swanbank. While the Odour Abatement Taskforce is doing a great job cracking down on waste operators that breach their environmental obligations, Ripley residents tell me that the odours are still present and they are disgusting. They tell me they cannot have friends around to their house and they worry about what the odours are doing to their kids' health.

I believe the companies responsible need to be held accountable, and if that means considering what kinds of restrictions need to be put in place for composting then that should be something the department looks at. I know that drones are being trialled over the Swanbank industrial area with some success, and I am pleased to advise that six Envirosuites are to be installed in coming weeks to monitor and collect data. We will continue to look for solutions to this problem because we are the first government in Queensland to invest in tougher compliance and enforcement in the local waste industry for Ipswich. We were the first government to put in place plans to fix the problem, unlike the Newman LNP government that had no plan to deal with it and introduced the waste levy and increased the dumping in Ipswich. Similarly, COVID-19 is a big problem for our community. With our unite and recover plan, we can come through it.

(Time expired)

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (2.31 pm): The Palaszczuk state Labor government was woefully unprepared for such a health and economic crisis as we have seen with the COVID-19 pandemic. Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, under Labor Queensland has had either the highest or second highest unemployment rate of any state jurisdiction, and today's Australian Bureau of Statistics are damning of this Labor government. Business confidence under Labor has been the lowest in Queensland of any state jurisdiction as well. Queensland also has the highest number of bankruptcies and the highest rate of business failure, all due to this incompetent Palaszczuk state Labor government. What about debt? Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, debt in Queensland under Labor was heading to \$91.8 billion over the forward estimates, with it now being projected to reach \$100 billion.

As the Liberal National Party shadow minister for communities, disability services and seniors and shadow minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partnerships, over the last three years I have visited numerous communities throughout Queensland and just so many Queenslanders have raised with me the many failures of the Palaszczuk state Labor government. With respect to our health system, Queenslanders are absolutely fed up with a state Labor government that is generating longer surgical waitlists and allowing significant ambulance ramping to return as the so-called normal to Queensland's hospital emergency departments.

On schools and education, while the Palaszczuk state Labor government has been focused on its own integrity and accountability scandals, parents and students are crying out for a curriculum that actually teaches our students the foundation skills that they need to get a job and succeed in life. Parents and schools also want certainty and choice, and that is why the Liberal National Party is committed to supporting the vital independent public schools model which has worked for so many schools across Queensland, including my schools in the electorate of Moggill.


When it comes to both community and child safety, Queenslanders know that Labor has all but given up on ensuring the safety of our communities and our most vulnerable, and that is why the Liberal National Party has already announced a comprehensive plan aimed at implementing tougher laws to reduce crime, particularly youth crime. The Liberal National Party will also fix Queensland's broken child safety system. We are going to implement a full overhaul and create a new child protection force working 24 hours a day, seven days a week to protect our children.

Ms Farmer interjected.

Dr ROWAN: I hear the Minister for Child Safety interjecting. The minister has failed our most vulnerable in Queensland. The LNP will fix up Labor's mess when it comes to child safety in Queensland. Labor has failed, whether it is with respect to our economy, whether it is with respect to protecting jobs, whether it is with respect to health and education or public transport. It is a simple fact that the Palaszczuk state Labor government has failed Queenslanders, not only in the electorate of

Moggill but the western suburbs of Brisbane. The Liberal National Party is committed to improving the economic, health, education and social outcomes of all Queenslanders. It is only the LNP that will get Queensland working again.

Mackay Electorate, Queens Park Redevelopment


 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (2.34 pm): The Palaszczuk government's unite and recover economic plan has given an infrastructure investment guarantee of \$51.8 million over four years so that we will continue to build and employ, grow our economy and continue to ensure that the great state of Queensland continues to thrive. Whether a cyclone, flood or bushfire or health emergency, as the world is currently navigating, building infrastructure is central to our economic fightback as we unite and recover for Queensland jobs.

Mackay's Queens Park will be officially opened tomorrow following the completion of \$8.8 million worth of state funded revitalisation works. This project has proven to be an employment boost to Mackay, with more than 50 locals supported during the redevelopment. These jobs have been especially valuable over the past few months as we have battled the economic fallout from COVID-19. The revitalisation of the park shows a high quality of artisan skill in the design and the finishings, such as the intricate handmade metal orchids on the Orchid House gate. Brian Archer and his team from BWA Engineering told me that his trades team had put all of their skills together to hand make these orchids and that they were really pleased to make something with their welding skills other than working on large mining equipment. Nowhere in our state has been immune from the challenges that we are seeing in Queensland and around the world, and projects like this have been critical for businesses, workers and their families.

Tourism is also a central part of recovery, and the beautiful Queens Park is another reminder that Mackay is a good place for people to visit or come for a holiday. The project was fully funded by the Palaszczuk government to help Mackay recover from 2017's severe Tropical Cyclone Debbie. The people of Mackay can remember when those opposite ridiculed the list of projects put forward by local councils after Cyclone Debbie, especially the member for Whitsunday, who said that there is nothing wrong with the park. We believe that, where possible, repairs and restoring to the same standard after destruction are not always the best way to go; make it better and make it more resilient is the way to go, and that is what we have done with Queens Park.

Only the Labor Palaszczuk government backs the regions. In total, our government invested \$110 million to help Queensland communities get back on their feet following Cyclone Debbie. Our government is focused now on continuing to deliver our COVID economic recovery plan to get Queensland working again. It is only Labor that looks after the regions.

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Buy Local Policy

 **Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (2.37 pm): I rise to speak about the government's buy local and procurement policies and the local benefits test. I am a huge supporter of using local contractors and local suppliers for government projects and services. All government departments and entities should buy and use local. I have been informed, however, that any company in Australia or New Zealand can be classified as local under the government's procurement policy, which I think is ridiculous. I again raise serious flaws with the current policy which has resulted in local firms and suppliers not being used and contracts going to firms in Brisbane and as far away as Western Australia.


One case was a Tablelands business that supplied the Lotus Glen correctional facility with meat produce for more than 10 years. The company is within 15 minutes of Lotus Glen, employed staff on the Tablelands, purchased its meat from locals and used the local abattoir for processing. After 10 years of supply, the company was asked to tender for its contract renewal, only to find out that the majority of the contract was awarded to an international distributor with a facility based in Cairns which flew in its meat from elsewhere. The local business went from supplying \$10,000 a week to around \$1,500 a week which resulted in the laying off of staff and impacted the local community.

I have also been frustrated at government tenders for state roads that have gone to southern and Western Australian companies. I have witnessed roads which have fallen apart because these companies do not understand local conditions, do it as cheap as possible and do not have to face the consequences when the work falls to pieces.

An example is Henrietta Creek on the Palmerston Highway and the melting tar issue on the Millaa Millaa-Malanda Road last year. We were advised that firms who own no equipment and have no local road knowledge were awarded contracts because they were exceptionally great at completing

paperwork. They are often awarded jobs because they offer bargain basement prices. Companies then hire local contractors and screw them down on the price to the point where locals are losing money to do the job. The buy local procurement policy and the local benefits test sound great in theory. In reality it is badly failing local contractors and suppliers and needs a complete review to ensure locals are given every possible chance to secure government contracts and are not being hired as a third party by Brisbane or interstate firms.

Queensland Times

 **Mr MADDEN** (Ipswich West—ALP) (2.40 pm): Mr Speaker, 27 June was a sad day for Ipswich, the city where I was born, where I live and that I love. It was the last day for the print edition of the *Queensland Times*, our local newspaper, the newspaper where my parents' marriage was announced, where the birth notices for myself and my siblings were published. For longer than I can remember my day has begun, Monday to Saturday, with me scouring the front lawn looking for my rolled-up copy of the QT.

Saturday, 27 June was not just the last day for the print edition of the QT; it was also the last day for the print edition of a string of Queensland regional newspapers stretching right across the state. Their demise is not just a tragic loss but also a real discredit to the hardworking journalists and the public. There are many people who still want to read a newspaper and are prepared to pay for the privilege. Past journalists include popular ABC presenter Kerry O'Brien.

Founded in 1859 as the *Ipswich Herald*, renamed the *Queensland Times* in 1861, it is a newspaper that has covered many of the state's biggest developments, including the rivalry between Ipswich and Brisbane over which should become the state's capital, the growth of the coal industry in Queensland, the growth of Amberley RAAF base and, more recently, the careers of Bill Hayden, Neville Bonner, Alfie Langer, the Walters brothers, Australian fast bowler Andy Bichel, Pauline Hanson, Paul Pisasale, state treasurers Llew Edwards and David Hamill, Springfield's property millionaire Maha Sinnathamby and, more recently, world tennis champion Ash Barty and, every now and again, the current member for Ipswich West gets a mention.


Other Ipswich icons that have passed into history include the Cribb & Foote Department Store, later rebranded as Reid's, its competitor, TC Beirnes, Joe's Pies, the Wintergarden Theatre, the Jim Gardiner Swimming Pool and McMahon's Soft Drinks.

Thankfully the *Queensland Times* will still exist in a digital format and I look forward to continuing to work with its remaining staff, editor Andrew Korner, journalist Paige Ashby, Lachlan McIvor, David Lems, Ali Kuchel, Ebony Graveur, Samtui Selave and Ross Irby.

While 27 June was the date of the last edition of the *Queensland Times*, the day before, Friday, 26 June, was the last working day for many of the staff. On this day I got to join Rob Williams, a QT photographer, on his very last assignment. The assignment was to take a photo of myself along with Ipswich State High School principal Simon Riley, school captain Abigail Asiati and STEM prefect, Reuben Mills, for an article about the school's new \$7 million, 12-classroom, two-storey STEM building. While it was a sad occasion, I was honoured to participate in Rob's last assignment for the *Queensland Times* and I am sure, Madam Deputy Speaker, you were pleased to hear this news about your old school, Ipswich State High School.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms McMillan): Thank you.

Lockyer Electorate, Representation


 **Mr McDONALD** (Lockyer—LNP) (2.43 pm): In 2017, shortly after I was elected, our leader Deb Frecklington addressed our cohort of new MPs. I remember her telling us a couple of stories, particularly the honour she felt being the elected representative for Nanango. The words I clearly remember were, 'You represent 50,000 people in your community. You are the one person of that 50,000 who gets to come to this honoured place and speak on their behalf.' For the record, I feel great honour being able to come and represent those 50,000 people in the population of the Lockyer electorate and I am very honoured to be a part of Deb Frecklington's team. We look forward to seizing government in October 2020.

Talking about great leaders, Deb Frecklington is one and our Prime Minister, Scott Morrison, is another. The way in which he has managed this COVID pandemic is exemplary. It is world leading. Back in March when we saw the pandemic taking hold across Australia, health advice was taken

seriously and put in place. At that time there were between 50,000 and 150,000 Australians expected to die. We flattened the curve and we saved many lives. The response by the Prime Minister was outstanding.

After the health response we then faced economic troubles. It was again the Morrison-led federal LNP government that was outstanding. I give credit to the member for Buderim, who yesterday advised this House that 7.3 per cent of the federal GDP has been spent on recovery efforts. That is in stark contrast to the \$4.8 billion, being only 1.3 per cent of Queensland's economy, being spent by the Palaszczuk Labor government. That stark contrast is further evidence of the absolute hopeless performance when it comes to this Labor government's record on the economy. If we did not have a \$90 billion debt bomb and if the economy of Queensland had been managed like the competent management of the federal government, there would have been more choices that this government could have had to help Queenslanders. It is only a Deb Frecklington LNP government that will invest in the infrastructure Queensland needs. We will unleash the potential of Queensland industries and we will supercharge the regions. Only an LNP government will get Queensland working again.

Logan Electorate, Schools


 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (2.46 pm): Logan will unite and recover. We have united to follow the rules and to stop the spread of COVID-19 in Logan. We have united to look after every person; the healthy and the strong changing their behaviour so those who are aged or have health conditions could be safe. Now we will unite again to recover and create the jobs and services that the city needs. As a former high school teacher I know the value of education in transforming lives. I know about its value in giving a young person the best chance to get the job they want for life. That is why after so much work from the local community and the member for Jordan I am excited that on Tuesday the Premier announced funding for a new primary school to serve the Greenbank and North Maclean communities.

The new state-of-the-art school will be built opposite the Pub Lane shops in the Everleigh Estate behind the soon-to-be-built sport and recreation park. Opening in 2022 it will have a resource centre, multipurpose hall, prep learning area, junior learning area, student and staff amenities, canteen and covered areas—a great place, as good as anywhere in Queensland, to teach, to learn and play. It will also provide 220 jobs during construction and local jobs for teachers, teacher aides, cleaners and groundskeepers. These are vital local jobs to aid the economic recovery.

What worries me is that our plan to recover could be put at risk by the LNP. We saw that they wanted to put Logan at risk by bringing in people from Victoria to infect Logan. Indeed, we just heard a member say they wanted to continue to do it. That would slow down the recovery. I am also worried that they would not deliver on the schools we need to recover. We have heard how they cut the number of teachers for growing Logan schools, but what is worse is that they did not build the classrooms we needed in a growing area.

I have spoken before about the two other schools that we have built in Logan, but we should also mention new classrooms at Logan Village State School, an SEF block in Flagstone State Community College, a STEM centre in Park Ridge State High School, as well as a new classroom block currently being built at Logan Reserve State School. This is the investment that a growing area needs, but it is not what we got under the LNP. Members probably know that in three years the LNP built no new schools. What they probably do not know is that there was not even a single classroom built for this fast growing area. We cannot trust the LNP to keep us safe from COVID-19. They would have flooded Queensland with cases. We certainly cannot trust the LNP when it comes to helping Logan recover because they have a record of no new classrooms in Logan.

Mooloolaba Spit; JobTrainer

 **Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (2.49 pm): I want to thank the federal government for the outstanding new package that was announced today, which is great news for Queensland's apprentices and trainees. Firstly, I wish to table a nonconforming petition in relation to the Mooloolaba Spit. People are outraged at the state Labor government's secret plans to overdevelop the Spit. I table that nonconforming petition.

Tabled paper: Nonconforming petition regarding protection of the Mooloolaba Spit from overdevelopment [[1198](#)].

In March, the Liberal National Party government announced a \$1.3 billion scheme to subsidise 50 per cent of apprentice wages. Today we have heard that the federal Liberal National Party government will invest another \$1.5 billion to extend and expand that scheme for six months, until April next year. Our federal Liberal National Party government is doing the heavy lifting with regard to helping people live their lives, keep their jobs and, importantly, get the training that will give them jobs tomorrow.


I say to the Palaszczuk Labor government: do not play silly political games as they did last time with regard to training packages. This Queensland Labor government knocked back \$245 million in federal skills funding, disadvantaging Queensland's apprentices and trainees, simply because they wanted to play politics. Instead, they must step up and play a more constructive role in helping our apprentices and trainees, and this new federal package gives them that opportunity. JobTrainer is an outstanding program to help young people transition into new jobs and areas where there is opportunity.

This morning the Palaszczuk Labor government claimed that they are leading the nation. Unfortunately, they have been leading it in the wrong direction. We know that Queensland had some of the worst unemployment figures before COVID. We know that Queensland had the worst rates in respect to small business confidence in the Labor government. We also saw the number of traineeships and apprenticeships fall off a cliff in Queensland. In fact, between December 2014 and December 2019, completions had fallen by 32.7 per cent—that is, 17.9 per cent or 12,080 fewer students in training.

At a time when more than 200,000 Queenslanders are in the unemployment queue—which is the highest number ever recorded—the Palaszczuk Labor government chooses to have fake fights with Canberra instead of getting on with the job. We want to work with the federal Liberal National Party government so that we can create jobs and get Queensland working again.

(Time expired)

Redland City Council

 **Mr BROWN** (Capalaba—ALP) (2.52 pm): When a mayor has lost trust in the ratepayers, the ratepayers should lose trust in the mayor. During the last sitting week I raised serious concerns about Redland City Council officers deciding to spend a \$2.1 million state grant on a project that will financially benefit the mayor. Since then the mayor has used desperately low tactics to try to silence me by trying to sue me for defamation, demanding \$10,000 and then leaking the letter to the *Courier-Mail's* Des Houghton; however, the truth is a great defence to defamation. I table a letter from the Office of the Independent Assessor, which shares my concerns and is investigating the mayor over this matter.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 30 June 2020, from the Deputy Independent Assessor, Office of the Independent Assessor, Mr Charles Kohn, to the member for Capalaba, Mr Don Brown MP, regarding the conduct of Councillor Williams of Redland City Council [[1199](#)].

An RTI request makes revelations that show how corrupt the mayor and council are. I table that for the benefit of the House.

Tabled paper: Bundle of documents relating to right to information request to Redlands Council relating to Ekka Show holidays [[1200](#)].

Following the announcement of the change of the Ekka holiday from Wednesday to Friday, the mayor released a press statement titled 'Council poll on Redlands Coast Ekka Show day'. It states, 'Now is the time to vote on your next long weekend, with Redland City Council running an online poll to help decide'. I found it interesting that it was the mayor's suggestion to her chief of staff that the online poll should contain an option to vote for no Ekka holiday.

The RTI request reveals that the poll started to show a clear preference by ratepayers to change from the mayor's preferred Monday public holiday. It was then that the lying, manipulation and misleading by council officers started. The poll that the mayor used to justify ignoring the ratepayers was the council's online poll containing only 114 votes. That poll was contained in a report given to councillors for the purpose of voting on Wednesday, 27 May. However, an email from one council officer to another, at 9.48 am on Tuesday, states—

Please see attached screen grab of report (and the entire excel report to-date results)

I counted 129 completed survey in my inbox, but with the lag in reporting the report is only showing 114.

Leaving the date as is—is edging in front, explanation point.


Despite having all day and sending the report to councillors that afternoon, council officers misled councillors and only included the result for 114, instead of the result for 145, in the report that they used for voting the next day. Emails then show the mayor's chief of staff ordering the Facebook poll to be deleted on the day of the vote. That poll clearly showed that over 3,400 voters, or nearly 60 per cent, were in favour of changing the date.

Thirty council officers were involved in this massive act of deception of ratepayers and councillors. Is it any wonder that this year our rates went up higher than those in any other SEQ council area? If council officers are willing to do the dirty work for the mayor for just one public holiday, what other dirty work are they doing for her? I will forward this information to the CCC and urge them to investigate immediately. I look forward to the mayor's response.

(Time expired)

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms McMillan): I remind members that if you are going to interject you need to be sitting in a seat.

New Acland Coalmine

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (2.55 pm): The New Hope Group has announced yet another round of redundancies for their employees. On 6 July, 14 per cent of the corporate workforce and 15 per cent of Queensland Bulk Handling workers at the port facility were made redundant, which is on top of the 150 redundancies announced in September 2019 for mine site workers and the next round of redundancies is looming. All of that is happening in a Queensland economic climate that is toxic, although not due to the advent of COVID-19, as the Premier and Treasurer would like us to believe. Coronavirus has just added to the Treasury's woes. The dreadful state of Queensland's coffers is because of the mismanagement of the budget bottom line by the government.

New Acland stage 3 would create 187 new jobs within the first six months, 487 new jobs within 18 months and inject \$7 billion into the Queensland economy. One must wonder what part of that the Palaszczuk government does not understand. In June 2020, a motion to get this shovel-ready project up and running was passed by the Queensland Liberal and National senators in the federal parliament and supported by senators from other parties. In the past few weeks, three federal Labor members have thrown their wholehearted support behind New Acland stage 3, much to the annoyance of both the Premier and the federal opposition leader, Anthony Albanese, who has issued a gag order to his team to stop discussing the mine expansion. The 13 July edition of the *Australian* newspaper carried a scathing article from Queensland Labor Senator Anthony Chisholm, asking why it must take 13 years to approve the expansion of such a job-creating project. That is the very question that I have asked in this place time and time again.


The Toowoomba Regional Council has one of the worst unemployment figures in Australia. The New Acland project is on its doorstep, with many jobs ready to go. Recently, Mayor Paul Antonio stated—

Because of the ineptitude of the government this project has been sitting here for 13 years.

Truer words could not have been spoken. The Premier is like a broken record when asked about this project: 'The matter is before the court. Everyone in the House knows that.' That is always the response. Everyone in the House knows that Minister Lynham could approve the mine with the stroke of a pen, just as this government did with Adani. The New Acland situation has nothing to do with water, dust or noise. There are no environmental conditions at all. The appeal is being run on a legal technicality, unlike the Adani issue which was about associated water. There is only one reason that this has not been passed and it is green votes in the inner city—

(Time expired)

Townsville Electorate

 **Mr STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (2.58 pm): There is no doubt that Townsville people have been doing it tough. We have seen a downturn in the minerals commodity market, we have seen Clive Palmer close Queensland Nickel, we have seen the floods and, of course, now we have COVID-19. We have copped body blow after body blow, but we keep getting back up off the canvas; however, the Palaszczuk Labor government has invested in Townsville. The Townsville stadium is worth \$290 million. It created hundreds of local jobs and kickstarted our local struggling economy.

Talking about body blows, on Monday it was great to announce that the Jeff Horn fight is back on. It will be held in Townsville on 16 August, which is only a couple of days before my wedding anniversary. I know exactly what gift to buy my wife for our wedding anniversary. I am sure she will appreciate it, because she will be there with me with another 16,000 people. It will be worth \$5.6 million going back into our economy. What a great husband I will be when I present those tickets to her!

It is the Palaszczuk government that is continuing to invest in Townsville. We have invested \$215 million into stage 1 of the water pipeline. Some 1,000 local jobs and 420 local businesses were involved with that. There has been \$69 million for Works for Queensland funding into Townsville City Council. Now we have injected another \$13.5 million. That is 1,500 local jobs.

We know that this is a global pandemic and it is wreaking havoc right across the world either as a health or a financial burden. It is the Palaszczuk government's unite and recover plan that is focused very clearly on creating local jobs and supporting local economies. Let me explain. It is great to see the

Back to Work extension—2,700 workers in Townsville in 1,000 businesses. The Sconi mine support announced this week will create 700 local jobs, a project worth \$2.2 billion in mining nickel and cobalt for renewable batteries. CopperString 2.0 will see 400 local jobs created with the opening of the North West Minerals Province, cheaper power prices and extracting a projected \$167 billion worth of minerals. That is a great investment, getting our local jobs moving and showing there is a real strategic direction here.

