



RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT

Tuesday, 8 September 2020

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TUESDAY, 8 SEPTEMBER 2020

 The Legislative Assembly met at 9.30 am.

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

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

ASSENT TO BILLS

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

The Honourable C.W. Pitt MP

Speaker of the Legislative Assembly

Parliament House

George Street

BRISBANE QLD 4000

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

Date of Assent: 20 August 2020

A Bill for an Act to amend the Acquisition of Land Act 1967, the Environmental Protection Act 1994, the Mineral and Energy Resources (Financial Provisioning) Act 2018 and the legislation mentioned in schedule 1 for particular purposes

A Bill for an Act to amend the Biodiscovery Act 2004 and the Right to Information Act 2009 for particular purposes

A Bill for an Act to enable the establishment and operation of a wind farm in certain State forests, and to amend this Act, the Forestry Act 1959, the Land Act 1994 and the Planning Act 2016 for particular purposes

A Bill for an Act to establish a fund for reducing the State's debt, and to amend this Act, the Financial Accountability Act 2009 and the Superannuation (State Public Sector) Act 1990 for particular purposes

A Bill for an Act to amend the Betting Tax Act 2018, the Duties Act 2001, the First Home Owner Grant Act 2000, 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, the Taxation Administration Regulation 2012 and the legislation mentioned in schedule 1 for particular purposes

A Bill for an Act to amend the Ambulance Service Act 1991, the Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011, the Medicines and Poisons Act 2019, the Private Health Facilities Act 1999, the Public Health Act 2005, the Queensland Mental Health Commission Act 2013 and the legislation mentioned in schedule 1 for particular purposes

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


Governor

20 August 2020

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 20 August 2020, from His Excellency the Governor, to the Speaker advising of assent to certain bills on 20 August 2020 [[1525](#)].

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

Mulherin, Hon. TS


 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I was deeply saddened to learn of the passing of former member, minister and deputy leader of the opposition, Tim Mulherin. At a future time the House will formally note its condolences with the passing of the Hon. Tim Mulherin; however, I wish to make a few

comments. As someone who has served in this House with Tim Mulherin, I believe he was an exemplar parliamentarian. Tim was a tireless advocate, but he was also a gentleman, respected by both sides of the aisle. He was a great believer in bringing people together and a passionate advocate not only for his community of Mackay but for all regional and rural Queensland.

With the passing of Tim Mulherin we have lost a person who has contributed much to public life in Queensland. He was a person of boundless enthusiasm and I was very proud to call him my friend. My thoughts go out to his wonderful wife, Erin, sons Declan, Liam and Rory, his mother Helen and extended Mulherin family.

REPORT


Auditor-General

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I have to report that I received from the Auditor-General a report titled *Report 2—2020-21: Effectiveness of audit committees in state government entities*. I table the report for the information of members.

Tabled paper: Auditor-General Report 2: 2020-21—Effectiveness of audit committees in state government entities [[1526](#)].

PRIVILEGE

Speaker's Ruling, Referral to Ethics Committee

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, on 12 August 2020 the Treasurer, Minister for Infrastructure and Planning wrote to me alleging that the member for Everton deliberately misled the House on 14 July, 11 August and 12 August 2020.

The matter relates to statements made by the member for Everton regarding the Treasurer's knowledge of fiscal principle 6. The three statements by the member for Everton were, first, 'In recent media interviews the Treasurer ... did not know one of Treasury's key fiscal principles'; second, 'Not long ago he did not know the fiscal principle about the growth of the Public Service'; and, finally, 'This Treasurer, who has challenges when trying to remember his own fiscal principles'.

I sought further information from the member for Everton about the allegation made against him in accordance with standing order 269(5). I have considered the material put forward by the Treasurer and the member for Everton and am of the opinion that there is an arguable case that the statements are factually incorrect and misleading and that the member for Everton knew this at the time. The member for Everton based his statements on a media interview by the Treasurer. However, the assertions by the member for Everton are not supported by the transcript of the interview. Furthermore, the Treasurer rose on a matter of privilege explaining the interview while the member for Everton was in the Assembly and, notwithstanding the absence of further evidence, the member for Everton repeated his claims.

Accordingly, I will be referring the matter for the further consideration of the House via the Ethics Committee. I wish to emphasise that my role is not to determine whether there has been proven fault—a breach of privilege—but, rather, whether there are sufficient issues in play to warrant the further consideration of the House via the Ethics Committee. I remind members that standing order 271 now applies and members should not refer to these matters in the House. I seek leave to incorporate the ruling circulated in my name.

Leave granted.

SPEAKER'S RULING ALLEGED DELIBERATELY MISLEADING THE HOUSE

On 12 August 2020, the Treasurer and Minister for Infrastructure and Planning wrote to me alleging that the Member for Everton deliberately misled the House on 14 July, 11 August and 12 August 2020.

The matter relates to a statements made by the Member for Everton regarding the Treasurer's knowledge of fiscal principle 6.

The three statements by the Member for Everton were, first, 'In recent media interviews the Treasurer Did not know one of Treasury's key fiscal principles'; second, 'Not long ago he did not know the fiscal principle about the growth of the Public Service'; and finally 'This Treasurer, who has challenges when trying to remember his own fiscal principles'.

In his letter to me, the Treasurer contended the first statement was misleading because the Member for Everton based his statements on a media interview. However, the Treasurer argued that he was asked in the interview about the Government's performance against fiscal principle 6. The Treasurer declined to confirm the interviewer's assessment of the Government's performance against the fiscal principle. He argues that he did not decline to state what the fiscal principle actually was.

I sought further information from the Member for Everton about the allegation made against him, in accordance with Standing Order 269(5). The Member for Everton argued that his statement was not misleading and relied on the aforementioned media interview as evidence.

Having considered the material put forward by the Treasurer and the Member for Everton, I am of the opinion that there is an arguable case that the statements are factually incorrect and misleading, and that the Member for Everton knew this at the time.

The Member for Everton based his statements on the media interview by the Treasurer. However, the assertions by the Member for Everton are not supported by the transcript of the interview. Furthermore, the Treasurer rose on a Matter of Privilege on 12 August 2020 explaining what he was asked in the interview when the Member for Everton was present in the Assembly.

Therefore, while the benefit of the doubt may be afforded to the Member for Everton in relation to his first two statements, that he was under a genuine mistaken belief of what was contained in the interview, this is difficult to sustain in relation to the third statement.


Accordingly, in relation to the third statement, I find that there is an arguable case against the elements of the alleged contempt to be considered by the Ethics Committee.

Therefore, on the information before me, I have decided that the Member for Everton's statement does warrant the further attention of the House via the Ethics Committee and I will be referring the matter.

I wish to emphasise that my role is not to determine whether there has been proven fault—a breach of privilege—but rather whether there are sufficient issues in play to warrant the further consideration of the House via the Ethics Committee.

I remind members that standing order 271 now applies and members should not refer to these matters in the House.

Speaker's Ruling, Alleged Deliberate Misleading of the House

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, on 13 August 2020 the Minister for State Development, Tourism and Innovation wrote to me alleging that the Leader of the Opposition and the members for Everton, Chatsworth, Glass House and Moggill deliberately misled parliament on 11 August and 12 August 2020.


The matter relates to statements made about alleged additional costs to the Cross River Rail project. In her letter to me, the minister contended that the members' statements were baseless and that they had failed to provide any material that supported their claims. I sought further information from the Leader of the Opposition and members for Everton, Chatsworth, Glass House and Moggill about the allegation made against them in accordance with standing order 269(5). The members provided me with a document provided to the opposition by an anonymous whistleblower. The document outlines the events that are alleged to incur additional costs to the Cross River Rail project. While the contents of the document are open to debate and scrutiny, it cannot be said that the members' statements were baseless. While parliamentary privilege affords all members freedom of speech and the ability to raise concerns in the House without fear of challenge, I remind all members that any information relied on and raised in the House should be used in good faith and after some assessment is made as to the accuracy and veracity of such material.

On the evidence before me, I consider that the Leader of the Opposition and the members for Everton, Chatsworth, Glass House and Moggill have made an adequate explanation for the basis of their statements under standing order 269(4). I have therefore decided that this matter does not warrant the further attention of the House via the Ethics Committee and I will not be referring the matter. I table the correspondence in relation to this matter.

Tabled paper: Bundle of correspondence in relation to the alleged deliberate misleading of the House by the Leader of the Opposition, Mrs Deb Frecklington MP, the member for Everton, Mr Tim Mander MP, the member for Chatsworth, Mr Steve Minnikin MP, the member for Glass House, Mr Andrew Powell MP, and the member for Moggill, Dr Christian Rowan MP [[1527](#)].

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

School Group Tour

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

PETITIONS

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

Sunshine Coast Daily

Hon. Jones, from 352 petitioners, requesting the House to urge News Corporation to continue to publish the Sunshine Coast Daily in a paper format or sell the paper to a local consortium who will continue its publication [[1528](#)].