What are the LNP plans for recovery? It is Strong Choices 2.0. They will sell the assets, they will cut the programs and they will sack the workers.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr STEWART: They don't like it. They just don't like it. COVID-19 has had a huge impact—

Opposition members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Members to my left!

Mr STEWART: Madam Deputy Speaker, I am sure I had a couple of seconds left on the clock.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms McMillan): Yes, you do. Continue.

Mr STEWART: COVID-19 has had a huge impact internationally. The Palaszczuk government has a very clear plan for our economic recovery. We have a proven track record in this, and that is why I am getting on with the job.


(Time expired)

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

Report, Motion to Take Note

Resumed from 18 June (see p. 1429), on motion of Mr Harper—

That the House take note of the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee Report No. 30, 56th Parliament—*Investigation of the closure of the Earle Haven residential aged care facility at Nerang (Inquiry into aged care, end-of-life and palliative care and voluntary assisted dying)* tabled on 28 November 2019.

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (3.02 pm): I rise to speak to report No. 30, titled *Investigation of the closure of the Earle Haven residential aged care facility at Nerang (Inquiry into aged care, end-of-life and palliative care and voluntary assisted dying)*, tabled by the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee in November last year. What happened at Earle Haven was an absolute disgrace and should never happen again. No-one denies that. My heart goes out to the residents of that aged-care facility for what they had to go through.

On 11 November last year, former ACT chief minister Kate Carnell AO released a report following her inquiry into the events at Earle Haven. All 23 recommendations from that inquiry were accepted. The report went deep into shining a light on the system issues that led to the Earle Haven debacle last year. It reported that on 11 July 2019, contrary to media reports that staff had walked out, the care staff of Hibiscus House and Orchid House continued to work despite being told they would not be paid. They placed the needs of residents before themselves. Many morning staff stayed beyond their shift. Staff arriving for their afternoon shift stayed on after being told they would not be paid as they arrived for work. People who were not rostered on that day or who no longer worked at the site received phone calls from their colleagues and came in to lend a hand. Some staff remained until around midnight.

My great concern is how the Palaszczuk Labor government sought to play politics with the issue and that the focus of the issue seemed to be more about maximising political opportunism. That is a disgrace. The member for Gaven seemed to be a regular visitor to Earle Haven after the incident happened but not beforehand. When I asked her at the public hearing on the Gold Coast how many times she had visited the high-care facility in the past 18 months, the member for Gaven said—

I had not visited the high-care section of the facility prior to this event. I had tried numerous times to get on site, asking the management to meet with the independent residents.

When I asked for the documentation to prove that, the member responded—

I do not know if they expressly refused or did not get back to us, but I know there were several conversations whereby we had requested and that did not eventuate.

At the same public hearing I also asked, since Earle Haven had occurred, how many times the member had visited the Nerang Nursing Centre, where 50 of those patients were evacuated to, and the answer was—

I have not been to the Nerang Nursing Centre as yet. I had every intention of visiting that facility on the Thank You For Working in Aged Care Day, but I was not able to, but I have a hamper in the back of my car for them so I will be visiting there soon. But I have received information back from some of the family members who have been to that facility.


The public hearing was on 12 September. The events at Earle Haven happened on 11 July, over two months earlier. That should say it all.

Queenslanders want to see world-class aged-care facilities that look after our most senior residents. These are Queenslanders who have worked hard all their lives and deserve to be treated with dignity and respect. There has been a disturbing trend of failures in the system and we need to ensure that standards of care are improved, with greater transparency. We need to take the politics out of this issue and focus on better care and improving the system. I would hope that all levels of government can work together in the interests of elderly Queenslanders without the political grandstanding and blame game that we have seen from the Palaszczuk Labor government. Blaming the member for Moncrieff, who had been the federal member for a minute, was disgraceful, disingenuous and downright dishonest.

It was very disappointing that health minister Steven Miles was quick to jump on the Earle Haven disaster to try and score cheap political points while complaints about abuse and neglect have been happening at state-run facilities right under his nose. Only last year, the ABC reported that an elderly resident with a cognitive impairment in a Queensland state-run aged-care facility was treated so poorly that police had to be called to investigate complaints about the use of excessive force. Another resident made a complaint about allegations of sexual assault. The details of these issues were obtained by the media under RTI, showing 16 serious complaints raised with Queensland Health in 2018. No-one knows whether it was one complaint at 16 state-run aged-care homes or 16 complaints at one home.

I wrote to the health committee last year asking that state-run aged-care facilities be included in the Earle Haven inquiry, and the silence in response has been deafening. We agree with the Queensland Nurses and Midwives' Union that there needs to be greater transparency, but that should also include state-run aged-care facilities, otherwise it is just another Labor cover-up. I have also written to health minister Steven Miles asking to visit 14 of the 16 state-run aged-care facilities that I have not managed to visit yet and there has been no response to that either. They want a world-class aged-care system, but my concern, as it always has been—

(Time expired)

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (3.07 pm): Whilst I would love to use up my time debunking the disgraceful comments by the member for Mudgeeraba—how dare she stand up here and say we were turning this into a political argument, which is exactly what she has done? I thought this was a debate about the atrocious behaviour at Earle Haven, not an opportunity to pick on the member for Gaven. Let me continue—

Opposition members interjected.

Ms PEASE: Each and every one of us in this House has a reason to be appalled. I am appalled by the member for Mudgeeraba, by the operators at Earle Haven and also by the federal government oversight body.

Opposition members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Pugh): Order!

Ms PEASE: May I say—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Lytton, member for Mudgeeraba, I was on my feet. Next time you will be warned.

Ms PEASE: On 11 July 2019, so just a little over a year ago, this appalling matter played out in the media for each and every one of us in this House to watch. The oldest and most vulnerable people in our communities were treated yet again to despicable behaviour over the almighty dollar. That is what it all actually boiled down to. It was a dispute between businessmen. Arthur Miller and HelpStreet should be absolutely ashamed of themselves for what they did. Arthur Miller decided he was on holidays and was unable to read important documents that related to the matter of his licensing agreement.

It just amazes me that we come in here and the member for Mudgeeraba says that it cannot be political. She is turning it into something political. These are old, vulnerable people—they could be our grandparents, our parents, our aunts and our uncles. They deserve to be treated better. We should all

hang our heads in shame that we let this happen. Do you know who let us down? It was the federal oversight body. That is who let us down. That organisation had been through a litany of disputes and problems for years. That is a fact and you all know it. There is no denying that. That is very clear. The federal oversight body is the one that let each and every one of those residents of Earle Haven down.

What I was so appalled by, if any of you have had the opportunity to listen to any of the hearings, was the recording of the nursing manager who called the ambulance. She was laughing. She was laughing as she called to say, 'Oh, there's something going on here. You better call some ambulances because we're shutting down the nursing home.' How disgraceful! Was it funny? It was not funny at all. It is terrible. We need to make sure that this can never, ever happen again. I will make sure that it does not. I am not going to put up with it, and I know that everyone on my side of the House is equally appalled by this.

The federal government agency needs to stand up. They need to provide more funding for aged care to look after our elderly. These are people who have shaped our community and our economy. There have been systemic failures in the aged-care sector for years. That is because it is significantly underfunded by the federal government. The Leading Age Services Australia reported that there are approximately 200 aged-care facilities that were at an unacceptable risk of going broke.


One of the other things I would like to acknowledge is the great work of the nursing staff at Earle Haven. I agree with the member for Mudgeeraba: they certainly did step up. They stepped in. There was no way that that facility could continue to operate even with the great staff who were there providing that service because HelpStreet had gone about removing the computers and all medical records. They removed bedding. They removed facilities. There was no food for the aged-care residents. There was no capacity for those people to stay there.

The ambulance officers and paramedics who attended on that day did an outstanding job taking care of those residents, as did each and every one of those people in the emergency response team who looked after the aged-care residents. Without them, goodness knows what would have happened. All that matters is that we have to make sure that we do better. We can do it better. We are good people. As you can tell, I am appalled. I had a speech written, but I am speaking from the heart. I cannot believe in this day and age that this could happen to the vulnerable people in our community. If the member for Mudgeeraba wants to make it political, take it to Canberra and ask for more funding for the aged-care sector. That would be the best thing that you could do to take care of the aged-care sector.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Pugh): Order! Member, direct your comments through the chair.

Ms PEASE: The best thing that the member for Mudgeeraba could do is call on the federal government to support the aged-care sector, as I am doing. I call for extra funding for the aged-care sector to make sure that they look after the most vulnerable in our community. I also call on the oversight body to step up and do their job a little bit better.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: I remind members to direct their comments through the chair. That means not using the word 'you'.

 **Mr McARDLE** (Caloundra—LNP) (3.12 pm): I rise to make a few comments on the report before the House. Many of us in this House have relatives, whether parents or grandparents, who reside in nursing homes. My mum resides in one at Banyo. When I heard of the report of 69 residents on 11 July 2019 having to be evacuated from Earle Haven, it sickened me because we are talking about people who are coming to the end of their life. They are weak, they are feeble, they are ill, they have dementia and they have multiple needs. They are the people that this chamber—and indeed all chambers across this nation—should be gathering around to ensure they have the best final years of their lives.


Earle Haven came down to a battle of egos of two people—Mr Bunker in HelpStreet and Arthur Miller in People Care—who forgot the primary reason why they were there. The primary reason why they were there was to provide for the residents of Earle Haven. They began chasing the almighty dollar months, if not years, before, forgetting their obligation to those people. Can you imagine being 80 years of age or older and suddenly you have all of these people around you—QAS, police, doctors. You are completely confused because you have no concept of what is going on. That is the trauma that descended on those people in July 2019 thanks to those two men.

What took place led to a triple 0 call being made. As a consequence, a code brown alert went out. I cannot praise enough the personnel of QAS and Queensland Health on that day. They were charged with coming into a situation that they knew nothing about. They had no idea how many people would have been there or their state of health, both physical and mental. They had to take charge—

and they took charge. They assessed the situation, they got them the help and the care they required and they transported them to other facilities. The great work that they did must always be remembered as one of the shining lights that came out of that tragic situation.

The committee took on the task of trying to establish the background as to why this disaster unfolded. We had to issue summonses to get people to attend. We were concerned that documents critical to the investigation we were undertaking may no longer exist unless we secured their appearance at the inquiry by a summons. That is how serious it was. It should never be forgotten that the committee took that action on one sole premise—to protect people who may find themselves in situations such as this in the future from experiencing what occurred on that day and night.

At the same time there is a royal commission taking place in regard to aged care. When you read the website of the aged-care royal commission, they are dealing with a myriad of issues. They are not dealing with the fallout purely from Earle Haven. They are dealing with the fallout across this nation of multiple issues and multiple concerns. The questions they have before them are going to guide aged care and aged-care facilities for decades to come. It has been a long time coming. Can I say this: there has been fault on both sides at the federal level by successive governments. We cannot point the finger at one and say you are at fault. They are all at fault. Can I also say this: as a collective, as a society, we are at fault as well. I agree with the member for Lytton when she made the comment that this must never happen again. We as a parliament must play a role in achieving an outcome to ensure that it never, ever happens again.


 **Mr O'ROURKE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (3.17 pm): I rise to speak in support of report No. 30, *Investigation of the closure of the Earle Haven residential aged care facility at Nerang*. The aged-care facility formed part of Earle Haven Retirement Village—namely, Hibiscus House and Orchid House—which closed on 11 July 2019, leaving 69 vulnerable aged-care residents without appropriate care. The company that was running the aged-care facility at the time was HelpStreet Villages Pty Ltd, which had removed essential equipment from the aged-care facility and told staff that they were out of a job. Management simply called triple 0 to deliver a bulk evacuation. The requirement was a fleet of ambulance and numerous health staff to support, comfort and transport the 69 residents to other aged-care facilities. These residents were confused, upset and had no understanding of what was happening.

The organisation had taken out computerised medical equipment so that staff were unable to work out what medications had been given. They removed some of the bedding and some food, which are the absolute essentials when providing a health service. The relocation of these residents was reasonable to ensure their health and safety needs were met. Those who were supposedly in charge of the facility were unable to show a suitable plan as to how they were going to ensure that residents' needs were met.

What happened at Earle Haven on the Gold Coast was absolutely disgraceful and it is not good enough. It cannot be allowed to happen again, and that is what this report is about. The report makes 12 recommendations, and most of the recommendations fall within the realm of the federal government. Over recent months we have heard numerous stories about aged-care facilities calling on the federal government to review their aged-care funding. They are struggling financially to meet the increasingly complex needs of our aged-care residents. Our Prime Minister and the federal government should hang their heads in shame for treating our ageing Queenslanders in such an appalling way.

Leading Aged Care Services Australia provided a report some months ago concerning some 200 aged-care facilities that are struggling financially and at an unacceptable risk of going broke. Insufficient federal funding has led to the stories we heard at some aged-care facilities which have not provided high-quality care for residents. They are so underfunded that they are running with a skeleton staff. Our ageing Queenslanders need to be looked after and provided with high-quality aged care.

I want to thank the ambulance staff, health officials and staff from the facility on the day of the closure for the great work they did in supporting those very vulnerable people and helping transport them to other facilities while they were very distressed and upset about everything that was going on in their lives. The recommendations in this report are about making aged care better for our loved ones. They deserve to be treated with dignity and provided with high-quality care. Our ageing Queenslanders deserve the best. I commend the report to the House.

 **Mr HUNT** (Nicklin—LNP) (3.22 pm): I rise to make a contribution and comment on the report before the House. On 17 July 2019, the committee resolved to undertake an investigation into the sudden closure of the Earle Haven residential aged-care facility at Nerang. The aim of this investigation was to determine the factors that led to this emergency situation and what could be done to prevent

such an event occurring again in Queensland. The committee also conducted the investigation as a case study for our broader inquiry into aged care, end-of-life and palliative care and voluntary assisted dying.

Can I first thank all members of the committee secretariat, which was led by Rob Hansen at the time. As has been mentioned, we were in the middle of one of the largest inquiries in Queensland history at the time and this was thrown into the mix, requiring a reallocation and increase in resources along with the appointment of council to assist. Pulling all of this together in such a short time under those circumstances was an extraordinary effort that should be recognised. I know it is much appreciated by members of the committee. I also thank council assisting the investigation, Ms Ruth O’Gorman, for her excellent work. It should be noted that the federal government also conducted an inquiry into the incident, and I will touch on some of the alternate recommendations and conclusions reached by them.

The committee held three public hearings and tabled its report 28 November 2019. The LNP members of the committee submitted a statement of reservation along with the report. Essentially, the matter under investigation was as a result of the Earle Haven Retirement Village closing abruptly on 11 July 2019 after the contracted operators of the service, Help Street Villages Pty Ltd, abandoned the facility without notice. Staff contacted emergency services, and the Queensland Ambulance Service and Queensland Health responded to the matter, allocating 69 residents into alternate care arrangements. At this point, as other members have mentioned in their contributions, I want to acknowledge their work under very difficult circumstances. This is obviously, and thankfully, an unprecedented and rare emergency. Those who responded did so admirably and with all the care and professionalism that such a situation warrants.

The fact they responded so well to the situation under the circumstances does not mean, however, that we cannot learn from the incident how we might deal with things in the future. It is very important that, when we respond to unusual incidents such as these, we take the opportunity to examine improvements to responses, resources and alternate options. Indeed, the federal inquiry made observations about the dangers of moving people under those circumstances and observed that it might be a better option in future when dealing with major disruptions such as this at an aged-care facility to look at ways of increasing resources on site to deal with the incident. The report did, however, acknowledge that under the circumstances of this incident several factors made that difficult. The federal report stated—


While making this observation with the benefit of hindsight, the reality of the day would not have easily allowed such a calm and methodical analysis of what was going on.

It goes on to say—

The Inquiry makes this finding in the hope of identifying options to better respond should a similar event ever occur in future. It is not the Inquiry’s intent to suggest the outcome of 11 July was the responsibility of emergency responders. The blame must lie squarely with the senior management of Help Street and People Care who allowed the situation to descend into disarray.

Indeed, I certainly agree with that. Our investigation uncovered concerns about the quality of care provided at the facility. Essentially, the urgency of the incident itself arose out of a contractual dispute between People Care Pty Ltd, the accredited operator of the facility, and Help Street Villages Pty Ltd, the company engaged by People Care to operate the facility. This led to what can only be described as an act of corporate sabotage and indifference to human suffering when Help Street abandoned the site without notice. The federal government inquiry also acknowledged where improvements are needed and made several recommendations around the oversight of these matters which should serve to ensure that an incident like this does not occur again.

I would like to congratulate the Morrison government for their much needed royal commission into aged care so we can reform it for the future. As the member for Caloundra said, there is fault on both sides. For the member for Rockhampton to get up here and start blaming the current federal government is disingenuous. The government talks about not making it political, but then the member for Rockhampton goes and does that. Congratulations to the Morrison government.

 **Ms SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (3.27 pm): I rise to make a contribution on the investigation of the closure of the Earle Haven residential aged-care facility at Nerang and report. In so doing I would like to thank the chair and committee for scrutinising the litany of failures that led to 69 frail, elderly residents in my community being grossly let down by the system that was supposed to care for them. The aged care sector has become a national disgrace, and unfortunately my community has been at the centre of that failure. This is an issue I have been speaking about for some time now.

On 21 September 2018 the *Gold Coast Bulletin* published an article titled ‘Staffing shortage unsafe’ wherein I commented on a statewide audit that showed the electorate of Moncrieff had the worst hours of care provided to residents in the state. On 16 November 2018 again the *Gold Coast*

Bulletin published an article titled 'Elderly deserve a better level of care' which outlines the issues I was hearing from aged-care staff on the ground at the time. On 30 October 2018 I stood in this chamber and articulated my concerns as a matter of public interest in relation to insufficient staffing levels and associated elder neglect. On 9 May 2019 I spoke in this parliament about the impact the privatisation of the aged-care sector is having on our public hospitals.

I started a petition almost a year before the closure of this facility, calling on the federal government to ensure that the aged-care sector had a safe level of staffing. I articulated my concern about the privatisation of this sector meaning that operators are propping up their profits by cutting corners and shifting their costs onto the public healthcare system. I knew the system was bad: I did not think it was so bad we would reach the point we did on 11 July 2019, when I received a phone call stating that triple 0 had been called to relocate 69 elderly residents from Orchid House and Hibiscus House at Earle Haven over what, as we now understand, appears to have been a contract dispute over money.


I drove to the facility that evening where I remained with the health minister until the late hours of the evening. What I witnessed was akin to what we would see during a disaster. I want to thank all of the emergency services, health staff and aged-care staff who stayed behind until the very early hours the next day to ensure that everyone had a safe place to stay. I also want to thank the families who have shared their experiences through this investigation to ensure that this never happens again. As the report said, 'Put bluntly, the events at Earle Haven should never have happened.'

What has come to light since this incident is that there were a number of red flags that raised some very serious questions of the federal government, which was responsible for the regulation of this sector. On 30 April 2007 People Care, the approved provider, were sanctioned. They were again sanctioned on 3 June 2016 with a report identifying an immediate and severe risk to care recipients' safety and health and wellbeing. This detailed a failure to ensure appropriate clinical care that is consistent with general health, adequate nutrition and hydration, and a failure to provide care recipients with a safe and comfortable environment.

On 11 May 2017, People Care Pty Ltd were again sanctioned, and on 22 January 2019 they were issued with a noncompliance notice. We have also learnt that 22 complaints were made against the nursing home to the Aged Care Complaints Commissioner leading up to the incident since January 2019. It is therefore entirely appropriate that the committee has called on the federal government to take action because they are primarily responsible and accountable for deciding aged-care funding arrangements, the standards of care for clients, how complaints are dealt with and which providers are permitted to operate.

There are many recommendations in this report which would go a long way in protecting elderly residents in our community and I acknowledge the important work staff do every day caring for our loved ones. In particular, I would like to see the federal government improve transparency by implementing improvements in aged-care sector reporting and putting in place minimum staffing levels in private facilities, like we have legislated for in our publicly owned facilities. I also support an increase in wages for aged-care employees, with the long-term goal to achieve wage parity with other health sectors. I have shared the story in this parliament before of Allison, an aged-care worker who has been in the industry for 10 years and is paid \$24 an hour.

This report will not fix everything, but it goes a long way in addressing problems that have been ignored for too long. It is easy for us all to forget sometimes the impact that these reports have on people's lives. I recently called Lorraine Cook, a woman in my electorate whose husband was moved from that facility that evening. He went to another facility that she was not comfortable with and has since gone to another facility and is now at the end stages of his life. She wants to see systemic change in this sector, as do I, and that is what this report aims to do. Private providers need to be held accountable, as do governments.

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (3.32 pm): I rise to make a brief contribution on the health committee's report into the closure of the Earle Haven aged-care facility. As others have mentioned, this was an unexpected but in some ways timely detour amongst the committee's broader inquiry into aged care, palliative care and voluntary assisted dying. I say it was timely certainly not because anyone on the committee wanted to find ourselves there; it was timely because it was such an instructive case study in the risks of profit driven provision of this kind of essential service.

Other speakers have referred already to some of the impacts on the residents that we heard in evidence in this part of the inquiry. That is one of the things that will stick with me most. These were incredibly frail people. Many of them were suffering from dementia or other forms of ill health which

made it so difficult for them to deal with such an unsettling experience. These are people for whom familiarity with their surroundings is so important, so to be moved on at such short notice and the challenge of finding somewhere else for them to live was quite extraordinary to see. I want to echo the comments that have been made previously about how impressive the response from the ambulance and health department was in circumstances that should not have arisen.

As has been described already, it was a pretty straight up and down commercial dispute. The deputy chair and member for Caloundra called it a battle of egos but I think it was much simpler than that. These were two companies which, within the framework that exists at the moment, were both out to make the most money they could from the provision of this essential service. We have all heard in the contributions and we all agree that this is something that should not have happened and it should never happen again.

One thing that concerns me is that the backdrop for this incident was not unique, and I do not see that we have really gone any way in terms of making sure it does not happen again. We still have arrangements that allow an approved aged-care provider to outsource the provision of care to another company that is looking to make money out of it and provide services at the least possible cost. Often times we are dealing with very large companies in the provision of aged care. These are companies that are listed and that have a legal obligation to maximise returns for their shareholders. In those circumstances, I do not think we should be particularly surprised that, when their profit motives are not being served anymore, they drop these elderly and very vulnerable people like they are hot and get out of there. A lot of work obviously needs to be done in the aged-care sector to make sure we do not see this sort of behaviour repeated. I am very keen to see the response to the royal commission, as we all are.

I want to express my thanks again, as we always do, to the secretariat for the enormous amount of work they did in supporting the committee throughout that massive inquiry last year. I want to reiterate my thanks to counsel assisting, Ruth O’Gorman. She did an outstanding job with a huge amount of material and in very short time frames to get the committee across what we needed to know and to also make sure that the evidence, the conduct and the scrutiny of everyone involved in this, particularly those aged-care providers, was laid bare. I commend the report to the House.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

STATE DEVELOPMENT, NATURAL RESOURCES AND AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Report, Motion to Take Note



Mr WHITING (Bancroft—ALP) (3.36 pm): I move—

That the House take note of the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee Report No. 42, 56th Parliament—*Inquiry into the impacts of invasive plants (weeds) and their control in Queensland* tabled on 6 December 2019.

I want to start by thanking our secretariat who processed an enormous amount of information on this inquiry to present this report. They have done tremendous work on this. The committee’s inquiry was on just three weeds—prickly acacia, fireweed and giant rat’s tail. We found that the local, state and federal governments are meeting their responsibilities as need be and that our Queensland biosecurity programs are effective and financed appropriately. There could be better coordination amongst jurisdictions, but the truly scary thing I found in this inquiry is what is waiting over the border. One of these weeds has been here for 150 years, but the committee inquiry emphasised to me that our biosecurity threats are a lot greater than perhaps we perceive.

As I said, one of these weeds has been here for 150 years. It was 1872 when prickly acacia first arrived and it is considered to be one of Australia’s worst weeds. Fireweed was brought into Australia 100 years ago and giant rat’s tail came 50 years ago. This inquiry only looked at three weeds, but we know there are 1,400 species of weeds in Queensland and over 170 invasive weeds throughout Queensland. It is extremely difficult to eradicate every weed.

Another theme I want to touch on that we discovered with this inquiry is that a lot of initiatives and projects are happening, whether on other weeds or these three weeds specifically. I have been impressed with how all jurisdictions have worked well together under the Biosecurity Act. The Biosecurity Act is a good framework for dealing with weeds such as these three. It was introduced in


2016 and it gives that framework for all biosecurity in Queensland. The act imposes obligations on individuals and organisations to take reasonable and practical steps to prevent or minimise biosecurity risks, and biosecurity means plants or animals.

Everyone plays their part including councils, and they have done a tremendous job. There could be better coordination. An example of a successful collaboration is the Flinders Shire Council's Good Neighbour Program as well as their War on Weeds project in partnership with Southern Gulf NRM group.

At a state level I think this report also highlights what is working well and what we have done. For example, in 2016 nearly an extra \$11 million went to Biosecurity Queensland and we redirected \$20 million of funding towards our capability building in Queensland. I am so glad the report has highlighted what we are doing and what we are putting towards biosecurity risks within Queensland. Another example is the Queensland Feral Pest Initiative, a joint federal and Queensland government funded project. There is also funding going to regional NRM groups and industry for their programs. In 2017 DNRM invested \$12 million in weed control.

One of the things that really struck me while undertaking this inquiry and also after the drafting of the report was those bigger biosecurity risks out there. There are a lot more threats that have not arrived and they are just lurking over the border. We must deal with them before they become established. That is the key. We must use science to deal with that. For example, African swine fever could cause \$2 billion worth of damage to our pork industry. If that came in we would have to eradicate entire herds. There is no vaccine for this disease and it has already arrived in Timor-Leste. If foot-and-mouth disease gets in, it would be a \$50 billion hit to the Australian economy.

One of the great things about this report into the three weeds that have been here a long time is that we are doing a lot of work on them, but biosecurity is everyone's responsibility.

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (3.41 pm): I rise to make a contribution as a member of the committee that undertook the second iteration of this self-referred inquiry. It was begun in the last term of parliament after it was introduced in 2016. It lapsed with the election and it was picked up again, and finally the report was tabled in December 2019. This was an opportunity to provide some solutions and some avenues to address the threat that weeds pose to the agricultural industry across this state. Unfortunately, that opportunity was missed as only one recommendation came out of the whole report and that was that the report be noted.

As the chair has said, the impact of the three weeds was investigated in this inquiry. Those weeds are prickly acacia, giant rat's-tail grass and fireweed. In my part of the world on the Downs fireweed is by far the most prevalent. People can actually find it while driving around now; they can see the yellow flowers. Of the three weeds included in the inquiry, fireweed is the only one that has toxicity; it can be fatal to cattle. That is very hard to diagnose. It usually takes an autopsy to discover they were a victim of fireweed. There are two different varieties of fireweed. One is an introduced species from South Africa and the other is native. That further complicates the situation. They are very hard to distinguish from one another; people actually need to know a fair bit about them.

Giant rat's-tail grass was another one that we looked into. We went to Gladstone and looked at giant rat's-tail grass there. Mind you, we had to walk through a lot of grader grass before we could get to the giant rat's-tail grass; there were weeds everywhere. It is a significant problem up there and one that is not easily solved. We saw a similar situation when we went to Gatton. We saw a national park in Gatton that was full of giant rat's-tail grass that was coming from state owned land onto private land. We also saw hobby farms in that area. We also get fireweed in my part of the world and I know the member for Ipswich West does in his part of the world as well. There is not enough control by some of those landowners and there is no sufficient register to show where those outbreaks are located.


In terms of prickly acacia, we went to Hughenden and Barcaldine and also out to Aramac. Prickly acacia is taking over a lot of land up in the north. It really took off amongst those open flowing bore drains in the north. Capping those bore drains has certainly helped, but we saw thousands of acres of prickly acacia. We did a tour to view where they have been spreading pellets on it by air. They are doing a great job to control that. There are very few native trees there for shade, so they have to be very careful that they do not take them out.

It was incredibly disappointing at the last federal election for Minister Furner, the state minister, to stand up with the federal minister and pledge \$5 million worth of funding to address prickly acacia because after the election that just disappeared; we have never seen it. I tabled a photo in this House after the dreadful floods in North Queensland to show that prickly acacia has just gone wild. It probably

had one of the biggest spreading and seeding events since it has been here. It is right down into Warrego and it is threatening Eyre basin. This is a weed that we need to take a grip of, and this was an opportunity to do it.

Some of the failings are between state owned land, federal land and council land and some of the challenges are with small councils. For instance, in Barcaldine they have a very small rate base. They do not have a lot of funds. The councillors who are asked to enforce this are often neighbours with those who offend. This report was an opportunity to provide a road map through that. At every agriculture meeting I have been to since this started people have asked me, 'Where's the report? Where's the report?' There was disappointment from AgForce, the QFF, Desert Channels and those NRM groups; they were disgusted that this was the best effort the committee could come up with. So much work went into the inquiry. There were 60 submitters to this, 49 people appeared at hearings and all we could do was note the report.

(Time expired)

 **Mr MADDEN** (Ipswich West—ALP) (3.46 pm): In 2016 the member for Gympie and I, as members of the then agriculture and environment committee, successfully moved a motion that the committee investigate the impact of invasive weeds and the effectiveness of control programs for Queensland's \$12 billion agriculture sector. At the time the member for Gladstone was the chair of the committee and he supported the motion. The terms of reference for the committee were that the committee investigate and report to parliament on the impacts of invasive weeds and their control in Queensland, particularly whether—

- the responsibilities of local governments in relation to the control of prohibited, restricted and invasive plants imposed under s.48 of the Biosecurity Act 2014 are reasonable, and local governments are meeting those obligations
- programs for the control of weeds on Crown land administered by the Department of Natural Resources and Mines are effective
- Biosecurity Queensland's weeds programs, including biological controls and new technologies, are adequately funded and effective at controlling weeds
- environmental programs administered by the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection impact favourably on weed control programs administered by the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries and local governments, and
- federal, state and local government weeds programs are coordinated to maximise their achievements and to have a whole of government approach.


It was not possible to examine all government programs concerning invasive weeds, so the committee resolved to examine the impact of three plant species as case studies for the inquiry. As previous speakers have mentioned, they were prickly acacia, giant rat's-tail and fireweed. Just over 3,200 introduced plant species have naturalised in Australia, 500 of which have been declared noxious or are under some form of legislative control. It is estimated that the cost to the Australian economy of agricultural impacts of weeds is about \$4 billion annually. This includes the direct cost of weed control, reduction in yield and contamination of agricultural products. The economic impact of weeds on nature conservation, tourism and landscape amenity has been estimated at a further \$4 billion annually.

There was a high level of interest in the inquiry, especially from the agricultural industry sector, and public hearings were well attended. The committee appreciated the engagement and commitment displayed by the submitters and attendees. These hearings included a hearing at the University of Queensland Gatton campus, where I undertook my undergraduate and postgraduate studies in weed science and specialised in the study of invasive weeds, so the inquiry was of particular interest to me. I would like to thank those individuals and organisations who made submissions and put their faith in the committee to provide clear direction to the state government with what action is required to address the problem of invasive weeds.

With its report tabled in December 2019, titled *Inquiry into the impacts of invasive plants (weeds) and their control in Queensland*, the committee made only one recommendation—that the Legislative Assembly note the report—but, in a significant development, the Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries released the Queensland Invasive Plants and Animals Strategy 2019-2024 in that same month, December 2019. This strategy highlights existing established invasive plants, exotic weeds and pest animals in Queensland. The strategy also underlines the importance of management and building on the principle of governments, industry and the community working together to minimise the impacts of weeds on the Queensland economy, environment, social amenity and human health.

At the federal level, the federal Minister for Agriculture had been working towards a biosecurity levy that would have delivered \$325 million over three years towards biosecurity programs and protecting Australian borders. This levy was due to commence on 1 July this year but was axed at the eleventh hour.

I would like to thank my fellow members of the Natural Resources, Agricultural Industry Development and Environment Committee, the committee secretariat, the submitters and Hansard. I commend the report to the House.

 **Mr BATT** (Bundaberg—LNP) (3.51 pm): I rise to discuss the report titled *Inquiry into the impacts of invasive plants (weeds) and their control in Queensland*. As I commence, I would also like to thank my fellow committee members and the secretariat staff for their involvement and assistance throughout the process. In the time I have today I will be voicing my extreme disappointment in the Labor government, which is failing to help our farmers deal with detrimental invasive weeds like prickly acacia, giant rat's-tail grass and fireweed.


During the previous 55th Parliament the then Agriculture and Environment Committee, AEC, undertook an inquiry into the impacts of invasive plants and weeds and their control across the state. The AEC received 60 public submissions to the inquiry and held six public hearings across Queensland but was unable to finalise its report before the 55th Parliament was dissolved for the 2017 state election. As part of the current 56th Parliament, the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee resolved to finalise the inquiry and report to parliament on this important issue. As a member of that committee and as the state member for my regional electorate of Bundaberg, I would like to express my frustrations at the fact that the report, which commenced in November 2016, has taken three years to be released. I would like to express my disgust at the fact that this Labor government is making no changes as a result of this inquiry, simply stating that it will note the contents of this report.

Every rural and regional Queenslander knows that weeds are a major problem, and all agricultural lobby groups, local councils and NRM groups reinforced this message during the inquiry. Farmers in these representative groups, including those in and near my electorate of Bundaberg, have been waiting to see the committee recommendations from this report but there are none. This is unbelievable for an issue this serious. This is a massive slap in the face to all Queenslanders who engaged in the committee process in good faith by making submissions and participating in the process to receive absolutely nothing in return. It is a slap in the face for everyone else in the agricultural sector, too. Queenslanders were told that this was their opportunity to have their say and make a difference, but after three years and thousands of combined hours of effort and goodwill, the Labor government has completely disregarded the spirit of the original inquiry, continuing to cover up its ineffective and limited weed control programs. It would be hard, in fact almost impossible, for Queensland landholders and farmers to not be cynical as to the whole process and question whether there was ever any intent to make any meaningful recommendations and changes or rather leave the control of weeds in the too-hard basket.

A report with actual and proper recommendations would have called on the Labor agriculture minister, Mark Furner, to act on the management of weeds in this state—something that I believe he is incapable of and unwilling to do. This is the same minister who committed \$5 million of state funding to match the federal government's commitment to tackle the spread of prickly acacia and then failed to actually provide the funding once the election was over. Invasive weeds may not be a problem in the Brisbane bubble where some of the committee members and the agriculture minister live, but in regional Queensland, like my electorate of Bundaberg, these weeds, especially GRT, are causing significant damage to our agricultural and horticultural industries.

As a regional MP and a former local government councillor and deputy mayor, I am very aware of the impacts invasive weeds are having on our farming sector. There is something deeply unsettling about the Labor government's failure to uphold its obligations to the management of the state's pests, weeds and biosecurity. As an example, the state's principal third-party advisory group, the Biosecurity Queensland Ministerial Advisory Committee, which is supposed to inform the government on such matters, has been dormant for more than 20 months. There have been no meetings and no public information on the review of the Biosecurity Act 2014 and regulations in that time. It is easy to get good marks on the way the laws are working when there is no industry or third-party scrutiny through the relevant committee.

When it comes to issues affecting rural and regional areas in Queensland, Labor continues to be a government from Brisbane for Brisbane. We have seen Labor's ignorance with the Paradise Dam debacle, and we see it again with its inability to manage invasive weeds in our great state. While my electorate of Bundaberg and all other regional seats in Queensland continue to lose our battle against weeds, the minister and Labor continue to play politics from their inner-city offices and ignore the real problems at hand. This report is a disgrace and a complete injustice to the important issues this inquiry was meant to investigate.

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (3.56 pm): I rise to make a brief contribution to the debate of the committee report. At the outset it is appropriate to thank our wonderful secretariat, who have done a wonderful job over the past few years. As you said in your contribution, Mr Deputy Speaker Whiting, they do such a volume of work for us as a committee. I thank Jacqui Dewar and her able team for doing that for us once again. We cover a really wide variety of issues. I was not around in the last parliament, unlike some other members of the committee, so it was wonderful to have the opportunity to participate in the inquiry into the impact of invasive weeds and their control in Queensland. As you said as chair of the committee, Mr Deputy Speaker Whiting, all Queenslanders have a general biosecurity obligation under Queensland's Biosecurity Act 2014—each and every one of us. That means that everyone is responsible for managing biosecurity risks that are under their control and that they know about or should reasonably be expected to know about.

The inquiry into the impacts of invasive plants and weeds and their control in Queensland was established to investigate three weeds—prickly acacia, fireweed and giant rat's-tail grass—their impact and their control in Queensland. This inquiry commenced before my time—as I said, in late 2016—and the report was not finalised prior to the dissolution of the 55th Parliament. However, in the 56th Parliament the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee identified the importance of the work already commenced on this significant topic, coupled with the high level of public interest, particularly in those regional areas that we have heard about. The committee finalised and then tabled the report in December last year.


We have over 170 invasive plants or weeds here in Queensland. We know that the task of eradicating every single weed would be extremely difficult. We certainly cannot say that an investigation into just three weeds is the be-all and end-all. Here in Queensland of course we need to take our biosecurity very seriously. We have to assess incursions and realistically assess them accordingly. That is why in December 2019 Minister Furner released the Queensland Invasive Plants and Animals Strategy 2019-2024. This strategy highlights existing, established invasive plants, exotic weeds and pest animals in Queensland. The strategy also underlines the importance of management and of building on the principle of a shared responsibility and the commitment from landholders, government, industry and the community to work together to minimise the impact of weeds on Queensland's economy, environment, social amenity and human health.

Invasive plants in Queensland are principally regulated under the Biosecurity Act 2014, though other legislation and local government laws also place obligations on people and persons to manage or control weeds. Local government biosecurity plans outline responsibilities, objectives and strategies for the management of invasive biosecurity matters in their area. Biosecurity Queensland continues this cooperative partnership with local governments—we have over 70 in Queensland—and industry to improve the management of regional and local invasive weeds and to ensure an understanding of biosecurity obligations. Local governments are empowered to give those biosecurity orders to landowners who fail to manage invasive biosecurity regardless of who is the landowner or the manager.

Debate, on motion of Ms Pugh, adjourned.

COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Portfolio Committees, Reporting Dates and Transfer of Responsibilities

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (4.01 pm): I seek to advise the House of the determinations made by the Committee of the Legislative Assembly at its meeting today.

The committee has resolved pursuant to standing order 136 that the Education, Employment and Small Business Committee report on the Public Service and Other Legislation Amendment Bill and Criminal Code and Other Legislation (Wage Theft) Amendment Bill 2020 by 28 August 2020; the State Development, Tourism, Innovation and Manufacturing Committee report on the Nature Conservation and Other Legislation (Indigenous Joint Management—Moreton Island) Amendment Bill by 28 August 2020; the Natural Resources, Agricultural Industry Development and Environment Committee report on the Waste Reduction and Recycling (Plastic Items) Amendment Bill by 28 August 2020; the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee report on the Child Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Bill by 28 August 2020; and the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee report on the Meriba Omasker Kaziw Kazipa (Torres Strait Islander Traditional Child Rearing Practice) Bill by 28 August 2020.

The committee has resolved pursuant to standing order 194B that Auditor-General's report No. 16, *Licensing builders and building trades*, be transferred to the Transport and Public Works Committee.

MOTION

Amendment to Business Program



Hon. YM D'ATH (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (4.02 pm): I move—

That, in accordance with sessional order 2B.(4) and (5), the business program motion agreed to by the House for this week be amended by omitting and inserting 1(d) as follows—

(d) the Ministerial and Other Office Holder Staff and Other Legislation Amendment Bill.

Motion agreed to.

CORRECTIVE SERVICES AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from p. 1758, on motion of Mr Ryan—

That the bill be now read a second time.



Mr MOLHOEK (Southport—LNP) (4.02 pm), continuing: I rise to conclude the debate. Prior to the break, I was expressing concern and a little frustration at the fact that gel blasters are to be considered and treated the same as weapons under the Weapons Categories Regulation 1997. I draw to the House's attention that across Queensland the Gel Blaster Association supported an e-petition tabled in this House with some 11,000 signatures rejecting the suggestion that these toys—these gel blaster guns—be included under weapons category legislation and that there should be some exemption for them.

As I said earlier, as the father of four sons I always encouraged my boys to go out and to enjoy a bit of an adventure. Times have changed. When the boys were younger, we certainly enjoyed some great times out on the farm with grandad and a .22. I realise that in this day and age the regulations around that are a lot tighter and that even that opportunity for many young men and children is not available any longer.

We are depriving our children of fun, adventure and the opportunity just to take a bit of personal responsibility and to learn a few hard lessons of life. It can be dangerous—and I do understand that—but life is an adventure. As a young child, I remember a little bridge across a creek near my home. If you went there on the wrong day you might be unlucky enough to be shot with a slug gun in the leg or the thigh or to cop one in the back. It was not always pleasant, but it certainly helped you to grow up. On that note I will leave the debate to others in the House, but it is a very sad day when we as a state take yet another step to becoming even more of a nanny state than we are already.



Mr POWER (Logan—ALP) (4.05 pm): I wish to speak on the Corrective Services and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. A theme of my speech is that on these issues the LNP is really contradictory. Last night we heard the member for Ninderry's motion on a really ill-conceived policy purporting to tackle juvenile crime, but it was really attempting to tackle inadequacies in the LNP's election policies and in what it took to the public. We heard members opposite say that we were soft on crime, but less than 15 minutes later we heard others say that we have locked up too many people and as a result our prisons are too overcrowded. When we reveal some of these hypocrisies and doublespeak, members opposite start yelling and crying.

Ms Scanlon interjected.

Mr POWER: That is why they do it, member for Gaven. They cannot hold a consistent line on this for 15 minutes, but we know that that is what they are like on so many issues.

As an aside, during the 2015 election campaign, after three years of the LNP government, a prison educator came up to me in the street when I was in Crestmead and said that he wanted to help out my campaign. I said, 'Are you a local?' He said, 'No, I actually come from a little bit of a different place, but I have driven past here and I want to help you out.' He taught in our prisons. I note that the member for Ninderry gave extensive speeches on training in prisons and the need for them, so I am responding to that.

This man was a prison educator. He taught at a trade school—I will not mention the name as I might give him away. He said that he felt so diminished as they were all getting sacked by the LNP and that people coming out of the prisons did not have trade skills or skills. He felt that he was in the literal sense a servant of the public, giving these guys something that they could take away which gave them a little bit of confidence. He felt massively undermined by the LNP in what he was doing for these

troubled young people and in terms of the public benefit he felt he delivered, because he knew he could give them a little bit of confidence in work and set them on the right path. But the LNP sacked so many of them. That is why he came out and wanted to get rid of the LNP. We do not want to go back there in those terms.

I have also listened to some opposition about the original inclusion—this is when COVID was at its height—to release prisoners on parole a couple of days earlier if it works better in terms of getting people out of the prison community and back to a stable home community where we can manage these situations. We are not doing that. Members opposite know we are not doing that, but they wanted to continue to talk about it. That is not considered a priority.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stevens): Order! Members on my left. The member is not taking your interjections. Please cease interjecting.

Mr POWER: This has become something of a distraction. As the opposition knows so well, we have done so well in terms of COVID but we have such a long way to go.

An honourable member: Thanks ScoMo.

Mr POWER: He did a good job in Victoria, didn't he? I am advised that the member for Kawana oversaw the release of over 1,000 prisoners when he was the member who loved pink jumpsuits so much. That is 1,000 prisoners who did the crime but did not really do the time or did the time but less a day or two. There may have been good administrative reasons for that. It may have saved the prison service by doing only one trip. That might have been the case so I do not intend to condemn the member for Kawana for those 1,000 prisoners who were released early, but I will condemn him for his hypocrisy in this place and the hypocrisy of the LNP on this issue.


I now refer to a particular type of replica pistol and gun included in this bill, and that is gel blasters. We heard one member opposite say that members of the public should not be fooled by the appearance of gel blasters, but that is precisely the problem if someone feels intimidation and fear by thinking that it is a real weapon. I have spoken to some residents who saw someone cocking what they thought was a real weapon—a rifle—at their household and various different directions, including towards them. They were fooled by the appearance of the weapon and did have genuine fear.