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

Queensland State Fossil

From 775 petitioners, requesting the House to consider the installation of Diamantinasaurus matildae as the Queensland State Fossil [[1529](#)].

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

South Burnett, Specialist Cancer Nurse

Ms Frecklington, from 1,539 petitioners, requesting the House to appoint a Specialist Cancer Nurse role to the South Burnett [[1530](#), [1531](#)].

Great Barrier Reef Protection, Science

Mr Bennett, from 2,938 petitioners, requesting the House to revoke the Environmental Protection (Great Barrier Reef Protection Measures) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2019 and establish an Office of Science Quality Assurance to check the science being used to make political decisions [[1532](#), [1533](#)].

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

Ipswich, Incinerators

From 1,510 petitioners, requesting the House to recall the proposed incinerator coordinated project in Ipswich and reject any further applications for incinerators within city limits of Ipswich [[1534](#), [1535](#)].

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

Public Monuments, Women

Mr Berkman, from 791 petitioners, requesting the House to create a law that requires 50 per cent of statues, pictures and plaques in public places in Queensland to depict real women [[1536](#)].

Gold Coast, Police Resources

Mr Crisafulli, from 850 petitioners, requesting the House to relocate the Broadwater Police Beat resources from the Coomera Police District to the Runaway Bay Police District and increase the permanent police staffing allocation for the Northern Gold Coast [[1537](#)].

Child Protection

Ms Bates, from 590 petitioners, requesting the House to adopt the LNP's Child Protection Force [[1538](#)].

Ipswich West, Public Transport

Mr Andrew, from 151 petitioners, requesting the House to provide a compliant public transport service to meet the needs of the residents of Ipswich's western suburbs [[1539](#)].

North Stradbroke Island, East Road

Dr Robinson, from 280 petitioners, requesting the House to widen the road at a particularly dangerous section of East Road, North Stradbroke Island [[1540](#)].

Police Honour Roll

Mr Dametto, from 787 petitioners, requesting the House to accept the recommendation of the Queensland Ombudsman and add Senior Sergeant Michael Isles to the Police Honour Roll and to enable consideration on merit of other serving police officers whose loss of life can be attributed to suicide being added to the Police Honour Roll [[1541](#)].

Hydrocarbon

Mr Andrew, from 588 petitioners, requesting the House to bring legislation on hydrocarbon use in line with every other Australian State and territory [[1542](#)].

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

Palm Beach, Proposed Exit 92 Service Road

From 1,245 petitioners, requesting the House to seek an alternative to the proposed service road at exit 92 Palm Beach and preserve this valuable environmental space for our community [[1543](#)].

Dohles Rocks Road, Entry and Exit Ramps

From 182 petitioners, requesting the House to build new entry and exit ramps at Dohles Rocks Road, Murrumba [[1544](#)].

Puppies, Breeding

From 1,038 petitioners, requesting the House to review and strengthen the legislation to stop 'puppy farming' [[1545](#)].

D'Aguilar Highway, Moodlu

From 105 petitioners, requesting the House to close the eastern end access to Lord Lane, and open the western end for access to the D'Aguilar Highway, Moodlu [[1546](#)].

Queensland Air Museum, Extension

From 1,826 petitions requesting the House to not allow the extension of the footprint of Queensland Air Museum into Lot 687 containing the Isabel Jordan Bushland Reserve and Lot 340 [\[1547\]](#).

Townsville, Road Fatality

From 317 petitioners, requesting the House to follow up and make public the results of the investigation into an accident that occurred in Townsville on Thursday 30 January 2020 at 7.45 am in which a motorcycle rider was killed [\[1548\]](#).

Public Hospitals, Car Parking

From 1,579 petitioners, requesting the House to no longer refer to Queensland as the low tax state whilst hospital patients are forced to pay exorbitant car park fees whilst attending appointments at public hospitals and using government owned car parks [\[1549\]](#).

Doonan, Traffic Arrangements

From 697 petitioners, requesting the House to create an acceleration lane turning left from Grays Road into Eumundi-Noosa Road, a turning lane left into Grays Road and to extend the 60 km zone from the United Petrol Station, to Beddington or Duke Road at Doonan [\[1550\]](#).

Cassowary Coast Regional Council

From 402 petitioners, requesting the House to appoint a Financial Controller to the Cassowary Coast Regional Council or appoint an Interim Administrator to ensure the council carries out its responsibilities in compliance with the relevant legislation [\[1551\]](#).

Body Corporate Managers, Regulation

From 654 petitioners, requesting the House to regulate body corporate managers [\[1552\]](#).

Aged Care, Accommodation and Services

From 491 petitioners, requesting the House to properly legislate for aged care and seniors providers to design accommodation to a standard and to ensure staffing levels and training is capable of offering greater health protection and care during virus pandemics [\[1553\]](#).

Petitions received.

TABLED PAPERS

PAPERS TABLED DURING THE RECESS (SO 31)

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

17 August 2020—

[1388](#) Response from the Natural Resources, Mines and Energy (Hon. Dr Lynham), to an ePetition (3350-20) sponsored by the Clerk under provisions of Standing Order 119(4) from 393 petitioners, requesting the House to discover and rename all places in Queensland named for British aristocrats and politicians who were in favour of slavery or who voted against the slavery abolition laws introduced in Britain in the early part of the 19th century

21 August 2020—

[1389](#) Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee: Report No. 70, 56th Parliament—Crime and Corruption Amendment Bill 2020

26 August 2020—

[1390](#) COVID-19 Emergency Response Act 2020, Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012, Magistrates Courts Act 1921: Domestic and Family Violence Protection (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Regulation 2020, No. 153

[1391](#) COVID-19 Emergency Response Act 2020, Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012, Magistrates Courts Act 1921: Domestic and Family Violence Protection (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Regulation 2020, No. 153, explanatory notes

[1392](#) COVID-19 Emergency Response Act 2020, Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012, Magistrates Courts Act 1921: Domestic and Family Violence Protection (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Regulation 2020, No. 153, human rights certificate

27 August 2020—

[1393](#) Statement for Public Disclosure: Expenditure of the Office of the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly for the period 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020, dated 13 August 2020

28 August 2020—

[1394](#) Natural Resources, Agricultural Industry Development and Environment Committee: Report No. 8, 56th Parliament—Waste Reduction and Recycling (Plastic Items) Amendment Bill 2020

[1395](#) Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee: Report No. 40, 56th Parliament—Meriba Omasker Kaziw Kazipa (Torres Strait Islander Traditional Child Rearing Practice) Bill 2020

[1396](#) Education, Employment and Small Business Committee: Report No. 34, 56th Parliament—Public Service and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020

[1397](#) Education, Employment and Small Business Committee: Report No. 35, 56th Parliament—Criminal Code and Other Legislation (Wage Theft) Amendment Bill 2020

[1398](#) Public Report of Ministerial Expenses for the period 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020

[1399](#) State Development, Tourism, Innovation and Manufacturing Committee: Report No. 3, 56th Parliament—Nature Conservation and Other Legislation (Indigenous Joint Management—Moreton Island) Amendment Bill 2020

[1400](#) Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee: Report No. 71, 56th Parliament—Child Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020

31 August 2020—

[1401](#) Transport and Public Works Committee: Report No. 42, 56th Parliament—Inquiry into Motor Recreational Activities

4 September 2020—

[1402](#) Department of Transport and Main Roads: Master Plan—Priority Port of Townsville, 2020

[1403](#) Department of Transport and Main Roads: Master Plan—Priority Port of Gladstone, 2020

[1404](#) Rail Safety National Law (South Australia) Act 2012: Rail Safety National Law National Regulations (Fees and Other Measures) Variation Regulations 2020

[1405](#) Rail Safety National Law (South Australia) Act 2012: Rail Safety National Law National Regulations (Fees and Other Measures) Variation Regulations 2020, explanatory notes

7 September 2020—

[1406](#) Natural Resources, Agricultural Industry Development and Environment Committee: Report No. 9, 56th Parliament—Annual Report 2019-20

[1407](#) Response from the Treasurer, Minister for Infrastructure and Planning (Hon. Dick), to an ePetition (3363-20) sponsored by the Clerk under provisions of Standing Order 119(4) from 3,025 petitioners, requesting the House to repeal the decision granting the designation for the Yalingbila Bibula Whale Interpretive Centre at Point Lookout

[1408](#) Response from the Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy (Hon. Dr Lynham), to a paper petition (3391-20) presented by the member for Caloundra, Mr McArdle, and an ePetition (3355-20) sponsored by the member for Caloundra, Mr McArdle, from 941 and 3,217 petitioners respectively, requesting the House to ensure an extension of the current lease is granted to the Queensland Air Museum to extend their footprint to house more aircraft and construct buildings for education and interactive facilities

TABLING OF DOCUMENTS (SO 32)

STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

The following statutory instruments were tabled by the Clerk—

Medicines and Poisons Act 2019:

[1409](#) Medicines and Poisons (Postponement) Regulation 2020, No. 150

[1410](#) Medicines and Poisons (Postponement) Regulation 2020, No. 150, explanatory notes

[1411](#) Medicines and Poisons (Postponement) Regulation 2020, No. 150, human rights certificate

Therapeutic Goods Act 2019:

[1412](#) Therapeutic Goods (Postponement) Regulation 2020, No. 151

[1413](#) Therapeutic Goods (Postponement) Regulation 2020, No. 151, explanatory notes

[1414](#) Therapeutic Goods (Postponement) Regulation 2020, No. 151, human rights certificate

Agricultural Chemicals Distribution Control Act 1966, Animal Care and Protection Act 2001, Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Act 2008, Biosecurity Act 2014, Brands Act 1915, Chemical Usage (Agricultural and Veterinary) Control Act 1988, Drugs Misuse Act 1986, Fisheries Act 1994, Food Production (Safety) Act 2000, Veterinary Surgeons Act 1936:

[1415](#) Agriculture and Fisheries Legislation (Fees) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 152

[1416](#) Agriculture and Fisheries Legislation (Fees) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 152, explanatory notes

[1417](#) Agriculture and Fisheries Legislation (Fees) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 152, human rights certificate

Public Health Act 2005:

[1418](#) Public Health (Further Extension of Declared Public Health Emergency—COVID-19) Regulation (No. 4) 2020, No. 154

[1419](#) Public Health (Further Extension of Declared Public Health Emergency—COVID-19) Regulation (No. 4) 2020, No. 154, explanatory notes

[1420](#) Public Health (Further Extension of Declared Public Health Emergency—COVID-19) Regulation (No. 4) 2020, No. 154, human rights certificate

Weapons Act 1990:

[1421](#) Weapons Legislation (Replica Firearms) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 155

[1422](#) Weapons Legislation (Replica Firearms) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 155, explanatory notes

[1423](#) Weapons Legislation (Replica Firearms) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 155, human rights certificate

City of Brisbane Act 2010, Local Government Act 2009:

- [1424](#) Local Government Legislation (Integrity) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 156
- [1425](#) Local Government Legislation (Integrity) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 156, explanatory notes
- [1426](#) Local Government Legislation (Integrity) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 156, human rights certificate

Water Act 2000:

- [1427](#) Water Resource (Whitsunday) Plan (Postponement of Expiry) Notice 2020, No. 157
- [1428](#) Water Resource (Whitsunday) Plan (Postponement of Expiry) Notice 2020, No. 157, explanatory notes
- [1429](#) Water Resource (Whitsunday) Plan (Postponement of Expiry) Notice 2020, No. 157, human rights certificate

Building Industry Fairness (Security of Payment) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2020:

- [1430](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 158
- [1431](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 158, explanatory notes
- [1432](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 158, human rights certificate

Building Industry Fairness (Security of Payment) Act 2017:

- [1433](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 159
- [1434](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 159, explanatory notes
- [1435](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 159, human rights certificate

Statutory Instruments Act 1992:

- [1436](#) Statutory Instruments (Exemptions from Expiry) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 160
- [1437](#) Statutory Instruments (Exemptions from Expiry) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 160, explanatory notes
- [1438](#) Statutory Instruments (Exemptions from Expiry) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 160, human rights certificate

Health Act 1937:

- [1439](#) Health (Drugs and Poisons) Amendment Regulation (No. 3) 2020, No. 161
- [1440](#) Health (Drugs and Poisons) Amendment Regulation (No. 3) 2020, No. 161, explanatory notes
- [1441](#) Health (Drugs and Poisons) Amendment Regulation (No. 3) 2020, No. 161, human rights certificate

Planning Act 2016:

- [1442](#) Planning (Walkable Neighbourhoods) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 162
- [1443](#) Planning (Walkable Neighbourhoods) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 162, explanatory notes
- [1444](#) Planning (Walkable Neighbourhoods) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 162, human rights certificate

Planning Act 2016, Regional Planning Interests Act 2014:

- [1445](#) Planning Legislation (Fees and Other Amounts) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 163
- [1446](#) Planning Legislation (Fees and Other Amounts) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 163, explanatory notes
- [1447](#) Planning Legislation (Fees and Other Amounts) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 163, human rights certificate

State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971:

- [1448](#) State Development and Public Works Organisation Regulation 2020, No. 164
- [1449](#) State Development and Public Works Organisation Regulation 2020, No. 164, explanatory notes
- [1450](#) State Development and Public Works Organisation Regulation 2020, No. 164, human rights certificate

Criminal Proceeds Confiscation Act 2002:

- [1451](#) Criminal Proceeds Confiscation (Corresponding Laws and Serious Criminal Offences) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 165
- [1452](#) Criminal Proceeds Confiscation (Corresponding Laws and Serious Criminal Offences) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 165, explanatory notes
- [1453](#) Criminal Proceeds Confiscation (Corresponding Laws and Serious Criminal Offences) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 165, human rights certificate

Peace and Good Behaviour Act 1982:

- [1454](#) Peace and Good Behaviour Regulation 2020, No. 166
- [1455](#) Peace and Good Behaviour Regulation 2020, No. 166, explanatory notes
- [1456](#) Peace and Good Behaviour Regulation 2020, No. 166, human rights certificate

Electrical Safety Act 2002, Labour Hire Licensing Act 2017, Work Health and Safety Act 2011:

- [1457](#) Electrical Safety and Other Legislation (Fees) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 167
- [1458](#) Electrical Safety and Other Legislation (Fees) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 167, explanatory notes
- [1459](#) Electrical Safety and Other Legislation (Fees) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 167, human rights certificate

Transport Legislation (Disability Parking and Other Matters) Amendment Act 2020:

- [1460](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 168
- [1461](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 168, explanatory notes

Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999, Mining and Quarrying Safety and Health Act 1999:

- [1462](#) Mining Safety and Health Legislation (Respirable Coal Dust and Silica) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 169
- [1463](#) Mining Safety and Health Legislation (Respirable Coal Dust and Silica) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 169, explanatory notes
- [1464](#) Mining Safety and Health Legislation (Respirable Coal Dust and Silica) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 169, human rights certificate

Explosives Act 1999:

- [1465](#) Explosives (Security Clearances and Other Matters) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 170
- [1466](#) Explosives (Security Clearances and Other Matters) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 170, explanatory notes
- [1467](#) Explosives (Security Clearances and Other Matters) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 170, human rights certificate

Mineral Resources Act 1989, Petroleum Act 1923, Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004:

- [1468](#) Petroleum and Gas (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 171
- [1469](#) Petroleum and Gas (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 171, explanatory notes
- [1470](#) Petroleum and Gas (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 171, human rights certificate

Water Act 2000:

- [1471](#) Water (Licence Fees and Water Authorities) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 172
- [1472](#) Water (Licence Fees and Water Authorities) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 172, explanatory notes
- [1473](#) Water (Licence Fees and Water Authorities) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 172, human rights certificate

Nature Conservation Act 1992:

- [1474](#) Nature Conservation (Protected Areas) Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2020, No. 173
- [1475](#) Nature Conservation (Protected Areas) Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2020, No. 173, explanatory notes
- [1476](#) Nature Conservation (Protected Areas) Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2020, No. 173, human rights certificate

Nature Conservation Act 1992:

- [1477](#) Nature Conservation (Protected Areas) Amendment Regulation (No. 3) 2020, No. 174
- [1478](#) Nature Conservation (Protected Areas) Amendment Regulation (No. 3) 2020, No. 174, explanatory notes
- [1479](#) Nature Conservation (Protected Areas) Amendment Regulation (No. 3) 2020, No. 174, human rights certificate

Disaster Management Act 2003:

- [1480](#) Disaster Management (Further Extension of Disaster Situation—COVID-19) Regulation (No. 5) 2020, No. 175
- [1481](#) Disaster Management (Further Extension of Disaster Situation—COVID-19) Regulation (No. 5) 2020, No. 175, explanatory notes
- [1482](#) Disaster Management (Further Extension of Disaster Situation—COVID-19) Regulation (No. 5) 2020, No. 175, human rights certificate

Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993:

- [1483](#) Wet Tropics (Review) Amendment Management Plan 2020, No. 176
- [1484](#) Wet Tropics (Review) Amendment Management Plan 2020, No. 176, explanatory notes
- [1485](#) Wet Tropics (Review) Amendment Management Plan 2020, No. 176, human rights certificate

Gaming Machine Act 1991, Lotteries Act 1997:

- [1486](#) Gaming Tax Notice (No. 2) 2020, No. 177
- [1487](#) Gaming Tax Notice (No. 2) 2020, No. 177, explanatory notes
- [1488](#) Gaming Tax Notice (No. 2) 2020, No. 177, human rights certificate