The other issue is that that meant that police had to interview those people, and that was taking those police resources away from elsewhere. This legislation is absolutely clear about how these weapons are used and creates a safe framework. This creates a safe framework, protects the community and protects small businesses but allows people to continue safely enjoying a popular pastime. Everyone can enjoy a popular pastime. Almost all gel blaster owners behave responsibly. They would not be framing their sights on others, but unfortunately these incidents—and I have just told the House about one that was real—can be a significant issue. The State Coroner recommended that the government consider regulating replica firearms and the commissioner was asked to consider what steps this should take. These issues are quite important.

It is interesting—and remember that my theme is hypocrisy and doublespeak—to note that on 30 August 2018 Deb Frecklington on Seven News said, 'I think Fair Trading should take a look into banning them.' She was absolute; she wanted a ban. However, we know that—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stevens): Member for Logan, I ask you to correct the record and call the member by their correct title, please.

Mr POWER: My apologies. We know that there is hypocrisy in that the member for Nanango said that she thinks that Fair Trading should ban them. That is the hypocrisy that those opposite display on these issues and that is why I think much of what those opposite have said should not be taken seriously. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr DAMETTO** (Hinchinbrook—KAP) (4.12 pm): I rise to give my contribution to the debate on the Corrective Services and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. Before I start, I want to acknowledge the 14 submissions to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee on this bill. It is a dark day in Queensland when we start going after the low-hanging fruit in the community rather than get to the crux of what is going on with crime in our community. Real crime is wreaking havoc throughout the seat of Hinchinbrook and parts of Townsville. The problem is that youth offenders are running around in stolen cars night in and night out, yet here we are taking away the opportunity for little Johnny and little Sarah to use their gel blasters.

An opposition member: Soft on crime!

Mr DAMETTO: Exactly—soft; I take that interjection from the member. Once again the government is going soft on crime yet going hard on toys because it is the low-hanging fruit. People are just trying to have a good time and buy the kids a Christmas present. I will even admit that I bought my kids a Christmas present this year when I went into the local gel blasting store.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DAMETTO: It will be the first one I have bought for a while! I went in there; I had a couple of bucks spare in my back pocket! That store had the most brilliant atmosphere in the world. I walked in and it was like walking into a toy store, and some fun toys for once! As a kid I can remember that we could walk into Coles and buy a cap gun and a roll of caps for that cap gun. We then went through the stage where we tried to phase out guns as toys for kids because there is a part of the community that does not want kids playing with guns because they do not want kids enjoying firearms as adults as a sport. There are people who are making it very hard for others to enjoy that sport and they would hate for kids to maybe one day grow up and enjoy the sport of sports shooting. We are going to ban toys so that we cannot influence little kids playing with guns. I am sorry if that upsets some people, but it upsets me more that this right is being taken away by overregulating this industry.

Young people have started businesses off the back of this idea of selling gel blasters and selling gel blaster equipment to people in the community, and they are enjoying this new-found industry. I tabled a petition in the parliament started by Craig Bainbridge, a gentleman who lives in the Hill electorate. He started a business off the back of selling gel blasters. Guess what? He was absolutely horrified when he heard the idea that the state government was thinking about legislating and regulating against these things as if they were real guns. We started that petition and Queenslanders got behind it. Gel blaster users all over Queensland signed that petition. Over 11,000 people signed that petition and that should have sent a very strong message to the police minister—that is, that the government needs to wind back on this. I understand that some people have been scared by seeing gel blasters in public view, but they are few and far between. Let us be honest: there is already legislation and laws in place that can imprison a person for two years for taking one of these gel blasters out in public and firing them at a person who has not consented to it. Do not tell me that we need to regulate this, because it will only break down small businesses.

There are other issues in this legislation with regard to gel blasters that concern me. The fact that we will now have to lock them up as if they are a real firearm is ludicrous. These are toys. They should be thrown in the toy box alongside the other toys, not lock them up like firearms owned by someone with a weapons licence. What is next? Are we going to include water pistols in this regulation as well? They shoot a projectile. Are we going to ban rubber band guns being sold at local markets? They project a projectile. If you draw down into the bill, they are probably going to have to be locked up. We are heading into a situation here where it is a slippery slope and we are taking away people's rights. I will not stand for it. I know that this bill will likely pass today given the numbers on the other side, but I want people in the community, especially those over 11,000 people who signed that petition, to remember this in a couple of months time.


With regard to the firearms amnesty, if you look at this from the outside it probably looks pretty good. A permanent amnesty on firearms is something that the KAP has called for. After talking today to some of the shooting groups, they are worried about the extra steps that are going to happen with this change. As I understand it, usually someone could go into a firearms dealer and hand in a firearm without leaving a name or number. They then talk to the police and they take it on board as lost property. If it is not claimed as lost property, it would be handed back so that the gun dealer or the armourer could then sell that firearm. With this new legislation and the regulations, my understanding is that the firearm will have to be destroyed. Why would someone hand in a firearm just for it to be destroyed? They might as well destroy it themselves. This will probably reduce the number of people handing in firearms, and that worries me because having an amnesty is all about people handing guns in and it maybe being used in another way.

There are other issues with this legislation that worry me such as replica firearms and inoperable firearms being added to the restricted list. A, B and C firearms have been permanently disabled. They may be sitting on someone's mantelpiece or sitting in the local RSL on display, but now they will be restricted and it is likely that they will have to be locked up just like any other firearm. This legislation seems like overkill. There have been no reports of people using inoperable A, B and C restricted firearms menacing the community. There have been some absolute tools who have gone out in public with gel blasters and they are the people who have caused the problem—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stevens): Member for Hinchinbrook, I ask you to withdraw that unparliamentary language, thank you.

Mr DAMETTO: I withdraw. Those are the people who have caused this problem, but at the same time we did not have to pander to the couple of people who felt offended by seeing something that looked real out in the public space. Any police officer who has gone through proper weapons training would be able to tell the difference between a plastic gun and a real gun from about 15, 20 metres out.

Usually I stand here and praise the QPS, but I think they have played a little bit of a part in this as well. I see it come up on Facebook and on the news all the time when QPS do a great little drug bust—which is great for getting the drugs off the street—but guess what is in the picture? ‘We found three illegal firearms as well.’ No, you did not. You found one old bolt action rifle in the back shed. That is illegal, put that in the picture, but you see two plastic gel blasters in the picture as well. They are promoting, through their propaganda, that these are illegal firearms. They were not until tomorrow by the looks of this. I will be opposing this bill and so will the rest of the KAP.

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (4.20 pm): This bill is important in so many ways, but for me it is important because it boosts safety for prison officers, many of whom live in the Mount Ommaney electorate. In fact, I suspect that being a corrective services officer is the most popular vocation for parents at my kids’ primary school and that is why all of the children are so well behaved.

The corrective service officers are a huge part of the Mount Ommaney community. They are often the unsung heroes of front-line safety. They work in an extremely challenging environment with the most complex and difficult members of our community. The work they do can be and is often dangerous and the best days are when nothing happens, but it is vital work. Our corrective services officers are keeping our communities safe and in return it is incumbent upon us to keep them safe. This bill will go some significant way to achieving that aim.

There will now be tougher penalties for prisoners who assault those officers. Any prisoner who commits a serious assault on a corrections officer will face up to 14 years in prison for that offence. This rightfully matches the penalty that applies to anyone assaulting a police officer and other front-line service officers. This is the right thing to do. There is another important aspect to this bill that supports community safety. The bill also makes it an offence for a parolee to remove or tamper with a GPS device. A person who does so will serve the remainder of their original sentence behind bars with an additional three months added to that sentence. This sends a very clear message to those on parole.


The bill before the House today recognises the importance of reducing the risks of corruption within Queensland prisons. In December 2018 the Crime and Corruption Commission delivered *Taskforce Flaxton: an examination of corruption risks and corruption in Queensland prisons*. Taskforce Flaxton made 33 recommendations to reform Queensland’s anti-corruption framework for correctional centres, including to improve external oversight mechanisms and safety for staff and prisoners; increase accountability and transparency; and raise performance standards. The government supported all 33 recommendations.

The government recognises that the vast majority of visitors and officers who enter Queensland prisons do the right thing, but that the actions of a small minority who do the wrong thing put everyone’s safety at risk. The legislative amendments we are introducing respond to the number of risks identified by Taskforce Flaxton. This includes authorising the chief executive officer to require corrective services staff to submit to alcohol and drug testing, strengthening powers to undertake a general or scanning search of staff at a corrective services facility at any time, authorising the appointment, role and function of Queensland Corrective Services Professional Standards and Governance Command inspectors to investigate misconduct or corrupt conduct against a staff member.

Importantly, the bill also introduces a new offence to address the risk of inappropriate relationships between staff and prisoners or offenders to prevent corrupt conduct. The bill introduces a new offence prohibiting a staff member from having an intimate relationship with an offender. This offence includes sexual conduct or other physical expressions of affection or sexual contact or the exchange of written or other forms of communication of a sexual nature. The offence does not apply if the staff member could not have reasonably known the person was an offender or if the intimate relationship commenced before the person was a prisoner or offender. The offence will attract a maximum penalty of 100 penalty units or three years imprisonment to reflect the seriousness of this behaviour.

Everything about this bill is supporting the safety and integrity of our corrections network. As I said before, our corrections officers may often be the unsung heroes but our government knows the invaluable role they have in supporting community safety. In my relatively short time as the member for Mount Ommaney I have had the opportunity to visit the men’s correctional facility, the women’s correctional facility and the remand centre on multiple occasions, including the maximum security wing.

I mentioned one of these visits in my first speech. This is an issue that is really important to me. As a reward for my fifth visit, I also got to see the dog training. A few years ago I also went out to the Borallon Correctional Centre in the electorate of the member for Ipswich West to see a play. It is a fantastic facility. I thank the officers who have shown me through on my many visits, the hundreds of corrections staff who I have had the opportunity to meet with who have indulged me, had me along to morning briefings and invited me to get a better understanding of the issues facing our courageous corrections staff. Many of them are residents in my electorate and I appreciate the work that they do. They do not get enough praise for it. I hope that this bill helps them understand how appreciated they are.

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services) (4.25 pm), in reply: I join the member for Mount Ommaney in acknowledging the great workers in Queensland Corrective Services. It is an outstanding organisation and they deserve to be recognised for the work that they do. I also acknowledge the hard work that has gone into this bill. I acknowledge the people from the legislation team in Queensland Corrective Services, the Queensland Police Service and the other agencies, as well as the committee, parliamentary staff and Parliamentary Counsel.

The amendments proposed in this bill will boost community safety and deliver an improved correctional system that is responsive and flexible with safety at the forefront. Passage of this bill will protect the community from the risks of unregistered firearms and from replica firearms being used irresponsibly. Actions and inactions taken by the LNP when it was in government placed a huge strain on infrastructure in the correctional system and efficiency and staff safety. The LNP in government shut down prison industries. Under the Newman government the Darling Downs Correctional Centre was closed and 180 staff lost their jobs. The LNP gutted rehabilitation programs and diversionary courts. They slashed prison industry programs, an essential component of prisoner rehabilitation. The LNP has a history of underinvestment in correctional centres. When thousands of public servants were sacked under the former LNP government, the LNP also cancelled maintenance on correctional centres and outsourced training.

In response to the statements made about prison capacity in this debate, the government has made a record investment to prevent crime and support a safer correctional system and community. We have approved almost \$1 billion in capital works projects across Queensland Corrective Services. These projects have delivered around 660 jobs. In our last budget, the more than \$1 billion for Corrective Services was the most significant budget for Queensland Corrective Services in the state's history. By 2023 this government will have delivered an additional 4,000 beds across Queensland's prison facilities. For the member for Coomera who asked the question, Queensland Corrective Services has confirmed that there are no triple-ups in Queensland prison facilities.

This government has zero tolerance for violence. The safety of every corrective services officer is paramount. The amendments in this bill will improve safety in correctional centres by increasing the maximum penalty for serious assaults on corrective services officers. In relation to the member for Mirani's comments regarding the need for independent inspectors to investigate alleged corrupt conduct of staff, the amendments in this bill will enhance the powers of Queensland Corrective Services Professional Standards and Governance Command Inspectors by allowing them to access corrective services facilities, staff and information relevant to the investigation of alleged staff misconduct or corruption.

I will now address some of the gross misconceptions raised by members of the LNP about replica firearms in this debate. The big point here is it is not about what they do it is about what they look like. This is reinforced by the police, the coroner and many sections of the broader community.

Today in this House the performance of the member for Kawana was a total joke. Replica firearms are not a joke. While this government fully supports gel blasters being used for recreation, we are also aware that there are grave consequences for reckless and irresponsible use. There have been instances where gel blasters that look like real firearms have been used in serious offences such as armed hold-ups. That is clearly evident in comments made by Coroner Ryan, who recommended in his inquest into police shootings that the Queensland Police Service consider establishing a regulatory scheme for replica firearms.

This government's framework was written by police and is supported by police who have to respond to incidents involving replica firearms being used irresponsibly. This framework was the subject of consultation with key stakeholders. Simon White from the Cairns Gel Blasters Club said—

I appreciate the need for regulation and this strikes the right balance.

Brett Thompson, the CEO of the Queensland Homicide Victims Support Group, said—

If this means people do the right thing and adhere to the new rules then that's sensible. There should be clear consequences in place for individuals who don't do the right thing.

Tony Ferris from the RSL said—

This is a sensible, workable solution.

The Queensland Police Union supports it.

This government supports the overwhelming majority of people with gel blasters who use them responsibly. The bottom line is that if you are intending to use a gel blaster or a replica for anything that could be considered unlawful, dangerous, irresponsible or alarming and threatening to the public, that is not a reasonable excuse to have one. Police will always take the circumstances into account when making assessments of what is a reasonable excuse for ownership and I have provided a number of examples in my second reading speech.

The act will require all restricted items to be stored in a locked container. There are no specific requirements about what that container needs to be or how it should be locked. If the member for Kawana chooses to use his gun safe, that is fine. However, he could also consider alternatives that are readily available around the home, such as a toolbox or a filing cabinet. The LNP's hyperbole on gel blasters is astounding. Worse still, it is misleading. The Leader of the Opposition has previously said that she wants to ban gel blasters. Now her MPs are contradicting her. Their hypocrisy knows no bounds. They say one thing in Brisbane and one thing in the bush.

The Queensland Police Service has worked with key stakeholders in the gel blaster industry to formulate this policy.

Opposition members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Pugh): One moment, Minister. Pause the clock. Member for Southern Downs, I will warn you if I hear you again.

Mr RYAN: Key retailers and field operators are aware of the policy and how it will work for them. They have expressed a willingness to work with the Queensland Police Service in implementing this policy. In fact, for the past 12 months many of those stakeholders have been working on the policy with the Queensland Police Service. The policy is based on the Police Commissioner's advice.

This is a framework that supports the continued responsible use of gel blasters, supports small businesses that sell gel blasters and promotes community safety. The framework includes sensible and balanced changes. It reinforces that anyone who transports a replica firearm or gel blaster that looks like a real firearm should carry them in a suitable bag or case away from public view. Owners of a replica firearm or gel blaster that looks like a real firearm should keep it secured when stored at home. Owners of replicas and gel blasters that look like real firearms should have a reasonable excuse for owning them. The bottom line is that if you are intending to use a gel blaster or a replica that looks like a real firearm for anything that could be considered unlawful, dangerous, irresponsible or alarming and threatening to the public, then that is not a reasonable excuse. This policy protects the gel blaster industry and bolsters its integrity. I commend the bill to the House.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Consideration in Detail

Clause 1, as read, agreed to.

Clause 2—



Mr RYAN (4.34 pm): I move—

That clause 2 be postponed.

Motion agreed to.

Clause 2 postponed.

Clauses 3 to 14, as read, agreed to.

Clause 15—



Mr RYAN (4.34 pm): I move the following amendment—

2 Clause 15 (Insertion of new s 110A)

Page 12, line 19 to page 13, line 5—

omit.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 15 omitted.

Clauses 16 and 17, as read, agreed to.

Insertion of new clause—



Mr RYAN (4.35 pm): I move the following amendment—

3 After clause 17

Page 14, after line 16—

insert—

17A Insertion of new ch 3, pt 2A

Chapter 3—

insert—

Part 2A Offences by staff members

124A Prohibition on intimate relationships between staff members and offenders

- (1) A person has an *intimate relationship* with another person if the relationship between the persons includes either or both of the following—
 - (a) sexual conduct or other physical expressions of affection or sexual contact;
 - (b) the exchange of written or other forms of communication of a sexual or intimate nature.
- (2) A staff member must not have an intimate relationship with a person who is an offender. Maximum penalty—100 penalty units or 3 years imprisonment.
- (3) Subsection (2) does not apply to a staff member if—
 - (a) the staff member did not know, or could not reasonably have known, the person was an offender; or
 - (b) the staff member and the person were in an intimate relationship before the person became an offender.

Amendment agreed to.

Clauses 18 to 20, as read, agreed to.

Clause 21—



Mr RYAN (4.35 pm): I move the following amendment—

4 Clause 21 (Insertion of new s 173A)

Page 15, line 11 to page 16, line 6—

omit.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 21 omitted.

Clauses 22 to 55, as read, agreed.

Insertion of new clauses—



Mr RYAN (4.36 pm): I seek leave to move an amendment outside the long title of the bill.

Leave granted.

Mr RYAN: I move the following amendment—

5 After clause 55

Page 45, after line 16—

insert—

Part 3A Amendment of Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011

55A Act amended

This part amends the *Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011*.

55B Amendment of pt 3, hdg (Functions of chief executive and chief health officer)

Part 3, heading, 'and chief health officer'—

omit, insert—

, chief health officer and deputy chief health officer

55C Amendment of pt 3, div 3, hdg (Chief health officer)

Part 3, division 3, heading, after 'officer'—

insert—

and deputy chief health officer

55D Insertion of new ss 53AA-53AC

After section 53—

insert—

53AA Deputy chief health officer

- (1) The chief executive may appoint a deputy chief health officer for the State.
- (2) The deputy chief health officer is to be employed as a public service officer or as a health service employee.
- (3) The deputy chief health officer must be a medical practitioner.

53AB Functions of deputy chief health officer

The functions of the deputy chief health officer are—

- (a) to support the chief health officer in the exercise of the chief health officer's functions under this or another Act; and
- (b) any functions given to the deputy chief health officer by the chief health officer or the chief executive; and
- (c) other functions under this or another Act.

53AC Delegation by chief health officer

The chief health officer may delegate the chief health officer's functions or powers under this or another Act to the deputy chief health officer.

55E Amendment of s 139A (Meaning of *designated person*)

Section 139A(1)—

insert—

- (ca) the deputy chief health officer; or

55F Amendment of s 266 (Appointments and authority)

- (1) Section 266—

insert—

- (ba) the deputy chief health officer's appointment;

- (2) Section 266(g)—

insert—

- (iiia) the deputy chief health officer;

55G Amendment of s 267 (Signatures)

Section 267—

insert—

- (ca) the deputy chief health officer;

55H Amendment of sch 2 (Dictionary)

Schedule 2—

insert—

deputy chief health officer means the deputy chief health officer under section 53AA.

Amendment agreed to.

Insertion of new clauses—



Mr RYAN (4.36 pm): I seek leave to move an amendment outside the long title of the bill.

Leave granted.

Mr RYAN: I move the following amendment—

6 After clause 55

Page 45, after line 16—

insert—

Part 3B Amendment of Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004**55I Act amended**

This part amends the *Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004*.

55J Amendment of s 735 (Appointment)

- (1) Section 735(1)(d), 'authorised officer'—

omit, insert—

authorised officer (safety and health)

- (2) Section 735—
insert—
(1A) The chief executive may appoint a public service officer as an authorised officer (general).
- (3) Section 735(2), after ‘subsection (1)’—
insert—
, and the chief executive may appoint a person under subsection (2),
- (4) Section 735(1A) and (2)—
renumber as section 735(2) and (3).

55K Amendment of s 736 (Functions)

- (1) Section 736(2)—
omit, insert—
(2) The functions of an authorised officer (safety and health) include—
(a) conducting audits, investigations and inspections to monitor and enforce compliance with provisions of this Act, the Geothermal Act and the GHG storage Act relating to safety and health; and
(b) to provide the advice and help that may be required from time to time during emergencies at operating plants that may affect the safety or health of persons; and
(c) collecting information for this Act, the Geothermal Act and the GHG storage Act.
- (2A) The functions of an authorised officer (general) include—
(a) conducting audits, investigations and inspections to monitor and enforce compliance with provisions of this Act other than royalty provisions, the Geothermal Act and the GHG storage Act, other than the provisions mentioned in subsection (2); and
(b) to provide the advice and help that may be required from time to time during emergencies at operating plants that may affect the safety or health of persons; and
(c) collecting information for this Act, the Geothermal Act and the GHG storage Act.
- (2) Section 736(2A) and (3)—
renumber as section 736(3) and (4).

55L Amendment of s 737 (Appointment conditions and limit on powers)

- (1) Section 737(4), definition *signed notice*, paragraph (c), ‘authorised officer’—
omit, insert—
authorised officer (safety and health)
- (2) Section 737(4), definition *signed notice*—
insert—
(d) for an authorised officer (general)—the chief executive.

55M Amendment of s 738 (Issue of identity card)

- (1) Section 738(1), ‘authorised officer’—
omit, insert—
authorised officer (safety and health)
- (2) Section 738—
insert—
(1A) The chief executive must issue an identity card to each person who is an authorised officer (general).
- (3) Section 738(1A) to (3)—
renumber as section 738(2) to (4).

55N Amendment of s 741 (Resignation)

- (1) Section 741, ‘authorised officer’—
omit, insert—
authorised officer (safety and health)
- (2) Section 741—
insert—
(2) An authorised officer (general) may resign by a signed notice given to the chief executive.

55O Replacement of s 742 (Return of identity card)

Section 742—

omit, insert—

742 Return of identity card

- (1) A person who stops being an inspector or authorised officer (safety and health) must return the person's identity card to the CEO within 20 business days after the person stops being an inspector or authorised officer (safety and health) unless the person has a reasonable excuse.

Maximum penalty—50 penalty units.

- (2) A person who stops being an authorised officer (general) must return the person's identity card to the chief executive within 20 business days after the person stops being an authorised officer (general) unless the person has a reasonable excuse.

Maximum penalty—50 penalty units.

55P Amendment of s 772 (Return of seized things)

- (1) Section 772(2)—

omit, insert—

- (2) If the thing is not returned to its owner within 1 year after it was seized, the owner may apply for its return—

- (a) if the thing was seized by an authorised officer (safety and health)—to the chief inspector; or
 (b) if the thing was seized by an authorised officer (general)—to the chief executive.