Royal National Agricultural and Industrial Association of Queensland Act 1971:

- [1489](#) Royal National Agricultural and Industrial Association of Queensland (Prescribed Land) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 178
- [1490](#) Royal National Agricultural and Industrial Association of Queensland (Prescribed Land) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 178, explanatory notes
- [1491](#) Royal National Agricultural and Industrial Association of Queensland (Prescribed Land) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 178, human rights certificate

Co-operatives National Law Act 2020:

- [1492](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 179
- [1493](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 179, explanatory notes

Co-operatives National Law Act 2020:

- [1494](#) Co-operatives National Law Regulation 2020, No. 180
- [1495](#) Co-operatives National Law Regulation 2020, No. 180, explanatory notes
- [1496](#) Co-operatives National Law Regulation 2020, No. 180, human rights certificate

Electoral and Other Legislation (Accountability, Integrity and Other Matters) Amendment Act 2020:

- [1497](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 181
- [1498](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 181, explanatory notes
- [1499](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 181, human rights certificate

Community Services Industry (Portable Long Service Leave) Act 2020:

- [1500](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 182
- [1501](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 182, explanatory notes

Community Services Industry (Portable Long Service Leave) Act 2020:

- [1502](#) Community Services Industry (Portable Long Service Leave) Regulation 2020, No. 183
- [1503](#) Community Services Industry (Portable Long Service Leave) Regulation 2020, No. 183, explanatory notes
- [1504](#) Community Services Industry (Portable Long Service Leave) Regulation 2020, No. 183, human rights certificate

Education and Care Services Act 2013, Education (General Provisions) Act 2006, Education (Overseas Students) Act 2018, Education (Queensland College of Teachers) Act 2005, Education (Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority) Act 2014:

- [1505](#) Education Legislation (Fees) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 184
- [1506](#) Education Legislation (Fees) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 184, explanatory notes
- [1507](#) Education Legislation (Fees) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 184, human rights certificate

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

- [1508](#) Transport Legislation (Road Safety and Other Matters) Amendment (Postponement) Regulation 2020, No. 185
- [1509](#) Transport Legislation (Road Safety and Other Matters) Amendment (Postponement) Regulation 2020, No. 185, explanatory notes
- [1510](#) Transport Legislation (Road Safety and Other Matters) Amendment (Postponement) Regulation 2020, No. 185, human rights certificate

Personalised Transport Ombudsman Act 2019:

- [1511](#) Personalised Transport Ombudsman (Postponement) Regulation 2020, No. 186
- [1512](#) Personalised Transport Ombudsman (Postponement) Regulation 2020, No. 186, explanatory notes
- [1513](#) Personalised Transport Ombudsman (Postponement) Regulation 2020, No. 186, human rights certificate

Youth Justice Act 1992:

- [1514](#) Youth Justice Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 187
- [1515](#) Youth Justice Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 187, explanatory notes
- [1516](#) Youth Justice Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 187, human rights certificate

Rural and Regional Adjustment Act 1994:

- [1517](#) Rural and Regional Adjustment (COVID-19 Marine Tourism Rebate Scheme) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 188
- [1518](#) Rural and Regional Adjustment (COVID-19 Marine Tourism Rebate Scheme) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 188, explanatory notes
- [1519](#) Rural and Regional Adjustment (COVID-19 Marine Tourism Rebate Scheme) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 188, human rights certificate

Rural and Regional Adjustment Act 1994:

- [1520](#) Rural and Regional Adjustment (COVID-19 International Tourism Adaptation Grant Scheme) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 189
- [1521](#) Rural and Regional Adjustment (COVID-19 International Tourism Adaptation Grant Scheme) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 189, explanatory notes
- [1522](#) Rural and Regional Adjustment (COVID-19 International Tourism Adaptation Grant Scheme) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 189, human rights certificate

REPORT BY THE CLERK

The following report was tabled by the Clerk—

[1523](#) Report pursuant to Standing Order 169 (Acts to be numbered by the Clerk) and Standing Order 165 (Clerical errors or formal changes to any bill) detailing amendments to certain Bills, made by the Clerk, prior to assent by His Excellency the Governor, viz—

Biodiscovery and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2019

Amendments made to Bill

Short title and consequential references to short title—

Omit—

'Biodiscovery and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2019'

Insert—

'Biodiscovery and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020'

Health Legislation Amendment Bill 2019

Amendments made to Bill

Short title and consequential references to short title—

Omit—

'Health Legislation Amendment Bill 2019'

Insert—

'Health Legislation Amendment Bill 2020'

MEMBER'S PAPER

The following member's paper was tabled by the Clerk—

Member for Maiwar (Mr Berkman)—

[1524](#) Queensland Treasury Corporation Report—Queensland protected areas financial sustainability strategy report, presented to the Department of Environment and Science

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT**Parliamentary Service, Reconciliation Action Plan**


Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I wish to advise that at 1 pm today I will be launching the Queensland Parliamentary Service's Reconciliation Action Plan. This body of work has been put together with a lot of hard work, for which we thank Reconciliation Australia and, of course, also George Hasanakos from my office, who has worked tirelessly in this endeavour. It is at 1 pm on the Speaker's Green for those who are willing and keen to attend.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS**Coronavirus, Health Update**

Hon. A PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.42 am): Today I can report that we have one new case of COVID-19 in Queensland. It is a woman in her late twenties who is in hotel quarantine, having recently returned from overseas. In great news for Queensland, three existing cases have recovered and been discharged. We now have 25 active cases, 1,134 total cases and, in the past 24 hours, we have conducted 7,660 tests. I congratulate and thank Queenslanders for their continuing good work in confronting this pandemic. I urge people to keep getting tested, stay home if you are sick and keep up social distancing. We have expanded our ability to do even more tests. Fifty paramedics are now trained to operate testing facilities in schools and shopping centre car parks whenever they are needed.

You cannot have a strong economy unless you get the health response right. In a moment, the Deputy Premier and the Treasurer will further outline how those responses are linked. Our businesses are operating today because of our health response, and that includes our strong borders. Businesses in other states are not as fortunate. Many in other states have opened, only to be forced to close again. States with the strongest health response are the states with the strongest economies. We are keeping Queensland strong.

Coronavirus, Economic Update

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.44 am): The impacts of this pandemic have been widespread and unprecedented around the world. Tragically, worldwide more than 880,000 lives have been lost. Economies, businesses, industries and, of course, people have suffered. People have lost their jobs, which can have a devastating impact on their families and their communities.

As the federal Treasurer announced last week, Australia is now in recession—the first in nearly 30 years. ABS figures show that the national economy contracted seven per cent over the June quarter 2020. Queensland's state final demand declined by 5.9 per cent over the same period, which is markedly less than Victoria at 8.5 per cent and New South Wales at 8.6 per cent. It is abundantly clear that the success of Queensland's economy is dependent on how we manage and contain the spread of COVID-19.

Compared to other states, Queenslanders have done a stellar job in responding to this health crisis which puts us in a better position to focus on our economic recovery. A senior economist at Deloitte Access Economics noted—


The greater the success against the virus, the greater the success in protecting economies against the pandemic.

We have already released and are rolling out Queensland's economic recovery plan. This strong plan—underpinned by the fiscal update released yesterday by the Treasurer—demonstrates that we have a sensible and far-reaching plan for Queensland's future. We have a clear plan that focuses on protecting the health of Queenslanders, creating more jobs and working together as we rebuild our economy.

Queensland's economy is set to outpace the nation and climb out of recession by the end of this financial year. Reserve Bank of Australia governor, Philip Lowe, says that governments need to borrow more to spend on infrastructure projects and create jobs. That was endorsed by the Prime Minister. In Queensland we are able to borrow to absorb the hits to revenues from the global pandemic, continue \$51.8 billion of our infrastructure investment and invest to support 55,000 jobs this year because we delivered five consecutive budget surpluses prior to the pandemic. We have taken our response to more than \$7 billion. Yesterday the Treasurer announced a \$500 million Renewable Energy Fund and a \$500 million Backing Queensland Business Investment Fund. The Treasurer has announced total COVID stimulus of \$11 billion. I congratulate the Treasurer.


We are also delivering another \$249 million in tax relief, including a further payroll tax waiver for SMEs and land tax relief, as well as exempting JobKeeper payments from payroll tax. We will further allow businesses to pay their deferred payroll tax over 2021. However, we are not done yet because we know that more needs to be done to help Queenslanders on this journey. Our plan builds upon the economic recovery initiatives announced to date that are designed to support Queenslanders and businesses throughout this incredibly challenging time for everyone. Every day I am committed to doing everything I can to keep Queenslanders safe while rebuilding our economy and I will continue to do so for so long as this pandemic continues.