- (2) Section 772(3) and (4), after 'chief inspector'—

insert—

or chief executive

55Q Amendment of s 773 (Forfeiture of seized things)

- (1) Section 773(1), 'authorised officer'—

omit, insert—

authorised officer (safety and health)

- (2) Section 773—

insert—

- (1A) The chief executive may decide to forfeit a thing seized under this Act if the authorised officer (general) (also the **seizing officer**) who seized the thing—

- (a) can not find its owner, after making reasonable inquiries; or
 (b) can not return it to its owner, after making reasonable efforts; or
 (c) reasonably believes it is necessary to retain the thing to prevent it being used to commit an offence against this Act; or
 (d) reasonably considers it is dangerous to the extent that, to ensure safety, it must be destroyed; or
 (e) reasonably considers it has no intrinsic value and use.

- (3) Section 773(2), 'subsection (1)'—

omit, insert—

subsections (1) and (2)

- (4) Section 773(3), after 'forfeit a thing'—

insert—

, or the chief executive decides under subsection (2)(c), (d) or (e) to forfeit a thing,

- (5) Section 773(4), 'Subsection (3)'—

omit, insert—

Subsection (4)

- (6) Section 773(1A) to (5)—

renumber as section 773(2) to (6).

55R Amendment of s 774 (Dealing with forfeited things)

Section 774(2) and (3), after 'CEO or chief inspector'—

insert—

, or the chief executive,

55S Amendment of sch 1 (Reviews and appeals)

Schedule 1, table 1, column 1, 'section 773(1)(c), (d) or (e)'—
omit, insert—

section 773(1)(c), (d) or (e) or (2)(c), (d) or (e)

55T Amendment of sch 2 (Dictionary)

(1) Schedule 2, definition *authorised officer*—

omit.

(2) Schedule 2—

insert—

authorised officer means—

(a) an authorised officer (general); or

(b) an authorised officer (safety and health).

authorised officer (general) means a person who, under section 735, holds appointment as an authorised officer (general).

authorised officer (safety and health) means a person who, under section 735, holds appointment as an authorised officer (safety and health).

Amendment agreed to.

Insertion of new clauses—



Mr RYAN (4.37 pm): I seek leave to move an amendment outside the long title of the bill.

Leave granted.

Mr RYAN: I move the following amendment—

7 After clause 55

Page 45, after line 16—

insert—

Part 3C Amendment of Public Health Act 2005**55U Act amended**

This part amends the *Public Health Act 2005*.

55V Amendment of s 89 (Functions of contact tracing officer)

Section 89—

insert—

(2) A contact tracing officer's functions may be exercised within or outside Queensland or in relation to persons within or outside Queensland.

(3) Without limiting subsection (2), if the chief health officer has made an arrangement under subsection (4) with the corresponding officer for a jurisdiction, a contact tracing officer's functions may be exercised under the arrangement in relation to the jurisdiction or persons connected with the jurisdiction.

(4) For subsection (3), the chief health officer may make an arrangement with a corresponding officer for a jurisdiction for contact tracing officers to exercise functions in relation to the jurisdiction or persons connected with the jurisdiction.

(5) In this section—

corresponding officer, for a jurisdiction, means a person who has functions under a law of the jurisdiction that correspond with the chief health officer's functions.

jurisdiction means the Commonwealth or another State.

55W Insertion of new s 104A

After section 104—

insert—

104A Extraterritorial operation

It is the intention of the Parliament that this division have effect outside Queensland and in relation to persons outside Queensland.

55X Amendment of s 362D (Failure to comply with public health directions)

Section 362D, penalty, after 'units'—

insert—

or 6 months imprisonment

55Y Insertion of new s 362FA

After section 362F—
insert—

362FA Delegation

- (1) The chief health officer may delegate the chief health officer's functions or powers under this part to—
 - (a) the deputy chief health officer; or
 - (b) an appropriately qualified medical practitioner who is a public service officer or employee, or a health service employee.
- (2) However, the chief health officer must not delegate the chief health officer's power to give a public health direction.
- (3) Subsection (2) does not prevent the chief health officer delegating a function or power under a public health direction.
- (4) This section has effect despite the *Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011*, section 53AC.

55Z Amendment of s 456 (Protecting prescribed persons from liability)

Section 456(3)(b), note, 'chief executive'—
omit, insert—

chief executive, chief health officer, deputy chief health officer

55ZA Amendment of sch 2 (Dictionary)

Schedule 2—
insert—

deputy chief health officer see the *Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011*, schedule 2.

Amendment agreed to.

Clauses 56 to 60, as read, agreed to.

Insertion of new clauses—



Mr RYAN (4.37 pm): I seek leave to move an amendment outside the long title of the bill.

Leave granted.

Mr RYAN: I move the following amendment—

8 After clause 60

Page 46, after line 11—
insert—

Part 4A Amendment of Summary Offences Act 2005**60A Act amended**

This part amends the *Summary Offences Act 2005*.

60B Amendment of s 11 (Trespass)

Section 11(3), after 'entering'—
insert—

, or remaining in,

60C Amendment of s 12 (Persons unlawfully gathering in or on a building or structure)

Section 12(4), after 'entering'—
insert—

, or remaining in or on,

60D Amendment of s 13 (Unlawfully entering or remaining on particular land)

Section 13(4), after 'entering'—
insert—

, or remaining in or on,

60E Amendment of sch 2 (Dictionary)

Schedule 2, definition *authorised industrial officer*—
insert—

(c) a WHS entry permit holder under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 61, as read, agreed to.

Clause 62—

Division: Question put—That clause 62, as read, stand part of the bill.

AYES, 45:

ALP, 44—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Jones, Kelly, King, Linard, Lui, Lynham, Madden, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Miles, Mullen, B. O'Rourke, C. O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Stewart, Trad, Whiting.

Grn, 1—Berkman.

NOES, 38:

LNP, 34—Bates, Batt, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Crandon, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Gerber, Hart, Hunt, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Leahy, Lister, Mander, McArdle, McDonald, Mickelberg, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, O'Connor, Perrett, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Stevens, Watts, Weir, Wilson.

KAP, 3—Dametto, Katter, Knuth.

PHON, 1—Andrew.

Pairs: Lauga, Last; Mellish, Millar; Pegg, Boyce.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause 62, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 63 to 69, as read, agreed to.

Schedule, as read, agreed to.

Clause 2—



Mr RYAN (4.44 pm): I move the following amendment—

1 Clause 2 (Commencement)

Page 8, lines 7 and 8—

omit, insert—

- (1) The following provisions commence on the day immediately after the COVID-19 emergency period under the *COVID-19 Emergency Response Act 2020* ends—
 - (a) sections 36, 37(1), (2) and (4) and 41;
 - (b) section 52, to the extent it inserts section 490ZC;
 - (c) section 53(8).
- (2) Part 3B commences on 1 July 2020 immediately after the commencement of the *Resources Safety and Health Queensland Act 2020*, part 7, division 9.
- (3) The following provisions commence on a day to be fixed by proclamation—

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 2, as amended, agreed to.

Third Reading



Hon. MT RYAN (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services) (4.44 pm): I move—

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

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

Long Title



Hon. MT RYAN (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services) (4.45 pm): I move the following amendment—

9 Long title

Long title, from '*Penalties and Sentences Act 1992*' to '*Racing Integrity Regulation 2016*'—

omit, insert—

Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011, the Penalties and Sentences Act 1992, the Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004, the Public Health Act 2005, the Racing Integrity Act 2016, the Racing Integrity Regulation 2016, the Summary Offences Act 2005


Amendment agreed to.

Question put—That the long title of the bill, as amended, be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Minister for Education and Minister for Industrial Relations, Professional Qualifications

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Industrial Relations) (4.45 pm): I rise to make a ministerial statement. I wish to correct the record in relation to the baseless accusations of the opposition about my qualifications. I have said it before, and will say again, that the course I undertook at Harvard was at a high level. I have been forwarded an unsolicited email from a senior academic at the Harvard Law School sent to the *Courier-Mail* which is titled 'Correction to recent reporting on Grace Grace and Harvard Trade Union Program'. The email states—

Hello Steven Wardill,

Sorry to trouble you. But your recent articles have misspelled the first name of Alida Castillo, who currently directs the Harvard Trade Union Program.

Some journalists care about accuracy, so I thought I would let you know in case there is a mechanism for corrections at your paper.

I recognize this was an unintentional mistake, and you try hard to get things right.

PS. I realize you are not asking, but if anyone in Australia cares to know

I have taught for over two decades in the Harvard Trade Union Program, and I can tell you it is no picnic for the labor leaders.

It is hard work, and the academic level is at a high standard.

Yes, it is not a degree granting program (though some people enrolled in Masters degree Labor Studies programs elsewhere have received significant academic credit for their work in the Harvard Trade Union Program).

When Grace Grace did the program, some of the leading U.S. intellectuals taught in the program not only Noam Chomsky but also possibly the most famous economist in the USA John Kenneth Galbraith and the most important figure in the U.S. industrial relations John T. Dunlop, who previously served as a U.S. Secretary of Labor and was a core faculty member of the HTUP for some sixty years.

John Trumpbour

Research Director

Labour and Worklife Program

Harvard Law School.

This email supports the fact that the course was at a high level and that the important work undertaken during the program was at a masters/graduate diploma level. I have never said that I have a masters degree or a graduate diploma. I have never put any letters behind my name.

It is embarrassing for the member for Kawana, it is embarrassing for the opposition, and it is embarrassing for this parliament that a senior academic from an internationally renowned university has taken the extraordinary step of writing not only to me but also to Steven Wardill to uphold the integrity of his institution and program.

This is another example of the opposition overreaching on baseless accusations to besmirch my name and the good character of the Palaszczuk Labor government.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Whiting): Order!

Ms GRACE: I ask the member for Kawana and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition who only this afternoon—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members, I did call order. Thank you.

Ms GRACE: You may smile.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister, you as well. Please resume.

Ms GRACE: I ask the member for Kawana and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition to immediately apologise, or the Leader of the Opposition should come in here and show some leadership and apologise on their behalf, but I will not hold my breath.

**MINISTERIAL AND OTHER OFFICE HOLDER STAFF AND OTHER
LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

Resumed from 15 May 2018 (see p. 1128).

Second Reading

Hon. YM D'ATH (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (4.50 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

The Ministerial and Other Office Holder Staff and Other Legislation Amendment Bill was introduced by the honourable the Premier earlier this term and was referred to the Economics and Governance Committee for review and scrutiny. The Economics and Governance Committee considered the legislation and provided its report in mid-2018. I would like to thank the members of that committee for their careful consideration of this bill—in particular, the chairperson of the committee, the member for Logan, Mr Linus Power, who I know discharges his duties in the highest of manners.

Members will know that this bill will provide the director-general of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet with the statutory power to conduct criminal history checks to assess the suitability of a person employed under the Ministerial and Other Office Holder Staff Act 2010. Similarly, the bill will provide the Clerk of the Parliament with the statutory power to conduct criminal history checks to assess the suitability of a person to be engaged under the Parliamentary Service Act 1988, including in an electorate office.

The bill introduces requirements on the Queensland Police Commissioner and the Director of Public Prosecutions to provide the director-general or Clerk of the Parliament information about changes to an existing staff member's criminal history. The bill will amend the plan details of the parliamentary precinct following the Queensland parliament's agreement in 2017 to relinquish a small parcel of land for the Queen's Wharf Brisbane project. It will also make other minor legislative amendments to correct and update act references.

I note that the committee recommended that the bill be passed and that a minor drafting error be corrected. As outlined in the government's response to the committee's report, which was tabled by the Premier on 5 October 2018, the Palaszczuk government supports the committee's recommendations.

I also inform the House that following the tabling of the government's response to the committee's report, the government identified some further drafting inconsistencies between provisions in the Public Service Act 2008 relating to criminal history checking for public servants and those in the bill that will apply to staff employed under the Ministerial and Other Office Holder Staff Act 2010 and the Parliamentary Service Act 1988.

The policy intent of the bill is to provide the director-general and the Clerk of the Parliament with the same legislative power to conduct criminal history checks as is provided to chief executives for public servants. Accordingly, I will be moving amendments during consideration in detail to resolve these inconsistencies and to correct the drafting error identified by the committee.

The committee expressed concern that the explanatory notes to the bill provided insufficient detail about fundamental legislative principles, specifically about privacy and safeguards surrounding criminal history checks. In response, I would like to take some time to clarify for the House that there are safeguards contained in the bill with respect to criminal history reports and notices which have applied within the Public Service since 2008—in particular, a person's criminal history report may only be obtained with that person's consent; criminal history reports and relevant notices must be destroyed when no longer required for the purpose they were obtained; and there are strict limits on the use and disclosure of criminal history information, with a new offence prescribed for unauthorised disclosure of a person's criminal history, punishable by a fine of up to 100 penalty units, which currently amounts to \$13,345.


It is imperative that we are able to ensure the suitability of individuals employed under the Ministerial and Other Office Holder Staff Act 2010 and Parliamentary Service Act 1988 to maintain public confidence in these public offices. The director-general and Clerk of the Parliament have put in place administrative procedures since December 2017 to conduct criminal history checks for ministerial and parliamentary service staff. While these interim measures have been working well, embedding the process in legislation and including safeguards around the use and disclosure of the sensitive information provides greater protections for staff members whose criminal history is obtained through these provisions.

I also propose to move amendments during consideration in detail to include amendments in the bill to the Queensland Independent Remuneration Tribunal Act 2013. The amendments to the QIRT Act will give the Queensland Independent Remuneration Tribunal the functions and powers to set additional staffing entitlements for crossbench members to support their parliamentary duties.

Allowing the independent tribunal to make determinations regarding additional staffing entitlements for crossbench members will ensure that decisions about the additional staffing resources required by minor parties and independent members to fulfil their parliamentary duties are made by an independent entity.

Let me be clear, however, that this is not an open door for all crossbench members to access additional staffing resources in all instances. The amendments provide guidance about what matters the tribunal may consider when deciding whether additional resources are in fact required. These considerations include, for example, the composition of the parliament; the workload and duties on the crossbench members; staffing and resources available to all members; and whether the crossbench members are members of a political party.

The government considers that these amendments will increase the quality of parliamentary debate and result in better policies and legislation for the people of Queensland. With these words, I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (4.55 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Ministerial and Other Office Holder Staff and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. As the explanatory notes state, in December 2017 administrative procedures were implemented by the director-general of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet and the Clerk to conduct criminal history checks for ministerial and parliamentary service staff. What the explanatory notes do not state is the reason why these interim arrangements were put in place—why they were hastily rushed in, pending the legislative changes contained in this bill.

With the indulgence of the House, I think it would be a good idea to remind the House why these interim arrangements were hastily rushed in. The reason of course was that the then child safety minister, the member for Waterford, had hired a staff member with a criminal conviction for child pornography. As is always the case with the Palaszczuk government, no apology was made to the vulnerable children exposed to this unacceptable risk.

Rather than taking personal responsibility for the hiring of her own staff, what did the then minister do? The then child safety minister actually blamed the Queensland parliament for her mistake. The LNP will not oppose this bill because, as the last five years have demonstrated, Queenslanders simply cannot trust the Palaszczuk Labor government to undertake the most basic governance measures to ensure government integrity.

The Premier introduced this bill over two years ago—in May 2018. Welcome to 2020! That is a fast-tracked process under the Palaszczuk Labor government! During the Premier's introductory speech, she discussed the serious nature of the incident that led to the introduction of the administrative procedures and how this legislation would resolve the interim measures that were introduced. The fact the Premier introduced the bill over two years ago, following a child pornography scandal that emerged nearly three years ago, shows that the integrity of the Premier's own government is a low priority for her.

During the Premier's introductory contribution over two years ago, she stated that the bill provided powers to assess the suitability of a person to be engaged in a ministerial office. The Premier's definition of 'suitability' clearly did not extend to her own employment of her former chief of staff, David Barbagallo, who still to this day remains under investigation by the Crime and Corruption Commission.

We remember estimates questioning last year with fondness because this year, being the only state in the nation not to hand down a budget, we will not have the estimates process in the state of Queensland this year. What did we discover during the estimates process last year? I remember, because I asked the questions. During estimates questioning last year the Premier's then right-hand man was revealed to be part owner of a company that received a government grant of \$276,000. The Premier's then chief of staff was a director of Fortress Capstone Pty Ltd and one of its major shareholders. The company applied for, and received, a grant from the Palaszczuk Labor government's Advance Queensland Business Development Fund. Whilst this matter is still under active investigation by the Crime and Corruption Commission, it is telling that the Premier did not dismiss David Barbagallo when this scandal was revealed.

Mrs D'ATH: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The bill goes to a criminal history check for staff. It does not go to other issues or suitability, as the Leader of the Opposition is claiming. There is nothing in the bill that makes what the Leader of the Opposition is talking about now relevant because it is about the criminal history check of staff.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Whiting): Order! I am taking a point of order. I will remind members—I have the explanatory notes here in front of me—about the policy objectives and reasons for this bill, and I direct you to that. I see the words 'explicit power to conduct criminal history checks' twice. I remind you to keep that in mind as you are debating this.

Mr POWELL: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. It is a long-held convention that addresses in this House pertain to the long title of the bill. Given the long title includes the term 'ministerial staff', surely the contribution being made by the Leader of the Opposition is well within the grounds of that convention.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: As I have reminded you, it is the long title of the bill, it is committee reports and it is also in the explanatory notes. Bear with me while I have a consultation.

An honourable member interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Who said that? Please do not do that again while we are having a conference up here. On that point of order I want to remind people to stick within those limits, as I have said before. We will pay particular attention to people staying within the long title of the bill, particular purposes, explanatory notes and the report.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: As I was speaking to the Ministerial and Other Office Holder Staff and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, I would like to mention to the House that if the Attorney-General wished for the long title of the bill to reflect that it is only criminal checks, maybe the government would have liked to have renamed the bill. As the long title of the bill does reflect that, I will continue.

That company applied for, and received, a grant from the Palaszczuk Labor government's Advance Queensland Business Development Fund. Whilst this matter is still under active investigation by the CCC, it is telling that the Premier did not sack her then chief of staff. On this side of the House we know that that is just another example of the Premier's weak leadership, the Premier's lack of integrity and the Premier's lack of ability to fulfil a promise to the House that was made over two years ago. Whether it is waiting over two years for this debate, the Premier's failure to sack her former chief of staff, or the Premier's failure to discipline the member for South Brisbane after a compromising CCC assessment and her involvement in an independent recruitment process, the Premier's failure to sack—

Mrs D'ATH: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance. The bill specifically relates to the suitability of someone based on a criminal history report. That is what this bill is about. The examples that the Leader of the Opposition is raising in her speech do not in any way go to issues of criminal history checks.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: One moment. On this point of order, the title of the bill does include the words 'for particular purposes' which does draw everyone's attention to the particular matters contained in this bill and not wider policy issues, so I would bring the Leader of the Opposition back to what is contained in the directions I have previously indicated.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: The purpose of this bill is to check suitability. I will read directly from the explanatory notes, which state 'checks to assess the suitability of a person to be engaged in a Ministerial Office.' I will speak to that point and I would like to draw the Attorney-General's attention to that point. We are in this place today talking about this issue because of the failure of the integrity of members who have been employed in ministerial offices under the Palaszczuk government's regime. Time and time again we are drawn back into this House to debate issues of integrity, issues of scandal and issues that go to the core of a rotten government.

I say to this House that it is time that we cleaned up the mess, and that is why I am speaking to this bill today. That is why, even though we have had to wait for 2½ years to get to this point, we are speaking on this bill. Why? Because we have to clean up another integrity scandal as a result of the actions of a minister under the Palaszczuk government. I do note that the minister has been placed in a different position, obviously because of failures under her direction as the Minister of Child Safety. I will return to my speech.

Mrs D'Ath interjected.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I beg your pardon?

Mrs D'Ath: Don't you think that is misleading the parliament?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Through the chair.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: You are welcome to write to the Speaker.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Whiting): Order! I remind you of the standing order about engaging in cross-chamber chatter. Please direct your comments through the chair.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: It is clear that for the past five years the Premier has failed to uphold some of the most basic standards of integrity, and that is why we are here today.

The bill also updates the plan of the parliamentary precinct in the Parliamentary Service Act following the parliament's agreement in 2017 to relinquish a small parcel of land for the Queen's Wharf Brisbane project. I will draw to the attention of the Attorney-General and Labor members of the House that that is also contained in this bill—nothing to do with criminal checks there—so I will talk about this issue which is involved in this bill, because it is quite clear that the Attorney-General, whilst just speaking on the bill, obviously did not have a good look at the whole lot of it.


This bill does update the plan of the parliamentary precinct, which takes us to the Queen's Wharf Brisbane project. This project would not exist if it were not for the former LNP government. This project will transform the heart of Brisbane. That proves that only the LNP can work in partnership with the private sector to build the stronger economy that we need to provide a decade's worth of secure jobs. Queen's Wharf represents an investment of more than \$3 billion. It will create more 8,000 jobs when complete. This project, which started under the previous LNP government, is in stark contrast to the eight tourism infrastructure projects that have failed under the Palaszczuk Labor government. The eight Labor failures have cost 32,000 Queenslanders their jobs.

While the LNP got on and delivered a world-class integrated resort development with the private sector, the Palaszczuk Labor government has spectacularly failed with its half-baked global tourism hubs in both Cairns and the Gold Coast. Queensland will only be open for business once again under an LNP government. Only the LNP will deliver projects like the Queen's Wharf development. We will set up Queensland investment partnerships to work hand in hand with the private sector to deliver at least a billion dollars worth of signed and sealed new public and private projects by 2024. As we did with Queen's Wharf, the LNP will partner—

Mr POWER: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member for Nanango asked us to look at the bill and the explanatory notes. I note there is nothing in there to do with the LNP's plans or lack of plans up until 2024. I ask that she be brought back to the long title of the bill.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Nanango, could you please stick to the long title of the bill.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Sure. I shall wrap up. In conclusion, as we did with Queen's Wharf, the LNP will partner with the private sector to unleash the potential of Queensland. It is only the LNP that has a plan to get Queensland working again, it is only the LNP that has a plan to rebuild our economy and it is only the LNP that will make sure we create a decade of secure jobs and secure our children's future.