Binna Burra Lodge

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.47 am): Today marks 12 months since a devastating bushfire swept across the Gold Coast hinterland impacting the lives and livelihoods of many hardworking Queenslanders, including the iconic and much loved Binna Burra Lodge. Last week, following a year of reconstruction work under some very difficult conditions and steep terrain, the road to Binna Burra was reopened to the public, marking an important recovery milestone for the Binna Burra community, local tourism and visitors to Lamington National Park. I am happy to say that visitors returned to the Sky Lodge on 28 August and even more tourists are expected to visit when the campgrounds reopen in time for the September school holidays.

Today also happens to be Yellow Ribbon Day to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of our volunteer fireys who met last year's challenging conditions head-on and who are now preparing for another bushfire season. I thank all of our emergency services staff who do an amazing job protecting our communities.

Mulherin, Hon. TS

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.48 am): It was with great sadness that I learned of the passing of my good friend Tim Mulherin. Tim served as the member for Mackay from 1995 to 2015 and as deputy leader of the opposition from 2012 to 2015. It was after the

2012 election when Labor was reduced to just seven members, at one of the first sittings of parliament, when Tim turned to me and said, 'Stac, we'll have hides as thick as rhinos by the end of this.' Then he said, 'Just to think, we have only three more years to go!' That was so true. But underneath that thick skin was a heart as big as Queensland. Tim was the eldest of six children and had a family tree that seemed to spread everywhere. Family was everything to Tim.

His nickname was 'Cuz' because wherever Tim went he found a relative or the relative of someone else he knew from Mackay. He was probably our secret weapon, when you think about it. He also believed a stranger was just a friend he had not met yet.

Tim had a deep and abiding love for workers and their families. He understood the dignity of having a job, paying the bills and having a roof over your head. He fought for those families every day of his political life and long after.


He served as Minister for Agriculture and Regional Economies and later as Minister for Rural and Regional Economies. His heart never left those regional centres and the people and industries that make them thrive. His last text to me at the end of August was once again updating me on his health, but it was also talking about regional Queensland.

Tim knew everyone. He loved history and was keen to share it. More importantly, he was eager to learn the lessons of the past. I am profoundly grateful I saw Tim on my last visit to Mackay. I valued his guidance, strength, good humour and friendship.

I offer my condolences to Erin and their three sons, Declan, Liam and Rory. His pride and love for them was boundless and on constant display. Anyone who visited was considered part of the family and Tim would always cook up a feast in his home. Above all, Tim Mulherin was a gentleman in every sense of that word. I have lost a friend and Queensland has lost a true champion.

Honourable members: Hear, hear!

Mulherin, Hon. TS; Coronavirus, Health Services

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (9.51 am): At the outset I endorse the words of the Premier and you, Mr Speaker, in acknowledging the sad passing of our dear friend Tim Mulherin. You both acknowledged his contribution to the parliament and the community. I also would like to acknowledge his contribution to the Mackay Hospital and Health Service. He was a fantastic advocate for that community and that health service in the period of time that I was the health minister and I am sure the Treasurer would say the same about his time as health minister.

There has been one new case of COVID-19 overnight—a returned overseas traveller who was and is in hotel quarantine. There are now 25 active cases in Queensland, bringing our total to 1,134. Globally, though, there have now been 27 million cases and 890,000 deaths. Queensland Health continues to aggressively contact trace and quarantine close contacts connected to the latest cluster. I am pleased to say we have conducted 7,660 tests in the last 24 hours. It is that strong response that has allowed our economy to remain open and businesses to remain open, keeping people in jobs. Queenslanders are uniting behind our plan to recover for health and for jobs.

We continue to expand health services for Queenslanders and those from other states. Queensland's specialist COVID-19 Healthcare Support Service launched on Friday. The service, available via a new hotline, is designed to ensure thousands of interstate residents who access health care in Queensland each month are supported when they enter the state. So far they have fielded 231 calls since Friday. The new team will also provide a unique case managed approach to those entering mandatory quarantine who have complex healthcare needs. Nurses, doctors, social workers, paramedics and representatives of other key state government departments are all part of the new service. Every exemption request relating to medical needs will be assessed by a clinician.

While our border restrictions have been in place in some way since March, we have always allowed interstate residents to enter the state for medical care. Anyone can enter Queensland by road, rail or air for emergency health care without an exemption. People can also continue to receive essential health care in Queensland where they have an ongoing relationship with a healthcare provider or if the health care cannot be provided close to their home. After all, our border restrictions are in place for one reason alone: to save lives and prevent harm. In fact, we have continued to treat people from outside our borders throughout this pandemic.


The hospital and health services closest to the New South Wales border—Gold Coast, Metro North, Metro South, Children's Health Queensland, West Moreton and Darling Downs—treated more than 9,700 interstate residents in the last two months as inpatients, outpatients or emergency patients.

Some 75 per cent of these patients are New South Wales residents. That is more than 900 New South Wales patients treated in our hospitals each and every week. QAS transfers have increased this year compared to last. We facilitated 167 transfers from northern New South Wales to Queensland from June to August 2019 and in the same period this year we have facilitated 219 transfers.

We are very aware of how hard the quarantine process can be for those who do not get granted an exemption. That is why we also have a pilot program in place to make quarantine easier for people with existing medical needs or disabilities and those caring for very young children. As part of the new targeted care accommodation program, selected hotels or alternative accommodation will have additional health and social support on site or close by. Stage 1 of the program is being conducted with those in quarantine and currently COVID-19 negative by Metro South Hospital and Health Service in conjunction with Queensland police. Those who may be suitable for the additional support will be identified by various Queensland government and community services teams. This process will be further strengthened by the new special healthcare support service.

Our border restrictions are keeping Queenslanders safe and preventing the introduction of COVID-19 into the state. These new initiatives will help people with a genuine need to navigate these restrictions. As always, these services are run by clinicians who will make decisions based on medical need and risk, not on politics. I want to thank the Chief Health Officer for everything she does, including for briefing those opposite on Friday and answering their questions on these matters.

COVID-19 Fiscal and Economic Review

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Infrastructure and Planning) (9.56 am): Yesterday I released the COVID-19 Fiscal and Economic Review, which details the stark reality of the challenges we face and further details our plan to promote the economic recovery underway in Queensland. As many economists have already noted, you cannot open your economy if you cannot contain the virus. Sheraan Underwood from Deloitte Access Economics has noted—

The underlying equation is simple. The greater the success against the virus, the greater the success in protecting economies against the pandemic.

We can see that equation all too clearly in many jurisdictions around the world, including in countries such as Spain and France, which are now wrestling with the catastrophic consequences of a second wave. We can see it in Victoria which reminds us of the health and economic effects when the virus gets away.

There was one Queenslander who remained steadfast in her commitment to protect the state. There was one Queenslander who remained steadfast in safeguarding the health of Queenslanders so we could safely reopen our economy. There was one Queenslander who did not call 64 times for the borders to be opened earlier. That Queenslander was the Premier.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DICK: You stick to telling the truth. I will stick to the economy.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr DICK: You stick to the truth. I will stick to the economy.

Mr SPEAKER: The Treasurer will direct his comments through the chair, not to those opposite.

Mr DICK: That Queenslander was the Premier. Whilst Victoria is searching for a path out of lockdown, Queensland is taking competent steps towards recovery. Queenslanders are good to go anywhere in the state and have been doing so in record numbers. COVID-19 has struck an economic hammer blow around the world, and Queensland is not immune. What the data tells us, however, is that jurisdictions that take strong action to contain the virus do best in the battle against it.

Last week we learned that the Australian economy had entered recession, contracting in the June quarter by seven per cent. The contraction in state final demand in Queensland was 5.9 per cent. This is grim enough but better than in New South Wales and Victoria, where the contraction was around 8.5 per cent. It is worth noting that these numbers relate to economic performance prior to the outbreaks in New South Wales and Victoria and before the further opening up of our own economy.

Retail trade in Queensland also strengthened in July, increasing by five per cent, the second highest increase in the nation. ABS building approvals data from last week show approvals for houses in Queensland rose by 17 per cent in July, more than double the national average. ABS data also revealed that the number of jobs in Queensland has grown since mid-April by 5.4 per cent, compared to the national figure of four per cent.

These are the outcomes of strong borders. These are the dividends from being able to relax restrictions and open up our economy because community transmission has been contained. That is not to diminish the challenges we face or the suffering that has been inflicted by this insidious virus. I have previously spoken of my reluctance to borrow, but that pales beside my resolve in the fight against unemployment. In line with the urging of the Morrison federal coalition government, the Governor of the Reserve Bank and the secretary of the federal Treasury, I outlined in the COVID-19 Fiscal and Economic Review the government's plan to borrow an additional \$4 billion to invest in projects to stimulate demand and create jobs.

This, together with the measures we have already announced, will bring the total government investment in our COVID response to \$11 billion. This investment is both measured and affordable, supported by record low interest rates that are likely to remain suppressed for the foreseeable future. This means that the interest payments required to service the debt will be lower—\$800 million lower each year—than when the LNP were last in government and the member for Nanango was the assistant treasurer of Queensland. That is \$800 million lower each year than when the LNP were in government and the Leader of the Opposition was Campbell Newman's assistant treasurer.

Our financial position, like every other government in the nation, has been rocked by falling revenues.

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

Mr DICK: We have seen a reduction in key revenues of \$6.7 billion from payroll tax, royalties for coal and gas and GST payments over two years. I take the interjection from the member for Broadwater. He is a professor, an expert, when it comes to asset sales. We know now is not the time to add to the burden on Queensland families—

Ms Bates interjected.

Mr DICK: The member for Mudgeeraba may wish to listen. We know now is not the time to add to the burden on Queensland families so no new or increased taxes are part of our plan. As noted economist and one-time LNP hopeful—

Mr Perrett interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Member for Gympie, you are warned under the standing orders. You may not have seen me but my intent should have been clear.

Mr DICK: Do not take my word for it. Take the word of former LNP hopeful and noted economist Nick Behrens. Yesterday, Mr Behrens said—

The Treasurer has rightly indicated there is no role for increased taxation to play in aiding recovery.

I note that that sentiment is shared by the Prime Minister, who yesterday said that an increase in the Medicare levy to fund aged-care reforms was not part of his plan. It is not part of his plan and it is not part of my plan either. Just as now is not the time for new revenue measures, now is certainly not the time for austerity measures.

Mr Langbroek interjected.

Mr DICK: I would have thought the last person who should be interjecting here is the member for Surfers Paradise—supporting racist comments in the Queensland community. It is an absolute disgrace. That you could even show your face—

Mr Langbroek interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Member for Surfers Paradise. This is the time for ministerial statements. I hope that this information is of public value.

Mr DICK: Just as now is not the time for new revenue measures, now is certainly not the time for austerity measures. That would only make things worse. Now is the time for governments to step up, to support the economy and to invest in projects that build economic capacity and support jobs.

That is why I announced an additional \$500 million for the Renewable Energy Fund to support investment in new capacity and storage for renewable energy. It is why the government is providing a further \$500 million to establish the Backing Queensland Business Investment Fund to turbocharge commercial enterprise in Queensland. These measures are considered, responsible, necessary and forward looking. They are a plan to chart Queensland's course to recovery from COVID-19. They have been welcomed by key economic stakeholders. Pradeep Philip from Deloitte Access Economics said—

In our view, all governments should be borrowing to cushion the economic impact, because this is the time governments have to stand up.

Nick Behrens from Queensland Economic Advocacy Solutions said—

... priorities are rightly being placed on health management and protecting the economy.


Chris Mountford from the Property Council said that he was 'pleased to see an extension of the state's land tax arrangements'.

It is now 1,001 days since the Leader of the Opposition took her position. The LNP have to tell Queenslanders who, what, when, where and how much they intend to cut to fund \$23 billion in unfunded election commitments.

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The Treasurer has continued his ministerial statement today by attacking the opposition, by debating points and by questioning the opposition. It is not question time for the government. It is time for ministerial statements. He has done that after you have already warned him with respect to ministerial statements.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Kawana. The questions from the Treasurer I believe were, by and large, rhetorical. Secondly, if the level of interjection were not so high the minister would have no interjections to respond to. I ask that future ministerial statements be of public value and, at the same time, I ask members to my left to cease their interjections.

Queen's Wharf

 **Hon. KJ JONES** (Cooper—ALP) (Minister for State Development, Tourism and Innovation) (10.05 am): We are getting on with the job of rebuilding Queensland's economy. Unlike southern states that are still feeling the full impacts of lockdowns and strict restrictions, our strong health response means we are able to continue to see the construction industry thrive in Queensland. In fact, it is the envy of other states and economies around the world where the construction industry has had to shut down.

We are now partnering with the private sector to see new jobs created as we roll out our record investment in infrastructure. We are also working to enable the private sector to build major new infrastructure projects like the \$3.6 billion Queen's Wharf Brisbane development. Today, I am proud to announce the latest contract to deliver the next major package of works that has been awarded to a proud Australian company based at Newstead, in the honourable member for McConnel's electorate.

Built have been awarded a multimillion dollar contract to fit out levels 5 and 6 of Queen's Wharf. This contract to deliver the sports bar and the fit-out of gaming, food and beverage outlets on floors below the Skydeck. That means one thing—more jobs for local contractors. This means chippies, sparkies, plasterers and labourers will all play their part in fitting out these entertainment areas over the next year. We are urging anyone interested in working on the largest tourism project in Queensland's history to keep an eye on the Queen's Wharf website, with opportunities for subbies to come online soon. Construction is picking up pace at Queen's Wharf.

Mr Nicholls: What a great plan! What a great development!

Ms JONES: Better than building a tower for yourself.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Cooper!

Opposition members interjected.


Ms JONES: Their priorities in government—cut, sack, sell; build a tower for ourselves.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Cooper will put her comments through the chair. The members to my left will cease their interjections, regardless of how constructive you may think they are.

Ms JONES: The contrasts in priorities of governments could not be more stark than those two projects.

Construction on Queen's Wharf is picking up pace. Work on the five 20,000 square metre carparks is nearly finished. William Street has now reopened to internal site traffic. We have excavated 26 metres below the surface and excavated more than 400,000 cubic metres of soil. With more than 50 new restaurants and bars and a precinct that will create up to 10,000 ongoing jobs, Queen's Wharf will change the CBD forever. It is also a ray of hope for the tourism industry as we look to the new infrastructure that will enable Queensland's tourism industry, when it is safe to do so, to rebuild and support the thousands of livelihoods that rely on a robust tourism industry in Queensland.

Renewable Energy

 **Hon. AJ LYNHAM** (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy) (10.08 am): In the face of harsh global headwinds caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, Queensland has a plan for economic recovery. Emerging industries like renewable energy are integral to that plan because they create jobs.

Queensland's renewable energy revolution is steaming ahead. It is part of our economic plan to recovery. It provides infrastructure investment. It is backing small businesses by lowering energy costs. It is growing our regions. It is investing all over our state. It can only do this because we are safeguarding our health and our health response has been strong.

We have more than 7,900 megawatts of renewable energy generation capacity either operational or committed. We are forecast to reach 20 per cent renewable generation this year and we are well on target to reach 50 per cent by 2030. In fact, on five consecutive days last month, renewable energy supplied over half of Queensland's electricity demand during the middle of the day. I was quite distressed to read reports today that the LNP are suggesting that renewable energy is but a fantasy.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Minister, I will give some guidance to ministers providing ministerial statements today. This is not a time for attacks of a political nature. This is a time for ministerial statements about things of value to the Queensland public. I have given fair guidance already today.

Dr LYNHAM: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Over the past five years under Labor, 41 large-scale renewable energy projects have commenced operations, are under construction or are financially committed. That represents around \$7.8 billion in investment and, most importantly, 6,500 jobs. Now, as outlined in our COVID-19 Fiscal and Economic Review, the Palaszczuk government will invest \$500 million in a Renewable Energy Fund.


In the short term, it means construction and construction jobs getting underway as soon as possible. In the longer term, it means that when we reach 50 per cent renewables by 2030, much more of it will be publicly owned. The fund comes on top of our \$145 million commitment to three renewable energy zones in regional Queensland. These zones will help connect new renewable energy to our network and attract industries wanting energy. That means more jobs in regional Queensland—jobs not just from construction but also from enticing industries like new economy minerals processing.

Meanwhile, new projects are already coming in thick and fast. Construction starts next year on the billion dollar Clarke Creek Wind and Solar Farm in Central Queensland, creating 350 jobs in construction and 15 operational jobs. This project has been made possible by our publicly owned generator Stanwell taking nearly 75 per cent of the energy generated.

Construction has started on the 162-megawatt Columboola Solar Farm between Chinchilla and Miles. This project will mean another 400 jobs on the Western Downs. Again, this is down to our publicly owned generator CS Energy buying 100 per cent of the output of this project. Our publicly owned generators CleanCo, CS Energy and Stanwell have now supported or own more than 1,900 megawatts of renewable energy generation.

The Palaszczuk government is driving Queensland's renewable energy revolution because it will put downward pressure on power prices. It will reduce emissions. Most importantly, in the post-COVID world, it will support jobs, it will support infrastructure, it will support our regions and it is part of the economic recovery for our state and protects our children's future.

Road and Transport Infrastructure

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (10.13 am): A record \$23 billion pipeline of road and transport projects is happening under this government, with a \$14.5 billion commitment to our regions. We have delivered four record road and transport budgets, with 90 per cent of works completed by Queensland companies; delivering 277 new bridges and culverts; sealing more than 500 kilometres of outback roads; \$1 billion going to road safety directly; delivering \$168 million for more bike lanes across Queensland; and delivering 90 new and upgraded boat ramps, floating walkways and pontoons for our boaties up and down the coast of Queensland. We have removed 630 derelict boats as part of our War on Wrecks program. We have also seen 353 RoadTek apprentices come online, bolstering RoadTek after the treatment by those opposite. That is the record of the Palaszczuk government.