 **Mr POWER (Logan—ALP) (5.10 pm):** I appreciate that the Leader of the Opposition wanted to speak on other issues that are not part of the bill, but I want to talk about the committee members and recognise one of the most able deputy chairs, Ray Stevens, the member for Mermaid Beach.

Ms Richards: Mayor of the Albert shire.

Mr POWER: Yes, mayor of the Albert shire. I also recognise the member for Pine Rivers, who has gone on to even greater things; the member for Bonney, who was very passionate about this deliberation, and I believe it was his first; the member for Ninderry, who has gone on to other places; and the member for Redlands. The ministerial staff and electoral staff who serve us do good work in trying circumstances. In this COVID period, they dealt with a lot of people who were anxious, unhappy and sometimes frustrated and angry about the rules that were put in place. A lot of them would join with the opposition in wanting a lot of Victorians to come up, and we had to deal with that process and say to them that those things were obviously not good for the state of Queensland. We never convinced the LNP about that, but we did manage to convince a lot of our constituents.

Our staff deeply care about the constituents who come to them. I want to recognise some of my staff who have since retired, Cheryl Bellert and Hazel Hubbard. They were wonderful servants for the people of Queensland and the constituents they served. They often pushed me to make the extra effort on someone's behalf because they were passionate about the issue. They also knew they had a responsibility to be trusted about the information they received and the situations they were in. That is

what makes this an evolution of the process of this parliament. It is giving powers to the Clerk in order to ensure that that trust is fulfilled. In that way it builds on the tradition of integrity that we have continued to see evolve, especially since 1989.

The committee was asked to inquire into the bill and report back by 5 July. We asked for written submissions from the public and we identified the stakeholders and subscribers. Because this was a commonsense evolution of the integrity of the parliament, we did not actually receive any submissions but we went through the process of ensuring people could make submissions. We requested written advice from the Department of the Premier and Cabinet on the bill and they gave us quite a comprehensive briefing which is on the committee's website.

The primary objective of the bill is to provide the director-general of the department and the Clerk of the Parliament with explicit power to conduct criminal history checks to assess the suitability of a person to be engaged in a ministerial office. We immediately put in place a mechanism to allow that. Although those temporary measures have not been challenged in any way and were active and working, ensuring we did have those high standards of integrity over the past couple of years, this bill explicitly does that—so it is still relevant and worthwhile because it ensures that continuing involvement of integrity. There was also a small adjustment to the parliamentary precinct that helped facilitate the Queen's Wharf development.


The government has explained that they undertook consultation with the Police Service, the Department of Justice and Attorney-General and the Clerk in relation to this bill. The committee made only two recommendations. The first was that the bill be passed and there was also a small drafting error. I wish to recognise here the good quality of our secretariat staff. The member for Mermaid Beach and I were about to point out that drafting error, but they got to it first so I commend them for that.

When the Clerk or the Speaker proposes to appoint or engage a person in their relevant duties, the Clerk may ask for written consent to obtain their criminal history. That is the process now for everyone. This applies even if the person is an office holder or employee of the Parliamentary Service when the Clerk proposes to engage them in a new role. They can ask for a variety of information—if a person was convicted, if there was a prosecution and if there was an appeal against prosecution.

It is also important, as the Attorney-General mentioned, that there be information safeguards. Like everyone in the Public Service, we have to ensure there are reasonable safeguards for our employees. The bill provides that information given to the Police Commissioner by the director-general or the Clerk in making a request for a person's criminal history must not be accessed, disclosed or used for any purpose, other than a purpose relating to assessing the person's suitability to be a staff member. Again, that is an evolution about how professional our Police Service is about the information it deals with.

Importantly, there are penalties. There are penalties about confidentiality, as I mentioned, which can be up to 100 penalty units. At the time of the publication of our report, that was \$12,615. There are also penalties for any person who makes false or misleading statements to the director-general or Clerk. If someone attempted to obscure or hide their identity so that information would not be revealed, there is a penalty which obviously ensures there is integrity in the process.

Although this is a relatively simple bill, I will not go on with an attempt to talk about staff members on the opposition side who faced ethics inquiries or anything like that and what should be done to their employment because that is not central to the bill. The bill is simply about the process of giving the Clerk the powers to do criminal history checks. I think that is a steady and worthwhile evolution of our integrity process in this place.

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (5.18 pm): I rise to speak to the Ministerial and Other Office Holder Staff and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018. I have to say that we are really stretching our memories here because this bill was urgently brought in to the new parliament, the 56th Parliament, and here we are coming to the close of the 56th Parliament and we have finally got to the Ministerial and Other Office Holder Staff and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018. I wonder if the Attorney-General will be able to advise us in her wrapping up of how many staff have got through and how many active criminals we have in the Parliamentary Service because this legislation has taken so long to come to the House.

I am aware that there have been some revelations with some parliamentary staffing issues and that those matters have been resolved. The fact that this legislation has taken at least two years to be passed speaks volumes about the importance that the Attorney-General has placed on it. I am disappointed that the wheels have been so slow to turn on this mechanism to do with the working of the House and it is now basically a bit more than three months before we get to the 57th Parliament and this is only becoming law in Queensland now.

The bill aims to enable the director-general or the Clerk of the Parliament of Queensland to perform criminal history checks on individuals to ascertain whether they are suitable for engagement in various ministerial and other offices. It also seeks to make procedural amendments to details of the Parliamentary Service Act 1988 and the Parliament of Queensland Act 2001, which I will address later.

In relation to criminal checks, the proposed legislation has been deemed necessary following the disappointing and serious incident in 2017. The Leader of the Opposition highlighted in her excellent speech and identified where these problems were in some parliamentary areas. At that time it was discovered that an employee of the Parliamentary Service had a previous criminal conviction, and that was noted by the Premier when she introduced the bill to the parliament.

The proposed legislation was referred to the Economics and Governance Committee on 15 May 2018. I was a young boy back then! Following that, the committee invited written submissions from the public—there were none—and it consulted with the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. As I mentioned, the proposed legislation enables the Attorney-General to request written consent to conduct a criminal history check on a person who is being considered for employment in the areas of an office of a minister, office of the Leader of the Opposition or office of another non-government staff member. As the Leader of the Opposition mentioned earlier and as we know, Mr Barbagallo, the former chief of staff, had some issues a long, long time ago that I am sure he would have disclosed when he took up the position as the Premier's chief of staff. Now there is another ongoing investigation by the Crime and Corruption Commission.

However, the issue that I would like to be tied to this part of the bill is the fact that it was determined by the Premier back then that a report would be done and it would be forwarded to this House so it would become part of the criminal checks into criminal matters and that particular behaviour. To this date we have not seen that report come to the House. I have put a question on notice requesting the date when that particular report might be coming to the House.

As I mentioned before, the bill bestows the same powers on the Clerk in the area of the Parliamentary Service for electorate officers. This is very important as a lot of important matters are discussed in parliamentary offices, and our regional offices are actually part of the parliament. As such, it is obvious to me that we should have had strong criminal history checks.

One thing I would raise with the Attorney-General is problems we have had previously with access to criminal history information from the New Zealand authorities. Perhaps the Attorney-General can cover that issue. I am sorry I am going back two-odd years, but I do not think we covered it at the time the committee conducted its investigation. Perhaps the Attorney-General could give some advice about that information we need. I am aware that we were prevented from getting criminal history information from the New Zealand authorities, and a lot of our brothers and sisters from New Zealand occupy positions here in Queensland.

The proposed legislation stipulates that, should consent for a criminal history check not be given or should it be withdrawn, the director-general and the Clerk have the ability to no longer consider an individual's employment or engagement. Additionally, if the individual is already a staff member, the refusal to consent to a check will mean that the relevant employer—the Premier, Leader of the Opposition or non-government employee of the Clerk—may decide to prevent them from further engagement in relevant duties.

During the public briefing I raised a question on notice about how this legislation, specifically regarding criminal history checks, compares to other jurisdictions in Australia. The department responded by advising for the most part criminal history checks are conducted on parliamentary and ministerial staff in other states and the Commonwealth, while checks on electorate staff are optional and are not required in all other states except for New South Wales and Northern Territory. Nevertheless, it was noted during the briefing that the department sees a need to legislate to prevent challenges to the director-general's ability to issue directives. The department also advised that QPS had indicated that, in order to conduct checks, there is a preference for a legislative head of power.


The bill provides the Clerk may request a criminal history report from the Police Commissioner or another entity. The Economics and Governance Committee requested advice from the department on who or what this entity is. Given that the bill includes provisions about information shared with the Police Commissioner, including that it must not be accessed, disclosed or used for any other purpose, the committee also questioned what measures would be undertaken to prevent information being provided to another entity. We need to keep a lot of those matters in the right hands in these days of digital communication and transfer of information. The department advised that other entities are limited to agencies accredited by the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission.

Following the incident in 2017—this speech must be old; it says ‘last year’—a contract was entered into with one such agency and the department informed the committee that the Clerk wished to continue this contract. In response to a committee question regarding safeguards on information shared with the agency, the department advised the contract includes provision for protecting information. Therefore, the bill does accommodate such contracts.

The proposed legislation also specifies that notice must be given for the committal conviction, end of prosecution or appeal against conviction of a staff member or parliamentary officer or employee. This notice must be given to the director-general or the Clerk by the Police Commissioner or prosecuting authority if either of the latter parties are aware that the individual committed to stand trial is convicted of an indictable offence, if prosecution ends with no conviction or if an appeal against a conviction ends.

I note that the committee noticed a small inconsistency, as the chairman of the committee referred to, with the Public Service Act in this area, in clauses 3 and 10 of the bill. It was advised by the department that a drafting error had occurred, which was addressed by the Economics and Governance Committee in its second recommendation.

The committee also sought advice from the department with regard to the lack of provisions requiring Public Service employees to notify the director-general if they have been charged with an indictable offence. The department responded that this requirement was perceived as being sufficiently addressed in policies such as an employment screening directive which requires staff to disclose whether they have been charged with, or convicted of, an indictable offence. It is also covered in employee codes of conduct for both ministerial and other office holders as well as parliamentary officers and employees.

 **Ms RICHARDS** (Redlands—ALP) (5.28 pm): I rise to support the Ministerial and Other Office Holder Staff and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018. This bill was brought before our Economics and Governance Committee. I thank my fellow committee members for the process that we have undertaken. I also thank the committee secretariat staff. The policy objectives of the bill are for the director-general of the department and the Clerk of the Parliament to have power to conduct criminal history checks to assess the suitability of persons engaged across ministers’ offices and including within our electorate offices.

It was interesting to hear the Leader of the Opposition’s contribution, and I think there might be a little bit of a short memory around integrity issues. We certainly did not see the LNP introduce measures like this to improve integrity. By stark contrast, they sacked the PCCC in the dark of the night. We also heard the member for Mermaid Beach say it would have been obvious that we should have had these criminal checks in place. Again, I note that this legislation was never introduced during the term of the LNP.

The committee undertook a briefing. We were given guidance that the Queensland Police and the Department of Justice and Attorney-General and also the Clerk of the Parliament had been consulted with in terms of preparing this legislation.

This bill further reinforces the checks and balances with regard to ministerial staff and other office holders. These are staff like those in our electorate offices—hardworking staff on all sides of the House—who are strongly engaged with our community members. I would like to thank every EO and our office staff for all of the hard work they do in working with our communities, particularly over the period of this COVID pandemic. I know that there has been a lot of pressure on our staff in terms of engagement within communities and engagement with departments in trying to help resolve our constituents’ issues. I give a shout-out to Damien Walker in the department of tourism and state development in leading the Care Army throughout that process. I know that our ministerial staff are tireless in their endeavours to make sure we deliver the best for our Queensland communities.


In terms of looking at criminal history reports, I think it is important to note that this bill does have safeguards and we have been given the appropriate reassurances. The Attorney-General noted the importance of having information safeguards, particularly in the digital age. We need to make sure that we protect sensitive information for our electorate office staff. That is a very important part.

The bill provides that information given to the Police Commissioner by the director-general or the Clerk in making a request for a person’s criminal history must not be accessed, disclosed or used for any purpose other than the purpose of assessing that person’s suitability and applicability to the role they are applying for. There are strong punishments and penalties in force for breach of that trust in the provision of information.

The bill also amends the Parliament of Queensland Act 2001. These minor amendments look at the notification and availability of forms and make some changes to the way we conduct our business in this place by omitting reference to the *Votes and Proceedings* and inserting ‘*Record of Proceedings*’.

I note how transformative Queen's Wharf will be for this precinct and the whole top end of William Street. Clause 9 amends the Parliamentary Service Act 1988 with regard to the plan details of the parliamentary precinct. This amendment is necessary due to the resurvey of land. It is important to ensure our plans and drawings are correct.

This is good legislation. As the member for Mermaid Beach said, we should have had these checks and balances in place some time ago. This bill goes a long way to ensuring that the people we have serving the communities of Queensland are best placed to do that. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (5.32 pm): I agree with the member for Redlands that it is important that we have these checks and balances, but it usually follows Labor Party dishonesty, Labor Party muckraking—all of these Labor issues we end up debating in this House. We have to change accountability measures because of Labor ministers breaching rules and ministerial standards. Then we have this bill, which came about from ministerial staff members in Labor Party offices.

I want to briefly talk about one of the issues that has been flagged for an amendment to the bill. That relates to additional staffing and the Queensland Independent Remuneration Tribunal being given the power to determine resourcing for crossbench members. This stems from Premier Palaszczuk being the first premier of Queensland to be found in contempt of this parliament. She gave resources to crossbench members, the Katter party particularly, and then took those resources away. That is the genesis of this amendment. We have been asking, 'Where are these amendments? What is happening?' Of course, like it is on a Thursday afternoon in parliament, just as the debate starts we are lobbed with amendments to the Independent Remuneration Tribunal legislation.

I table a letter that I wrote to the Premier on 26 February 2020 to which I have never received a response. I CCed the letter to the chairman of the Crime and Corruption Commission. I wrote to the Premier about these particular matters.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 28 February 2020, from the member for Kawana, Mr Jarrod Bleijie MP, to the Premier and Minister for Trade, Hon. Anastacia Palaszczuk, regarding resources for non-government members of the Legislative Assembly [[1202](#)].

On 22 October a motion moved by a crossbench member—the motion was carried in this House—talked about non-government members and the remuneration tribunal looking at the resources for non-government members. Non-government members includes the opposition. The motion carried by this House did not refer to just the crossbench. We even had members of the government saying at the time, 'It is inclusive of opposition members.' A couple of members said, 'I remember sitting over there in opposition with limited resources.' Once they had worked out—I think it was the member for Sandgate—that the motion they had just supported included opposition resources and the opposition might get an increase in resources, the motion then did not include the opposition; it included only the crossbench!

I wrote to the Premier suggesting that we should end all of this between governments, parties and parliaments and that all resourcing should go to the remuneration tribunal—once and for all, to end all of the political issues associated with funding of the opposition and crossbench—and be taken out of the Premier's hands. As I said, I never got a response.

I see that the tribunal will now have this power for the crossbench but, as I indicated in my letter to the Premier, the tribunal should be looking after the opposition's resources. It should not be, as we have said in the letter, for the government of the day to control it. Government members were very supportive of that position; they supported the motion in the House. They obviously did not read the motion because non-government members included opposition members, and now they are trying to say that it applies to just the crossbench members.

The crossbench member who will speak to this bill, Mr Knuth, will know that I have said we should end all of the political argy-bargy with respect to crossbench resources and opposition resources. It is important to put on record that the opposition were willing to do that. That is why we wrote to the Premier in February, but we did not even get the courtesy of a response. The letter speaks for itself in terms of comments made by Minister Bailey and Minister Lynham at the time with respect to the opposition. I say at the end of the letter—

Given your many years of assuring the people of Queensland that you support the Fitzgerald principles, will you support the House's resolution to refer all Non-Government Resourcing to the Queensland Independent Remuneration Tribunal?


The Opposition stands ready willing and able to assist in your deliberations.

I look forward to your reply.

That reply was never forthcoming. I see the amendment. I support the amendment. The amendment should have been truly responsive to the resolution that was passed by all members in this House. That included all non-government members' resources, including the opposition office. It is important, in order to keep the government accountable, to have a fully and properly resourced opposition. We have 22 staff in the opposition office. Many people think we have hundreds of staff. We do not. We have 22 staff compared to over 200 staff in ministerial offices in the Palaszczuk Labor government.

Mr Crisafulli: And growing.

Mr BLEIJIE: And growing, I might add; I take the interjection. There are over 200 staffers in ministerial offices and 22 staff for the opposition. I suspect that come 31 October the Labor Party will be in a different position and will be saying, 'Yes, the Independent Remuneration Tribunal should be looking at opposition resources.' I hope they do. I look forward to that conversation, when they come to us wanting the independent tribunal to look at opposition resources, because they will be in opposition because of all of the integrity woes they have had in this state.

 **Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Child Safety, Youth and Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (5.38 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Ministerial and Other Office Holder Staff and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018. The objectives of the bill are to: provide the director-general of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet with explicit power to conduct criminal history checks to assess the suitability of a person to be engaged in a ministerial office, the office of the Leader of the Opposition or an office of a non-government member; provide the Clerk of the Parliament with explicit power to conduct criminal history checks to assess the suitability of a person to be engaged in the Parliamentary Service; amend the plan details of the parliamentary precinct outlined in the Parliamentary Service Act 1988; and make some minor updates to references in the Parliament of Queensland Act 2001.

Those opposite cannot think of anything too much to say about this bill. I think the member for Mermaid Beach was trying to imply that people who may have been employed in any of our offices—I think that is where he was going with it—may have slipped through the cracks without criminal history checks.

An honourable member interjected.

Ms FARMER: He is on the committee, but maybe he just was not with it at the time this was being discussed.

As we know, since 2017 administrative procedures have been implemented by the director-general and the Clerk to conduct criminal history checks of ministerial and Parliamentary Service staff. This was always an interim arrangement; however, the intent of this bill has been in place in those interim arrangements since that time, that is, for almost three years. We can reassure the member for Mermaid Beach that we are doing okay in that regard.

A bill such as this, which is about accountability, transparency and integrity, is really just more on top of what this Labor government has already shown it has a proud record of doing in terms of integrity. This term alone we have passed the electoral funding and disclosure and other legislation amendment act to ensure that our elections cannot be bought and sold. There is the Councillor Conduct Tribunal, part of our government's rolling reform into local government. We have established the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission to build a stronger racing industry in Queensland.

In the previous term, we actively pursued issues that gave effect to the major recommendations of the CCC's Operation Belcarra report. We widened the definition of 'corruption' and provided the CCC with broader investigative powers. Of course, we reduced the threshold for the disclosure of political donations from their absolutely outrageous levels of \$12,800 to \$1,000. We introduced real-time disclosure of political donations, appointed an independent chair of the CCC, reinstated job security and fairness for government employees, and restored community objection rights that were removed by those opposite. We removed their gag clauses from the service agreement.


This bill reinforces and extends that commitment to clean government. I am really proud that we are introducing this bill. I really want to pay tribute to the staff who work in my ministerial office and to all staff across all of the ministerial offices. I have been in many meetings with staff from the opposition office and, although we come from extremely different philosophical angles, they work hard for the things that they believe are important. I honour the work that they do, too.

We are the servants of the public. As such, we must not only be people deserving of that trust; we must be seen to be deserving of that trust. Our staff must in fact reflect those same values and be seen also to be deserving of that trust. We have no qualms about making sure that the public has

absolute confidence in us. I would name each staff member in my ministerial office, but I know that last time members of the LNP were in government literally they went through the names of every single person who had worked in a ministerial office and who were affiliated in any way or who had a cup of tea with someone. Members opposite hounded and persecuted them.

I will not mention the names of my staff, but I know they will be listening now. I want to say thank you. I want to say thank you for the hours they put in, the dedication, the commitment, the way they deal with stakeholders in such an honest and genuine manner and the way they do everything they can to ensure that we are performing good government. I do not think the LNP will go after my electorate office staff. I want to thank AnnMaree, Lisa, Thomas and Vicky for their work.

While we are here—because this bill is about expecting the same standards of our staff as we do of public servants—I also want to say how proud I am to work with the staff of the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women and the Department of Youth Justice, who are second to none in terms of their professionalism, dedication and hard work. They have a massive reform agenda which they are undertaking. The extent to which they go to deliver advice to this government and to deliver services for the people of Queensland cannot be compared. I am so proud to be their minister. I acknowledge all of those people who work so hard for the people of Queensland. None of us have any qualms at all about having the absolute highest levels of scrutiny on ourselves or our staff. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr O'CONNOR** (Bonney—LNP) (5.44 pm): I rise to add to the debate on the Ministerial and Other Officer Holder Staff and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018. Of course, I sit on the Economics and Governance Committee which looked into this bill. That was long ago, back in early 2018, so it is good to finally see this return before the House. To have a relatively straightforward piece of legislation take over two years to return to the House again shows the government's lack of genuine care for integrity. I would have thought, given the set of circumstances that led to this bill, the government would be in a hurry to change the laws and give the explicit power to the director-general and Clerk rather than rely on what the Premier described in her own words in 2018 as 'interim measures'. It has been a long interim, because currently they are still in place.

It was disappointing to see the Premier and the minister shift the blame for this situation. Members of the government have no ability to admit their error and to properly correct it in a timely way. I support the objective of the bill to provide explicit power to the director-general and to the Clerk of the Parliament to conduct criminal history checks. It is a necessary and commonsense approach to the employment of our staff and to ensure employees adhere to the already high standards in many roles in the Public Service.

Our committee received no submissions to the bill, which I think either demonstrates how clear it was to the public that this change was a necessary, long overdue amendment that is commonplace in many workforces or just shows that clearly not enough people follow the good work of the Economics and Governance Committee. I also support the privacy protections the bill provides, with the unauthorised disclosure of the information in criminal checks punishable with a penalty of up to \$12,615. It delivers strong adherence to high standards for staff while protecting their privacy.


When it comes to the staff in our electorate offices, yes, the Queensland parliament is the technical employer, but we all know the reality of the situation. We have a big say in who works in our offices, ministers even more so. Often, our electorate staff are our representatives in the community, particularly when we are in parliament. They are given access to a wide variety of information and hear some of our most vulnerable constituents' stories. We need to ensure the staff we hire show integrity and honesty to ensure the public can trust our officers in a safe and trustworthy environment.