In 2015, when this government handed down its first budget, I said roads, particularly for rural and remote communities, are the lifeblood of many communities. Since then, we have completed the \$1.6 billion Toowoomba bypass; \$1 billion on western roads; \$874 million in Bruce Highway upgrades between Cooroy and Curra; \$276 million on sealing the Peninsula Developmental Road in Cape York; \$200 million for the Townsville Ring Road stage 5; \$119 million for upgrades to the Bruce Highway at Cattle Creek and Frances Creek; Bruce Highway upgrades between Robert and Foster roads in Cairns;

the Yellow Gin Creek Bruce Highway upgrade between Ayr and Bowen; and the \$38 million Tinana overpass. It was the MP for Maryborough who helped bring train manufacturing back to Maryborough, where they are rectifying the trains bought from overseas.

We also boosted our commitment to working with councils through our fifty-fifty TIDs funding, with 243 projects completed just last year. Last weekend we completed Mackay's largest ever road project—the \$497 million Mackay Ring Road. It was great to join the member for Mackay, who has been a great advocate for the project, and some of the 1,800 workers inducted onsite—80 per cent of whom were local—to mark the occasion.

I want to especially acknowledge the contribution of the former member for Mackay and my friend, the late Tim Mulherin, who has sadly passed away. He was unable to attend the opening on Saturday—though his wife, Erin, was there—but he was certainly there in spirit. I saw him last Saturday afternoon. He was in good spirits and he was talking policy.


Global economies are doing it tough, and Queensland is not immune. Thanks to the efforts of Queenslanders and the leadership of the Premier, Queensland is the best-performing state in response to the global pandemic in Australia. That means that we can build on our momentum of delivering better and safer roads for regional Queensland. Last financial year we delivered \$3.4 billion in road and transport infrastructure—above and beyond our target of \$3.1 billion.

Now we are getting on with \$14.5 billion regional road and transport projects like the \$1 billion Gympie bypass; the \$1 billion Rockhampton Ring Road; the \$481 million Bruce Highway upgrade from Edmonton to Gordonvale that is under construction now; another \$237 million to seal roads in Cape York; the \$230 million Townsville Ring Road stage 5; more than half a billion dollars to build a better Mount Isa rail line and Townsville port—both publicly owned and saved by this government; and the \$110 million Mackay northern access upgrade. We will also deliver another \$1 billion in road stimulus funding announced since April in conjunction with the federal government. These projects will support more than 13,500 jobs and will deliver broader economic benefits including better freight efficiency, road safety and more drive tourism opportunities.

The Palaszczuk government has a proven record of delivering jobs and infrastructure for Queensland. We will not cut but we will continue to back Queensland and regional Queensland jobs 100 per cent.

PARLIAMENTARY CRIME AND CORRUPTION COMMITTEE

Report

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (10.17 am): I also extend my sorrow in respect of the passing of Tim Mulherin, the late member for Mackay. He was one of the real gentlemen of this House. I know that those who knew him will extend their sympathies to his wife, Erin, and to their family. I am sure much more will be said about that.

I lay upon the table of the House report No. 105 of the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee, excitingly titled *Annual report 2019-20*.

Tabled paper: Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee, Report No. 105, 56th Parliament—Annual Report 2019-20 [\[1554\]](#).

The report details the activities of the committee for the period 2019-20. Over 50 complaints were received in the year. Public complaints received were 24. In a miracle of public accountability, we actually finalised 28. We received 29 section 329 complaints and finalised 31. I note that the people of Queensland are getting great value out of the PCCC!

I want to indicate that 25 meetings were held throughout the year, including public meetings, providing the necessary transparency, as well as entertainment and content for our friends in the media. I thank the deputy chair and all members of the committee for their diligence during the course of the year. I particularly thank the secretariat, who have to plough through hundreds and hundreds of pages of complaints and material. I must say that it is always a pleasure on a Friday afternoon to receive 300 pages of material for the next week's committee meeting to plough through. In particular, I thank Karl Holden, the committee secretary—

Ms Jones: It's nothing compared to what we have to do!

Mr NICHOLLS: It certainly beats the cabinet bag—certainly the cabinet bags that they will be receiving on that side of the House anyway. I thank Greg Thomson, the assistant secretary; Nicola Ryan and Carolyn Heffernan from administration; and of course Erin Pasley, who was previously the committee secretary.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Mr SPEAKER: Question time will conclude at 11.19 am.

Unemployment

Mrs FRECKLINGTON (10.19 am): My first question is to the Premier. Labor's own economic forecasts, released yesterday, reveal that over 72,000 more Queenslanders will lose their jobs in the next 12 months. Given the criticism of the CFMMEU and Labor's strategist Cameron Milner, are these 72,000 pending job losses an admission that Labor does not have an economic plan to keep Queenslanders in jobs?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question. I am happy to provide the Leader of the Opposition with Queensland's economic recovery plan. Here it is! In fact, I am happy to distribute copies to everyone on the other side because it is a strong plan, it is a recovery plan and it is about getting people back into work.

The Leader of the Opposition may be aware there is a global pandemic happening at the moment. As I said in the House, tragically hundreds of thousands of people have lost their lives and millions of people have been infected with COVID. One only has to look at Victoria to see the impacts of COVID: Victoria has now gone into a lockdown because the virus is circulating. This virus is deadly and this virus has long-lasting implications for economies not just in Australia but around the world.

That is why yesterday the Treasurer announced our response, the COVID-19 Fiscal and Economic Review, which charts very clearly our pathway to recovery. That recovery is about the provision of \$11 billion to fund our economic recovery in this state, and that is focused on one thing: putting Queenslanders first. This plan has also been talked about at the national cabinet level and at the meeting of treasurers.

It was very clearly stated at national cabinet and then by the Prime Minister that the states need to do more and the states need to borrow more, and we have responded. That call was made by the Prime Minister on 20 or 21 August, and we have responded by releasing our strong plan. We also need to know very clearly what the LNP's plan for Queensland is. I am yet to see an LNP plan.

(Time expired)

Taxation

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: My second question is also to the Premier. At the last election Labor hid its plans for nine new or increased taxes, yet yesterday the Treasurer refused point blank to rule out any more taxes after 2021. Will the Premier now tell Queenslanders about Labor's secret tax plan?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for the question. There is no secret plan. Let me say very clearly—

Dr Miles interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right. We are happy to circulate this plan. This is the plan.

Mr Mander interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Everton! Premier, please table the document or cease using it as a prop.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I am more than happy to table Queensland's economic recovery plan.

Tabled paper: Queensland government, Unite & Recover report titled 'Queensland's Economic Recovery Plan' [\[1555\]](#).

As we are in uncharted waters, the federal government has not yet enunciated their plan in relation to taxes. We are yet to see the federal budget. The federal budget will be handed down in October. Other states will follow with their budgets because the federal government has all of the information.

In good news for Queensland—maybe not such good news for the opposition—following the election—and that is a clear choice that the people of this state will have to make—the Treasurer has said very clearly—and it is a commitment from my government—that we will detail a full budget commencing the week of 30 November followed by a full estimates hearing. This government is prepared to work up to Christmas. We are prepared to do the hard work for Queenslanders.

Dr Miles: They want to take a holiday and come back next year.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right. Contrast that with the LNP, who said they would deliver a budget—

Mrs Frecklington: Within the first 100 days.

Ms PALASZCZUK: No, no.

Dr Miles: Next year!

Ms PALASZCZUK: Next year. That is what we heard. Perhaps the Leader of the Opposition—

Dr Miles: Lazy!

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right. Perhaps the Leader of the Opposition could stand up and inform us what her plan is because—

Mr Mickelberg interjected.

Mr Dick interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Member for Buderim, you have barely been in the chamber. You are warned under the standing orders. Treasurer, you will direct your comments through the chair.

Ms PALASZCZUK: At least we know who the Coordinator-General is. When you are going out to announce a policy about the Coordinator-General you may want to know the name of the Coordinator-General. As for the member for Everton—

Dr Miles: Two hours later.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Two hours later, she, Toni Power—

Mr Mander interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Everton!

Ms PALASZCZUK: How could we put those people in charge of this place! In all seriousness, there are people out there who do not have a job. There are people out there who are hurting—

Mrs FRECKLINGTON:

Mr SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition will cease her interjections. The Premier's time has expired. The member for Everton is warned under the standing orders. The member for Ninderry is warned under the standing orders.