I have always aimed for my office to be a place my community knows is there for them, whether to hold a community group meeting or event or to come and speak to me. I want the people I represent to know the office is safe to come to, even if they are going through a difficult time. Many tears have been shed in the office as constituents have revealed their difficulties, hurt and grief at whatever is their situation. My staff have shown incredible care and compassion in those situations, and I am thankful to them.

I will take a moment to pay tribute to the Bonney electorate office team: Joe Wilkinson, Katie Omrod and Deb Rowles. They all have been with me since I was elected and do a brilliant job. They have stayed around for so long and are passionate about working in my EO because they are truly community minded. Deb's second job is administering the Labrador Senior Citizen's Centre. She is a volunteer for the BeachCare program. Katie was the P&C president at Arundel State School and is


heavily involved through her church community at Arundel Presbyterian. Joe is president of Hope Island Rotary. He sits on the board of Headway ABI and chairs our local police community consultative committee.

When they started, none of my staff even flinched at having a criminal history check. They took it as a given that they would need one and were willing and ready to pass over whatever information was needed. They saw the need for these checks and to be above reproach to the community. On the other hand, the government has delayed this bill and takes no responsibility for what happened in the former minister for child safety's office. Sadly, we all know this is not the only matter of integrity of this government, with story after story of staff and ministers neither upholding best practices nor taking responsibility for their mistakes when found out. None of us would claim to be perfect, but being willing to stand up and say, 'I got it wrong' is imperative to build the trust of the public.

 **Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (5.48 pm): In speaking to the Ministerial and Other Office Holder Staff and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, I also acknowledge all of the electorate office staff who play a huge part in supporting constituents in our electorates, particularly when we are away. I also acknowledge the pressure they had during COVID-19 when every office in Queensland was closed. This is where it all began in terms of phone calls and constituents asking what they could and could not do. In these terms, we express our deep appreciation to those staff members.

With regard to the amendments relating to the Queensland Independent Remuneration Tribunal, we have been waiting for these amendments for 30 years. These are the amendments that have an independent remuneration tribunal determine crossbench resourcing. This was recommended by the Fitzgerald inquiry 30 years ago. We do want to express appreciation for this because parliament is about robust debate. Parliament is about holding members to account, holding governments to account and holding oppositions to account. It is important that every staff member is resourced. It has probably been the greatest act of discrimination that we have ever seen in that there are 22 opposition staff and, as was reported, 200 government staff while the Independents and crossbenchers have no staff whatsoever. Overall, it is something to be acknowledged in terms of the work of a crossbench. We have to have advice on legislation, the preparation of committee reports, research information, dissenting reports, the preparation of bills, vital parliament activities and meetings.

Having this denied to us was just unbelievable, but I am very appreciative of the fact that this has changed. In 2012—and this is not a new argument; this is something that we have been pushing for eight years now—the KAP received three staff, but 20 minutes before the Christmas break a minister in the Newman government walked in here and suspended standing orders and introduced legislation that took our staff off us. The same thing happened last year when the Premier took three of our staff, geed on by the opposition. Regardless, we are very appreciative and because of this I think this will be a better parliament. This means that crossbenchers do not have to rely on electorate staff—overworked electorate staff—to assist us with parliamentary duties and they can concentrate on the electorate. The Manager of Opposition Business acknowledged the work that electorate officers do, and he was the one pushing for electorate office staffing hours. We have to rely on our electorate office staff to help us with parliamentary duties. I want to acknowledge the government for pursuing this and moving these amendments. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Mr PURDIE** (Ninderry—LNP) (5.52 pm): I also rise to make a very short contribution to the Ministerial and Other Office Holder Staff and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018, otherwise known as 'you probably shouldn't employ criminals bill'. It has been a long two years waiting for Labor to cross the t's and dot the i's on simple administrative protections for staff in Queensland. This legislation responds to one of the more well-known integrity disasters of this government, the total number of which I have lost count. The reason behind the bill is the episode where the then Labor minister for child safety was busted for unwittingly employing a paedophile in her office.

As a new member of parliament I was pleased to say the least when the bill was referred to the Economics and Governance Committee for consideration, of which I was a former member. Not surprisingly, based on the commonsense value of the bill, the committee did not receive a single written or oral submission, just a tail between the legs briefing by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. You see, the bill simply puts in place what most of us would assume existed already. Apart from minor drafting errors in the bill that simply reflected the haste with which the bill was written, the committee recommended the bill be passed.

Let us go back to where it all began. As I alluded to, the genesis of this bill was a *Courier-Mail* article published in November 2017 which revealed a staff member of the then child safety minister, the member for Waterford, was a paedophile and had a criminal record for child pornography and had previously been convicted of three charges related to accessing and possessing child exploitation

material in 2011. While the rest of Queensland and indeed the country collectively screamed, 'How on earth could this happen?', the Premier and the minister stuck to the Labor government's playbook, taking absolutely no responsibility for this and instead blamed the Queensland parliament, claiming that it employed the criminal. During the Premier's first reading of the bill over two years ago she stated that the bill provided powers to assess the suitability of a person to be engaged in a ministerial office. The Premier's definition of 'suitability' clearly did not extend to her employment of her former chief of staff David Barbagallo, who still to this day remains under investigation for the—

Mrs D'ATH: I rise to a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. I have already raised this as a point of order previously in this debate. The opposition has been very selective in the wording in the explanatory notes and the bill in relation to 'suitability'. The suitability goes directly to criminal history records only and to be talking about any other staffing matters are not relevant to the bill and I ask that the member be brought back to the bill.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): I will take advice. In the short time that the member has, I ask him to come back to the bill.

Mr PURDIE: That aside, the key policy objective of the bill is to provide the director-general of the department—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members, under the provisions of the business program agreed to by the House and the time allocated for this stage of the bill having expired, I will now put all remaining questions.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Consideration in Detail

Message from Governor



Mrs D'ATH (5.56 pm): I present a message from His Excellency the Governor.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): The message from His Excellency recommends the amendment circulated by the Attorney-General. The contents of the message will be incorporated in the *Record of Proceedings*. I table the message for the information of members.

MESSAGE

MINISTERIAL AND OTHER OFFICE HOLDER STAFF AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2018

Constitution of Queensland 2001, section 68

I, PAUL de JERSEY AC, Governor, recommend to the Legislative Assembly that an appropriation be made for the purposes of the attached amendment, to be moved by the Minister, to a Bill for an Act to amend the Ministerial and Other Office Holder Staff Act 2010, the Parliament of Queensland Act 2001 and the Parliamentary Service Act 1988 for particular purposes

GOVERNOR

Date: 16 July 2020

Tabled paper: Message, dated 16 July 2020, from His Excellency the Governor recommending government amendment No. 13 to the Ministerial and Other Office Holder Staff and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018 [1203].



Mrs D'ATH (5.56 pm): I table the explanatory notes and statement of compatibility with human rights to my amendments.

Tabled paper: Ministerial and Other Office Holder Staff and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018, explanatory notes to Hon. Yvette D'Ath's amendments [1204].

Tabled paper: Ministerial and Other Office Holder Staff and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018, statement of compatibility with human rights contained in Hon. Yvette D'Ath's amendments [1205].

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: In accordance with sessional order 2B, the House must now consider clauses or remaining clauses, schedules and any amendments circulated by the minister in charge of the bill. I note that the Attorney-General's amendment No. 13 is outside the long title of the bill and therefore requires leave of the House. Is leave granted?

Leave granted.

Question put—That the minister's amendments Nos 1 to 13, as circulated, be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

Amendments agreed to.

Amendments as circulated—

- 1 **Clause 3 (Insertion of new pt 2A)**
Page 8, line 31, 'an indictable'—
omit, insert—
a relevant
- 2 **Clause 3 (Insertion of new pt 2A)**
Page 9, line 1, 'indictable'—
omit, insert—
relevant
- 3 **Clause 3 (Insertion of new pt 2A)**
Page 9, line 11, 'indictable'—
omit, insert—
relevant
- 4 **Clause 3 (Insertion of new pt 2A)**
Page 10, line 2, 'prosecution for the indictable'—
omit, insert—
prosecution process for the relevant
- 5 **Clause 3 (Insertion of new pt 2A)**
Page 10, lines 8 to 12—
omit, insert—
(b) if relevant, the court in which the prosecution process ended;
(c) particulars of the offence;
(d) the date the prosecution process ended.
- 6 **Clause 3 (Insertion of new pt 2A)**
Page 10, after line 18—
insert—
(7) In this section—
disqualifying offence see the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000*, section 168.
relevant offence means—
(a) an indictable offence; or
(b) a disqualifying offence that is not an indictable offence.
- 7 **Clause 10 (Insertion of new pt 5A)**
Page 17, line 28, 'an indictable'—
omit, insert—
a relevant
- 8 **Clause 10 (Insertion of new pt 5A)**
Page 18, line 1, 'indictable'—
omit, insert—
relevant
- 9 **Clause 10 (Insertion of new pt 5A)**
Page 18, line 11, 'indictable'—
omit, insert—
relevant
- 10 **Clause 10 (Insertion of new pt 5A)**
Page 19, line 1, 'prosecution for the indictable'—
omit, insert—
prosecution process for the relevant
- 11 **Clause 10 (Insertion of new pt 5A)**
Page 19, lines 7 to 11—
omit, insert—
(b) if relevant, the court in which the prosecution process ended;
(c) particulars of the offence;
(d) the date the prosecution process ended.

12 Clause 10 (Insertion of new pt 5A)

Page 19, after line 17—

insert—

(7) In this section—

disqualifying offence see the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000*, section 168.**relevant offence** means—

- (a) an indictable offence; or
- (b) a disqualifying offence that is not an indictable offence.

13 After clause 10

Page 20, after line 26—

*insert—***Part 5 Amendment of Queensland Independent Remuneration Tribunal Act 2013****11 Act amended**This part amends the *Queensland Independent Remuneration Tribunal Act 2013*.**12 Amendment of long title**

Long title, after 'Assembly'—

*insert—***and matters relating to entitlements of cross bench members to additional staff members****13 Amendment of s 3 (Main purpose of Act)**

Section 3, from 'decide'—

omit, insert—

decide—

- (a) remuneration in connection with members and former members of the Assembly; and
- (b) entitlements of cross bench members to additional staff members.

14 Amendment of s 7 (Functions)

Section 7(b)—

omit, insert—

- (b) to review entitlements of cross bench members to additional staff members;
- (c) to make determinations under this Act about the matters mentioned in paragraphs (a) and (b).

15 Insertion of new pt 3, div 1, sdiv 1, hdg

Before section 27—

*insert—***Subdivision 1 General****16 Amendment of s 27 (Power to make determination)**

Section 27, from 'about'—

omit, insert—

about the following matters—

- (a) remuneration in connection with members and former members of the Assembly;
- (b) entitlements of cross bench members to additional staff members.

17 Insertion of new pt 3, div 1, sdiv 2, hdg and s 28A

After section 28—

*insert—***Subdivision 2 Determinations about remuneration****28A Application of subdivision**This subdivision applies in relation to a determination about remuneration in connection with members and former members of the Assembly (a **remuneration determination**).**18 Amendment of s 29 (General principles for making determination)**

(1) Section 29, heading, 'determination'—

*omit, insert—***remuneration determinations**

- (2) Section 29(1) and (2), before 'determination'—
insert—
remuneration

19 Amendment of s 30 (Requirements for making determination)

- (1) Section 30, heading, 'determination'—
omit, insert—

remuneration determinations

- (2) Section 30, before 'determination,'—
insert—

remuneration

- (3) Section 30(d), 'section 55'—
omit, insert—

section 59D

20 Amendment of s 31 (When determination to be made)

- (1) Section 31, heading, 'determination'—
omit, insert—

remuneration determinations

- (2) Section 31(1) to (3), before 'determination'—
insert—

remuneration

21 Amendment of s 31A (Determinations about salary entitlements following public service salary decisions)

- (1) Section 31A, heading, 'Determinations'—
omit, insert—

Remuneration determinations

- (2) Section 31A(1) to (3), before 'determination'—
insert—

remuneration

- (3) Section 31A(4), 'If the determination'—
omit, insert—

If the remuneration determination

22 Amendment of s 31B (Particular determinations about additional salary entitlements)

- (1) Section 31B, heading, before 'determinations'—
insert—

remuneration

- (2) Section 31B(1) and (2), before 'determination'—
insert—

remuneration

23 Insertion of new pt 3, div 1, sdiv 3

Part 3, division 1—

insert—

Subdivision 3 Determinations about entitlements of cross bench members to additional staff members

31C Application of subdivision

This subdivision applies in relation to a determination about entitlements of cross bench members to additional staff members (an **additional staff member determination**).

31D General matters about additional staff member determinations

- (1) An additional staff member determination may provide for additional staff members for—
- (a) all cross bench members; or
 - (b) 1 or more stated classes of cross bench members; or
 - (c) 1 or more stated cross bench members; or
 - (d) a combination of 1 or more stated classes of cross bench members and 1 or more stated cross bench members.

- (2) An additional staff member determination may provide for—
 - (a) the same entitlement to additional staff members for all cross bench members, or classes of cross bench members, for whom the determination is made; or
 - (b) different entitlements to additional staff members for cross bench members, or classes of cross bench members, for whom the determination is made.
- (3) An additional staff member determination may state 1 or more of the following matters for an additional staff member for a cross bench member—
 - (a) the role of the staff member;
 - (b) the classification level of, including, for example, the level of salary for, the staff member;
 - (c) the location where the staff member is to perform the staff member's functions for the cross bench member.

31E General principles for making additional staff member determinations

- (1) In making an additional staff member determination, the tribunal may have regard to the following—
 - (a) parliamentary resources provided to cross bench members and other members of the Assembly;
 - (b) the composition of the Assembly and how the composition of the Assembly affects cross bench members;
 - (c) the workload and duties of the cross bench members for whom the tribunal is considering to make the determination;
 - (d) whether the cross bench members for whom the tribunal is considering to make the determination are members of political parties;
 - (e) relevant laws applying to members of the Assembly;
 - (f) other matters the tribunal considers appropriate.
- (2) In this section—

composition of the Assembly means the extent to which the Assembly is made up of the following members of the Assembly—

 - (a) members of a political party recognised in the Assembly as being in government;
 - (b) members of a political party recognised in the Assembly as being in opposition;
 - (c) cross bench members.

parliamentary resources, for a member of the Assembly, means services and support, including, for example, general staff members, provided to the member, in the parliamentary precinct or elsewhere, to help the member to carry out the member's duties.

31F Requirement to consult with Clerk

In making an additional staff member determination, the tribunal must consult with, and consider the views of, the Clerk.

31G When additional staff member determinations to be made

- (1) Subject to subsection (2), the tribunal may decide the frequency of additional staff member determinations.
- (2) The tribunal must make an additional staff member determination within 3 months after each of the following days—
 - (a) the day the Assembly is next summoned under the *Constitution of Queensland 2001*, section 15(1);
 - (b) if a person becomes, or ceases to be, a cross bench member during a term of the Assembly—the day the person becomes, or ceases to be, a cross bench member.
- (3) In this section—

term, of the Assembly, means the period—

 - (a) starting on the day the Assembly is summoned under the *Constitution of Queensland 2001*, section 15(1); and
 - (b) ending on the day the Assembly is next dissolved or expires.

24 Replacement of s 33 (Determination creates entitlement to remuneration)

Section 33—
omit, insert—

33 Effect of determination

- (1) If the tribunal makes a remuneration determination, a member or former member is entitled to the remuneration decided by the tribunal under the determination.

Note—

Also see part 4.

- (2) If the tribunal makes an additional staff member determination, a cross bench member is entitled to the additional staff members, decided by the tribunal for the member, under the determination.

Note—

Also see part 4A.

25 Amendment of s 41 (Annual salary entitlement of member)

Section 41, before 'determination'—

insert—

remuneration

26 Amendment of s 42 (Additional salary entitlement of some members)

Section 42(1) and (2), before 'determination'—

insert—

remuneration

27 Amendment of s 43 (Amount of additional salary)

Section 43(1), before 'determination'—

insert—

remuneration

28 Amendment of s 54 (Member's allowances and entitlements)

Section 54, before 'determination'—

insert—

remuneration

29 Relocation and renumbering of s 55 (Act does not affect other entitlements)

Section 55—

relocate to part 5 and *renumber* as section 59D.

30 Insertion of new pt 4A

After part 4—

insert—

Part 4A Additional staff members for cross bench members

59A Purpose of part

The purpose of this part is to provide for particular matters about additional staff members for cross bench members.

59B Clerk to give effect to entitlement to additional staff members

- (1) This section applies in relation to a cross bench member if the member is entitled to additional staff members under an additional staff member determination.
- (2) The cross bench member may request the Clerk provide additional staff members to the cross bench member in accordance with the additional staff member determination.
- (3) The Clerk must give effect to a cross bench member's request under subsection (2) in a way—
- (a) the Clerk considers appropriate; and
 - (b) that ensures the member's request is fulfilled to the greatest practicable extent without exceeding the member's entitlement under the additional staff member determination.
- (4) The Clerk's functions under this section are to be carried out as part of the Clerk's functions under the *Parliamentary Service Act 1988* as the chief executive of the parliamentary service established under that Act.

Note—

See the *Parliamentary Service Act 1988*, part 5 for matters about the management of the parliamentary service established under that Act.

59C When entitlement to additional staff members ceases

- (1) A person's entitlement under an additional staff member determination ceases if—
- (a) the person ceases to be a cross bench member; or
 - (b) for an entitlement that is conditional on the person being part of a class of cross bench members—the person ceases to be part of the class.
- (2) This section does not limit the ways in which a person's entitlement under an additional staff member determination may cease.

31 Amendment of sch 1 (Dictionary)

- (1) Schedule 1, definition *remuneration*—
omit.

- (2) Schedule 1—
insert—

additional staff member determination see section 31C.

additional staff members, for a cross bench member, means persons—

- (a) appointed under the *Parliamentary Service Act 1988*, part 5; and
- (b) provided to the member to help the member to carry out the member's duties in addition to general staff members for the member.

cross bench member means a member of the Assembly who is neither—

- (a) a member of a political party recognised in the Assembly as being in government; nor
- (b) a member of a political party recognised in the Assembly as being in opposition.

general staff members, for a member of the Assembly, means persons—

- (a) appointed, under the *Parliamentary Service Act 1988*, part 5, and provided to the member other than under an additional staff member determination; or
- (b) employed, under the *Ministerial and Other Office Holder Staff Act 2010*, part 2, as staff members in the member's office.

remuneration, in connection with a member or former member of the Assembly—

- (a) means salary, allowances or entitlements in connection with the member or former member, other than accommodation, services or other entitlements mentioned in section 59D; and
- (b) for a cross bench member—does not include an entitlement to additional staff members under an additional staff member determination.

remuneration determination see section 28A.

Clauses 1 to 10, as amended, agreed to.

Third Reading

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

Long Title

Question put—That amendment No. 14 be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

Amendment agreed to.

Amendment as circulated—

14 Long title

Long title, from 'the *Parliament of Queensland Act 2001*'—
omit, insert—


the *Parliament of Queensland Act 2001*, the *Parliamentary Service Act 1988* and the *Queensland Independent Remuneration Tribunal Act 2013* for particular purposes

Question put—That the long title of the bill, as amended, be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

PRIVILEGE

Member for Burnett, Register of Members' Interests


 **Mr BENNETT** (Burnett—LNP) (5.58 pm): I rise on a matter of privilege suddenly arising. I advise the House of a matter that has come to my attention with respect to my register of interests. Since February this year I have been liaising with the registrar to ensure that I have properly updated the register following my appointment as a director of James Bennett Property Pty Ltd as a beneficiary to the Bennett family trust. I completed a change of details and submitted it to the registrar on 6 March 2020.

The registrar then contacted me to seek further advice and particulars with respect to that declaration. There were numerous communications that took place between myself and the registrar about this matter. I responded to the registrar with further particulars and submitted an amended declaration in July 2020. That amended declaration was publicly available.

Following further advice from the registrar, I have today submitted a further update to the register to ensure that everything has been fully disclosed. I apologise to the House that I did not complete this strictly within the time limits but I was wanting to ensure that the declaration was correct considering that the registrar had already requested further particulars from me.

ADJOURNMENT

Everton Electorate, Traffic

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (6.00 pm): I rise in the House tonight to discuss an issue that is causing great concern for constituents in my electorate. The state Labor member for Ferny Grove has recently announced, with the Department of Transport and Main Roads, that there will be changes made to Samford Road to allegedly improve the traffic flow along Samford Road particularly in peak hours in the morning. One of those changes is to stop a right-hand turn from Samford Road into Pickering Street.

The problem with this is that myself and constituents in my electorate who would be affected by this change were never consulted. As soon as I found out about it, after a couple of constituents contacted me, I wrote to the minister expressing my concerns about this. I also wrote to my constituents in the Gaythorne area who would be negatively affected by this. Since that time I have been inundated with emails from people in my electorate who are greatly concerned about the negative impact that these changes would have on them. Some of those messages include the following—

Not only has the local community not been engaged in this decision at all, this change also creates a significant disruption to the vast majority of local residents who live in Gaythorne and Enoggera.

...

Removing this ability to turn right will increase our travel times and fuel costs, as well as contribute more pollution.

...

I know firsthand that the latter is not viable as the traffic volume through Pickering Street is too high to make a right-hand turn. With access points for two schools, two child care centres, the train station, the sports oval for Mt Maria, and the sports grounds for the local football club,

...

Removal of Samford Road into Pickering Street will make it extremely difficult to return to our house on Lode Street.


Finally—but there are many more—

... will require a significant detour down Wardell Street and onto the South Pine Road exit ramp ... It is already difficult to safely turn right from the South Pine Road exit into Pickering Street and this will increase the traffic load at that intersection which has no traffic lights.

My constituents are very concerned that this will have a negative impact on them. It will make their trip home longer and more dangerous as they drive west along Pickering Street trying to turn into their streets looking into the western sun, a street that is already congested.

I am calling on the minister to stop this so-called enhancement they are about to make and to make sure there is proper consultation with those in my electorate who will be negatively affected. That is the decent thing to do. We do not know about it. We need to be consulted before any change like this is made.

Greenslopes Electorate, Energy

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (6.03 pm): I would like to take some time tonight to update the House on what the Palaszczuk Labor government is doing to power our future in Greenslopes. The future of electricity in Greenslopes is cleaner and it is cheaper. I am the treasurer of the Coorparoo School of Arts and Memorial Hall Association and I was extremely pleased to receive our latest bill which was, in fact, a credit thanks to the rebate we had received. For three months of this year we have lost income due to the COVID shutdown. Every dollar counts. This rebate has been of great assistance to our association. Many constituents are telling me how pleased they are to see the rebates applied to their bills.


There are so many other initiatives that we have undertaken to make power cheaper in the electorate of Greenslopes, things like the rebates for energy efficient appliances, the solar for renters scheme, the battery schemes, the pensioner rebate scheme and we should not forget that network costs have also been driven down by 10 per cent. Underpinning all of this, of course, is the fact that we own the assets that generate electricity—all delivered by the Palaszczuk Labor government.

However, in the electorate of Greenslopes people do not just want cheaper energy, they want cleaner energy. I was pleased to take some time out to visit some clean energy projects in South-East Queensland. I was really pleased to be shown around the Wivenhoe pumped hydro scheme by Maia Schweizer, the CEO of CleanCo. That has now become a part of the daily clean energy mix in Queensland. One of the things Maia said stuck with me. She said our government should be really proud of CleanCo because there is nothing like it in the world. We also then went on and visited Coopers Gap Wind Farm and Oakey 1 Solar Farm.

These projects were not there two years ago when I last drove through this area. They are there because of private sector investment creating energy and jobs. They are doing that because of the confidence they have which has been instilled by the fact that the Palaszczuk Labor government believes in clean energy and backs clean energy. That is how we are powering our future in Greenslopes. It is a future that is cleaner, it is a future that is cheaper, and that is what people in Greenslopes tell me they want. Only Labor can deliver these things.

I take this opportunity to wish the Holland Park Meals on Wheels a very happy 50th birthday, a milestone they achieved on Monday. They have been delivering not just meals, but so much more, in our community for the last 50 years and I have had the great pleasure of volunteering for them on many, many occasions over the last 10 years. They are a great organisation. As a nurse I have seen it has enhanced our ability to get patients out of hospitals quicker and into their homes. They do so much good work. Thanks to all the volunteers and all the paid staff and happy 50th birthday, Holland Park Meals on Wheels.

Chatsworth Electorate, Small Business

 **Mr MINNIKIN** (Chatsworth—LNP) (6.06 pm): Small business is the backbone of the Queensland economy and I rise this evening to bring attention to the small businesses in the Chatsworth community that have shown strength and resilience throughout the challenges they have had to face during the COVID-19 pandemic. Through visiting and speaking with small business owners of different industries throughout my electorate, I am aware of the difficulties that they have had to overcome and the incredible steps they have taken to adapt. They are all to be commended. As we all know, the full economic impact is yet to be felt and unfortunately there may be tougher times ahead. I want the local businesses of Chatsworth to know that the community is well and truly behind them and that they are not alone in this endeavour.

As a true local who has grown up in Chatsworth it has been incredible to see how the small business community has matured and thrived over the years. Who could have guessed that Kenrose Street in Carina would one day become a busy and popular foodie destination for locals. The Baker's Corner on Kenrose Street has become a one-stop shop for freshly baked goodies provided by the talented owner and baker Ian. Backstreet Espresso is a well-known meet-up point for coffee and just next door is Giovanni's pizza, the place to go for authentic Italian pizza and pasta.

In Chatsworth we are blessed to have an amazing community of small businesses specialising in an array of services and products. Just to name a few, we have many beautiful coffee shops like Urban Cocina, with owner and head chef Jim; Mickle Pickle in Tingalpa; Bob's Bakery at Belmont—my go-to for a delicious pie from owner Brett; and Elio's pizzeria at Carina Heights run by Paul, an iconic restaurant where my family and I have celebrated many special occasions. For all things hair and beauty, our community relies on the talented hairdressers and barbers like Special FX Hair Studio, Theo's award-winning Carina BarberShop, Mr Men Barbers and RJ Hair Studio amongst many. Due to my lack of hair I cannot use their amazing services, but I do love dropping by for a good old chat instead.


Ms Bates interjected.

Mr MINNIKIN: When small businesses were feeling the brunt of the COVID impacts I launched a #buylocalchatsworth campaign to help, support and promote buying locally. For Mother's Day I supported local florists, the Carina Florist and Flowers by the Bay at Gumdale. To replace our much loved meat tray raffles I was happy to support award-winning local butcher Carina North Quality Meats with owner Michael, iconic Salm's butcher at Carindale and was interested to learn about the beauty industry with Gretchen, the owner of Magnolia House in Gumdale.

I would also like to acknowledge everyone in the Chatsworth community who has been doing their part to support small businesses. I know some have gone out of their way to buy as much as they can from smaller shops and family run businesses. I have had so many residents reach out to me asking how they can support local mum-and-dad businesses that have been doing it tough—tough indeed. To all Chatsworth small businesses, take a bow.

Mr SPEAKER: The member for Mudgeeraba is cautioned for attacking members who are follicly challenged.


Macalister Electorate, Coronavirus

 **Mrs McMAHON** (Macalister—ALP) (6.09 pm): Like many business throughout Australia and around the world, McAlister businesses have had a pretty tough few months. Earlier in the year I spoke about how eerily quiet the main street of Beenleigh was during the height of the pandemic here, but I know our tradies were still out on the tools, hardware stores and nurseries in particular did a roaring trade and our largest private employer, the Teys Bros abattoir, was going above and beyond to ensure that their production and, therefore, their jobs were not jeopardised. However, the impact on our hospitality and retail sectors was significant. In an urbanised old country town such as Beenleigh, the pubs, clubs and RSL are still the lifeblood of the community. They are the foundation stones in communities such as mine. As tough as it was, we know the closures were necessary and they do, too. It was those measures and the amazing work of our communities to comply with social distancing, to stay local and to stay safe that has put us in the position of being able to reopen and reimagine some of our local businesses.

It was with great anticipation that the pubs and clubs reopened on 10 July. At the Beenleigh bowls club the queue was down the street before 12.00. Many had been knocking on the door before that, having heard that 10 July was D-day but not realising the noon kick-off. Our pubs and clubs opened their doors and I did what any hardworking elected official would do: I went to meet people and gauge their reactions. Of course, I was very thorough. I attended quite a few venues and met with managers, bar staff and patrons. Obviously a few orders were made at the various bars to ensure offerings were up to scratch. In all seriousness, from speaking to the staff I know that they were nervous about opening. Even they admitted that they were a bit rusty, but they all agreed that it was great to be back at work.

Most patrons were very understanding about how the service at their local had to change to meet COVID-safe requirements. As I did at that time, I implore patrons at all of our venues to be patient and to work with the staff. Yes, some things have changed. Some ways of ordering are different. In many cases, the service may be a bit slower. However, those changes are necessary to ensure the health and safety of patrons and Queensland more broadly. Please do not take out your frustrations at the changes on the staff. They are doing their job. They are thankful to still have a job, but they know that by turning up to work every day and being on the front line of the service industry, their attendance at work places them at risk unless everyone follows the guidelines. As I have said, we are really happy to have our pubs and clubs opened, but I ask customers to please respect the staff, social distance and do not make their time at work any more anxious than it needs to be. In that way, we can stay open.

Gold Coast; Jackson, Ms K

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (6.12 pm): For the past five years, the Palaszczuk Labor government has treated the people of the Gold Coast like second-class citizens. That is so when it is playing petty games over funding splits on important infrastructure upgrades on the M1 or Gold Coast Light Rail, dragging their feet on the Second M1—a project the member for Macalister has said could take 40 years to build. It is so when the government is rolling out the red carpet to organised crime by watering down tough laws and resources for police, which has seen a resurgence of criminal bikies, or overseeing increased youth crime and domestic and family violence, putting the safety of locals at risk. It is so when it is promising to build a global tourism hub, a project that would support 6,000 local jobs but is now all but dead in the water. It is so when Labor is shifting the goalposts on a new cruise ship terminal at the same time that it is supporting a second one in Brisbane.


That is so when the government is suggesting that the sea breeze on the Gold Coast is enough to keep kids cool in schools and then backflipping and adopting the LNP's air-conditioning policy. It is so when it is sending word from Brisbane to drive bulldozers through our prized picnic areas with no community consultation and no warning. It is so when it is scaring everyone away for the Commonwealth Games, only to realise the Gold Coast was a ghost town when it was too late. It is so when the government is undermining the property rights of local families with draconian residential tenancy laws that had to be scrapped in an embarrassing about face or is continuing to strangle small businesses with extra taxes that cost jobs. It is so when it is allowing unemployment levels on the Gold Coast to skyrocket, with 11,400 jobs lost in May alone and, recently, using the guise of COVID-19 to increase land valuations of our hinterland properties by 500 per cent and driving local farmers out of the area with new sky-high rates charges. The list of Labor failures is endless.

It is no wonder that there is only one Labor MP out of 11 seats on the Gold Coast. After 31 October, the good people of Gaven will look forward to much better representation from Kirsten Jackson as their local member of parliament. Throughout the COVID pandemic, the incumbent member for Gaven has been missing in action. She is silent on the important issues affecting people on the Gold Coast. Only now are we seeing her crawl out of the woodwork, as Brisbane's chess piece, to take pictures and promote developments outside the Gaven area.

I am proud to say that the LNP candidate for Gaven, Kirsten Jackson, is someone who understands the issues in Gaven and will represent what local families need. Kirsten's family, the Goodings and the Nielsens, have been farming and living in the area since 1872 and have several roads named after them, including Gooding Drive and Nielsens Road. Kirsten is someone who will stand up for Gaven and the Gold Coast and not go missing in action when it counts or be dictated to by Brisbane. Kirsten Jackson is a local mum and a small business owner and, after two years of listening to people on the ground, she is exactly who the people of Gaven need to secure their economic future.

(Time expired)

Lytton Electorate


 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (6.15 pm): In recent months many Queenslanders have had their lives torn apart during the global health and financial crisis, but Queenslanders' diligence has ensured that we can and will unite and recover from COVID-19. I am proud of Queenslanders and I am proud to be part of the Palaszczuk government, which is supporting all Queensland communities, including the bayside, by investing in our economy to create jobs for Queenslanders. This week Cross River Rail saw a milestone with 150 trainees or apprentices on site. That \$5.4 billion project will generate over 7,000 jobs, including 450 trainees or apprentices, over the life of the project. It will deliver more trains and reduce congestion. I had an opportunity to meet with workers from a local Hemmant firm, IDEC, at the Albert and Charlotte streets site, as well as many other trainees and apprentices on that city-changing project.

Many bayside small businesses, such as Fun Fit Play, have received a small business adaption grant. Because of that grant, Fun Fit Play is expanding its business to attract grownups to the restaurant and bar while the children have fun, get fit and play. An injection of \$10 million in funding from Skilling Queenslanders for Work will generate around 500 jobs. I know that BABI will be pleased to hear about that expansion. We are supporting our economy to create job opportunities for all. I am very proud of our very own Wynnum Community Place, which will provide a place for locals to seek the assistance that they need. Our local schools continue to see the installation of air conditioning by local sparkies. We will see an expansion of health services at our beloved Gundu Pa with the introduction of ophthalmology clinics. We continue to support our local sport clubs with grants to prepare for a return to play through COVID SAFE Active Clubs Kickstart grants. There are further grants of up to \$20,000 to support clubs to purchase equipment and carry out capital works, creating jobs for local tradies.

Local schools, clubs and businesses are also backing the bayside. Iona College's \$20 million new Provence Centre will employ in excess of 400 workers during construction. Local firm Tomkins has been awarded the contract and has made a commitment to employ only locals and local contractors for the project. The \$10 million redevelopment of the best football club in Queensland, Wynnum Manly Leagues Club, home of the mighty Wynnum Manly Seagulls, is powering ahead, as is the much anticipated Waterloo Bay Hotel cinema and unit development. The Wynnum Manly Leagues Club, which is due for completion later this year, will employ an extra 40 staff. The Waterloo development, which is due for completion early next year, will swell its staff numbers by 50. I am told that those numbers will include trainees and apprentices.

I look forward to working with baysiders to deliver the Palaszczuk government's recovery strategy. We baysiders always look after each other. I thank each and every baysider for their care and support of each other and our community. I am so very proud of the great work that they have done. I look forward to continuing to work together as we unite and recover.

Rookwood Weir

 **Mr ANDREW** (Mirani—PHON) (6.18 pm): I am proud to represent an area that has some of the best agricultural land in Australia. With the right policies, infrastructure and support, I believe the region has the potential for extraordinary economic growth and expansion.

The new Rookwood Weir project, which is to be built along the Fitzroy River in Central Queensland, will be situated in an area that contains more than 45,000 hectares of land suitable for irrigated crops. If done right, it will underpin agricultural production and expansion in the Fitzroy area for many years to come. A reliable supply of irrigation water is vital to enable the region's farmers to transition to high-value agriculture. It is also hoped that access to new water supplies will boost business investment in the region and give farmers the opportunity to move to intensive irrigated crop production, which will achieve higher returns and allow them to expand and create more job opportunities. Therefore, it has been a great disappointment to farmers and communities in the region to find that the bickering and buck-passing by the state and federal governments is threatening the success of the project.

Many are worried that regional Queensland is about to be short-changed on quality and much needed regional infrastructure, leaving them high and dry by the state government yet again. Earlier this year the minister, Dr Anthony Lynham, said the estimated cost of the project was now likely to exceed the initial budget due to a blowout in the price of concrete. The result has been a number of key changes being made to the project's design, not least of which will be a 30 per cent reduction in its capacity for water storage.

Key design changes include using a lower grade of concrete for the construction and a reduction in the weir's height. The original earth embankment with gated flow-through has also been changed to a smaller embankment with no gate. Farmers, graziers and townspeople through Central Queensland are frustrated and angry at this downgrading of the project and are calling on the government to stick with the original plan. As one farmer in my electorate said—

One minute you look as though you've got access to water, the next minute it's all gone, especially because I'm on the tail end of it so if the weir gets lowered I won't get any of it.


The people of Central Queensland want Rookwood Weir built at full capacity at 76,000 megalitres. It is simply not good enough to say it is too expensive. It was this government's decision to pursue policies that frittered away billions on wasteful green projects and so-called innovation initiatives. Country areas have been starved of investment and infrastructure for many years now. They should not be made to pay the price for all that waste with substandard and underfunded water infrastructure.

Without full capacity, the money spent on the weir will be largely wasted and future growth in the region hampered. As one federal member said recently, you can do the numbers; if you take 22,000 megalitres off that 76,000, you are not going to be left with any long-term backup for agriculture.

What I am hearing from farmers is that there has been virtually no consultation from the Queensland government around final water allocations for farmers. All they know is that so far there has been little progress made.

(Time expired)

Musgrave Park Hostel; Correction to *Record of Proceedings*

 **Ms TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (6.21 pm): Tonight I want to talk about an issue that is of significant concern in my community: the proposed sale of Musgrave Park Hostel on Boundary Street, West End. Musgrave Park Hostel, owned by Aboriginal Hostels Ltd, has been providing emergency and short-term accommodation to First Nation people for many years. This hostel is enormously important to the local Indigenous community, given the cultural significance of Musgrave Park and the history of Boundary Street.

The loss of Musgrave Park Hostel will further deplete critical accommodation options for Indigenous people in need in South-East Queensland at a time when we can least afford it. The Aboriginal population in South-East Queensland is one of the fastest growing of anywhere in Australia, and with economic conditions worsening right now we know that it is those who are in insecure work who will be most impacted, including First Nation people.

Facilities like Musgrave Park Hostel play a crucial role in providing emergency and medium term accommodation to help those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness or those seeking services like tertiary hospital care or education and training.

Almost a month ago, I wrote to the federal minister, Hon. Ken Wyatt, asking him to intervene on this decision of Aboriginal Hostels Ltd to stop the sale of Musgrave Park Hostel and to work with local Indigenous organisations and the state to address the minor capital works necessary to get the hostel open to help accommodate people in need. I stand ready to work with my local community, local

Indigenous organisations, the Minister for Housing and Public Works, and the federal minister for Indigenous Australians in order to see this hostel operating in the manner in which it was intended. I table correspondence between myself and the federal minister for the benefit of the House.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 19 June 2020, from the member for South Brisbane, Ms Jackie Trad MP, to the federal Minister for Indigenous Australians, Hon. Ken Wyatt AM, regarding the sale of Musgrave Park Hostel [1206].


Tabled paper: Letter, dated 15 July 2020, from the federal Minister for Indigenous Australians, Hon. Ken Wyatt AM, to the member for South Brisbane, Ms Jackie Trad MP, regarding the sale of Musgrave Park Hostel [1207].

While I am on my feet, I wish to clarify statements made in my contribution to the Electoral and Other Legislation Amendment Bill on 18 June 2020. During my contribution, I stated—

To put this in context, I was six weeks late in formally finalising the declaration of this property but had provided information verbally and in written form to the Clerk, but I had not signed form 3. This was a six-week lag.

To clarify, I was six weeks late in providing a draft declaration with the details necessary for the Clerk to provide advice regarding the declaration of this property, having already advised him of such verbally, and it was another two weeks before I signed and submitted a form 3, which was required 30 days after the date of the settlement of the property on 26 April 2019. There was no intention to mislead. I apologise to the House if this has caused confusion.

Tinney, Ms S

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (6.24 pm): I rise this evening to reflect on the life of a remarkable woman, Shirley Rae Tinney, who sadly passed away on 18 June, and to convey my sympathies and the sympathies of Fiona Gaske, our LNP candidate for Pumicestone, to Shirley's family.

Shirley was Caboolture born and bred. Born at the local hospital on 13 September 1935, her daughter, Kathryn, shared that Shirley completed her schooling at Caboolture State School at the age of 14 and, despite scoring a scholarship to continue, began working at the Caboolture Clothing Factory before five years as a telephonist with Postmaster-General.


Shirley and Ken Tinney met at square-dancing in February 1954 and married on 12 November 1955. They were together for 61 years before Ken's passing. They welcomed their three children—Ian, David, and Kathryn. As the kids became older, Shirley's sense of service to the community went to another level. Shirley was before her time, becoming the manager of the boys football team and supporting her kids' involvement in cricket, Scouts, school tuckshop and finally netball. Shirley helped guide the establishment of Caboolture Netball Association in 1979, was the inaugural president and served on the executive in various roles including with Queensland Netball until retiring at the end of the 2002 season. In 2003, Shirley received an OAM for her dedication in serving the community. The Caboolture Netball Complex was named after Shirley in 2011 and it was at the complex that I first met her.

Shirley also loved her job at the Caboolture Hospital auxiliary canteen. She started when the hospital opened in 1993, and her last shift was in January this year. Nicky, manager of the Caboolture Hospital coffee shop, shared the following—

I met Shirl on my very first day of work at the coffee shop. The first job Shirl gave me was to grate eggs for the sandwiches. I remember thinking, 'Who the hell grates eggs?' but I didn't question Shirl; no-one ever did. By the end of the day we had become firm friends and had formed a friendship that would last forever. Shirl was a very special lady that deserved her own special things. She had her own knife and her own chair, both bought specially for her. We were allowed to use Shirl's chair, but no-one was ever allowed to touch her knife, so much so I had to lock it in the safe so no-one would touch it. It is still locked in the safe.

Shirley will be remembered for the fact that she did not seek recognition for her contributions to the community and was always quick to praise and acknowledge others who had been on the journey with her. In the words of celebrant Anna Staines: farewell Shirley Tinney, definitely our region's most forward, funny, strong, straight-shooting, independent, realistic, capable, experienced, down-to-earth, reminiscent, resilient, confident and caring woman.

Redcliffe Electorate, Community Organisations and Sporting Clubs

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (6.27 pm): As the Palaszczuk government implements its economic plan to help our communities unite and recover from COVID, can I say how great it is to see so many community organisations and sporting clubs starting to get up and running again. I had the great pleasure very recently to go out with the member for Bancroft to the Redcliffe Tigers AFC to have a look at their wonderful new grounds. With the announcement from the Premier this week, can I join in saying what a great initiative this is and how much it will support our local economy. We welcome our southern colleagues, and I am in no doubt

whatsoever that the Redcliffe community and the Moreton Bay region would happily adopt one of the AFL teams that are coming up to Queensland. There is no better place to stay and play than in our area.

Talking about sports, I also want to say that, now that we are seeing the NRL playing again, I think it is about time that we heard a decision on a new team for Queensland. Again, there is no better place for that team to be based than at the Redcliffe Dolphins. We have the best facilities, but more importantly we have such incredibly strong community support for the NRL and for the Redcliffe Dolphins. We are sad that the Intrust Super Cup has not recommenced this year. I note the member for Kurwongbah is nodding his head. I know he would support Redcliffe being that new team for NRL.

A government member: Don't forget the Roar!

Mrs D'ATH: Of course I would never forget the Roar! I know they will do very well this year.

Can I also very quickly acknowledge a number of businesses that have been supported by the Small Business Adaptation Grant. I congratulate Tempest restaurant at Scarborough; Scarborough Physio and Health, who, through their grant, are partnering with another local business, Brad Flynn, who is also president of the Redcliffe Peninsula Chamber of Commerce; Sunover Tours, who do amazing day and overnight tours to Moreton Island and Fraser Island; and also LaVida on Anzac, which provides outstanding accommodation to visitors to the peninsula.

They all received grants of up to \$10,000 which will be used to help market and grow their businesses and to get social media up and running. They were all heavily affected by COVID and the shutdown. They will be able to rebuild, to build up their customer base again, and to get people back into jobs. Tourism is so important for our area, so those businesses involved in tourism that are getting this grant are so welcoming of it. It is fantastic that local businesses have benefited from this, and I am proud to be part of the Palaszczuk government supporting the people of Redcliffe.

The House adjourned at 6.30 pm.

ATTENDANCE

Andrew, Bailey, Bates, Batt, Bennett, Berkman, Bleijie, Boothman, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Costigan, Crandon, Crawford, Crisafulli, D'Ath, Dametto, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Frecklington, Furner, Gerber, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Hart, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, Janetzki, Jones, Katter, Kelly, King, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Linard, Lister, Lui, Lynham, Madden, Mander, McArdle, McCallum, McDonald, McMahan, McMillan, Mickelberg, Miles, Millar, 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, Stevens, Stewart, Trad, Watts, Weir, Whiting, Wilson