Coronavirus, Health Response

Ms SCANLON: My question is of the Premier and Minister for Trade. Will the Premier update the House on the government's response to the COVID health emergency?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Gaven for her question. I will continue where I left off. As we know, these are very challenging times for Queensland. Do not think for one moment we do not understand that businesses are doing it tough. People are out of work and their lives have been completely transformed. People's lives have been turned upside down. Do not think for one moment that every single night I am not deeply concerned about the virus and the impact it could have on this state and our aged-care homes. Why do I say that? Because—

Mr Bleijie: You want a grab on telly.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Kawana, you have been warned multiple times today. You are warned formally under the standing orders. Members on warnings will cease their interjections.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I find that offensive and I ask that he withdraw.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Kawana, the Premier has asked that you withdraw that comment.

Mr BLEIJIE: I withdraw.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Why am I concerned about that? Because the large majority of deaths we have seen in Victoria have been in aged-care homes. People in Victoria are in a lockdown situation, and every day the Victorian government is grappling to do the best by that state. I do not want to see that here in Queensland.

That is why every single one of my team is committed night and day to protecting Queenslanders and making sure we contain the virus because our economic future depends on it. We can talk about what my government is planning and the delivery of our economic plan because of the response to health in this state. That is a big credit to every single Queenslanders out there who does the right thing— to every single Queenslanders who says, 'We're going to go to a cafe or restaurant and we're going to

make sure we check in. We're going to follow the Chief Health Officer's advice about a COVID-safe plan.' However, this can all be put at risk because we do not know what the plan is from those opposite. We simply do not know. What is the opposition going to do? We do know they have \$23 billion worth of unfunded commitments. Where is the money coming from?

Opposition members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: It is \$23 billion. It is up to the Leader of the Opposition to outline to Queenslanders where the \$23 billion is coming from. We need to know. Are they going to cut? Are they going to sack?

Ms Simpson: Just make it up.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I say to the member for Maroochydore that the member for Maroochydore was part of a government that has a record of sacking, cutting and selling.

(Time expired)

COVID-19 Fiscal and Economic Review, Debt

Mr MANDER: My question without notice is to the Treasurer. Will the Treasurer advise whether the \$4 billion debt funded election slush fund announced yesterday is included in the \$102 billion debt figure or is it on top of Labor's \$18 billion debt blowout?

Mr DICK: We have made very clear what our borrowing profile is. We declared in the fiscal and economic review that I released yesterday what the projections are for borrowings in Queensland, and \$4 billion will be spent over the medium term, over the next four years, including \$1 billion for two new funds to stimulate growth, jobs and regional communities. That is a \$500 million fund for renewable energy and \$500 million for backing Queensland business—to get our government supporting Queensland enterprise and to make sure we support jobs and businesses across the state particularly scale up. That is our pledge and that is our position that was made very clear in the COVID-19 Fiscal and Economic Review released yesterday.

What we do not know and what is unclear—after 1,001 days of the Leader of the Opposition holding her position and the shadow Treasurer holding his position—is how they will fund \$23 billion in election commitments. There is \$15 billion for the Bradfield scheme. The Leader of the Opposition said in the press on Sunday that it was not a feasibility study, not a program to consider, but funding for the construction of the Bradfield scheme if she is elected. There is that \$15 billion, and there is \$8 billion in additional promises.

What the Leader of the Opposition needs to do today—after 1,001 days in office—is tell Queenslanders what she will cut. What will the Leader of the Opposition cut? Who will be cut from the Public Service? What regions will suffer cuts? What services will be cut? What assets will be sold? The Deputy Leader of the Opposition talks about \$101 billion in debt. That is \$60.9 billion in general government sector debt, compared to \$852 billion in federal debt—

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr DICK: You might laugh, Leader of the Opposition—

Mr SPEAKER: Through the chair, Minister.

Mr DICK: That was \$852 billion in federal debt. What did Peter Costello say? You liked Peter Costello so much, Leader of the Opposition—

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Treasurer, you are warned under the standing orders. I have asked several times for your comments to come through the chair. There is a reason why. It is because that is the way the House operates.

Mr DICK: The Leader of the Opposition supported Peter Costello so much he was asked to do the Commission of Audit when she was the assistant treasurer. What was the observation of Peter Costello? I do not agree with Peter Costello very often at all, but what did Peter Costello, the man who conducted the Commission of Audit, say? He said that federal debt will exceed \$1 trillion. We have \$60.9 billion in general government borrowings. The reason they talk about \$101 billion is because the fastest way to reduce that is to sell government owned corporations, which is exactly what they want to do. It is why they talk about the headline figure. They want to sell government assets, which is what they did when they were in government. It is in their DNA. They will cut, they will sack, they will sell, and Queensland will suffer.

(Time expired)

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

Coronavirus, Economy; Queensland Border Closure

Mrs McMAHON: My question is to the Premier and Minister for Trade. Will the Premier provide any independent views about the links between a strong economic performance and border closures?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for her question. This is a very important question because we know that around the country those states that have had strong border measures in place have seen some good economic news when it comes to state final demand, especially Queensland, South Australia and Western Australia when compared to New South Wales and Victoria.

As I have said in this House, and let me say it again, you cannot have a strong economic response unless you are dealing with the virus. The reason that we have a great response is that we take the advice of our Chief Health Officer. Some people in this House may ridicule the Chief Health Officer, but I know that every single person on this side of the House and the public respect Dr Jeannette Young. Can I put on the public record our thanks for her tireless advice, for the care and consideration she gives to issues and for the way in which she presents clear advice to Queenslanders. I thank all Queenslanders for listening to that advice.

Since we were last here, the Federal Court has brought down a ruling. We all remember that was Clive Palmer against the Western Australian government, and Queensland supported Western Australia in that court case. Clive Palmer's position was also backed in by the Morrison government, which withdrew at a subsequent stage but the facts and their evidence were left there. What that Federal Court case clearly showed is that the borders are having an impact. The summary from the court case says very clearly—

If persons enter the Western Australian community while infectious, there would be a high probability that the virus would be transmitted into the Western Australian population ...

If there were uncontrolled outbreaks in Western Australia, the consequences would include the risk of death and hospitalisation ... In the worst-case scenario, the health consequences could be catastrophic.

That is the summary from the Federal Court of Australia. Let me make it very clear. While those opposite called for the border to be opened 64 times, we will stand by our health advice and we will stand by the strong measures we are taking because it means our economy can recover because of that response.

(Time expired)

Unemployment

Ms SIMPSON: My question is to the Premier. What excuse is the Premier going to use for Queensland having the worst unemployment rate in the nation before coronavirus and in July this year, and having the worst unemployment in the nation every year since the last state election?

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Members to my right. Member for Maroochydore, can I ask you to rephrase your question, particularly the introductory remarks. I believe there were imputations.

Ms SIMPSON: I will rephrase it. My question is to the Premier. What reason is the Premier going to use for Queensland having the worst unemployment rate in the nation before coronavirus and in July this year, and having the worst unemployment in the nation every year since the last state election?

Ms PALASZCZUK: Our trend rate was around 5.7 per cent; under the LNP it was 6.6 per cent or higher. I reject the premise of the question. No-one likes to see anyone without a job. Looking back, we put in place strong budget measures and we delivered five surpluses. Under the LNP exports, from memory, were around \$40 billion; we got them up to about \$80 billion. From memory, they are still around \$70 billion, so our exports are a strength of our economy. Our resources sector is strong. Our agricultural sector is strong. We have a big focus on manufacturing. Honourable members only have to see Rheinmetall being built in Ipswich as an example. We are backing small business. Let me say very clearly that in Queensland we have businesses that are open. In other parts of the world they are closed. In other countries of the world mining is not happening because the virus is having a devastating impact globally.

Our clear economic plan is about making sure that we are looking at the skills that people in Queensland need for the future. I want this next election to be a challenge of ideas, because I am prepared to put my ideas and the ideas of our government against those opposite.

Ms Leahy interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Warrego.

Ms PALASZCZUK: We did not see trains overseas being built; we are building trains here in Queensland. We are backing our local businesses. Where PPE was being manufactured overseas, we are now making sure that we can manufacture some of that PPE locally. By manufacturing locally and buying locally—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members to my left.

Ms PALASZCZUK: By manufacturing locally and buying—

Ms Simpson: Worst in the nation before COVID.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Maroochydore, I have just tried to counsel interjections from members to my left. You are warned under the standing orders. Member for Warrego, you have had a good go as well. You are warned under the standing orders.

Ms PALASZCZUK: In terms of a jobs record, no-one can forget the 14,000 people who were sacked under the LNP. The member for Broadwater knows about that because he actually lost his seat and had to move to the electorate of Broadwater, 2,000 kilometres away. There were cuts to our health services by the LNP. Imagine where we would have been if we had five years of the LNP dealing with the global pandemic. We would not have had the health response that our government prepared for.

Cairns, Health Services

Mr HEALY: My question is to the Deputy Premier and Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services. Will the Deputy Premier update the House on the Palaszczuk government's plans for delivering more health services in Cairns and is he aware of any alternative approaches?

Dr MILES: I thank the member for Cairns for what is a really important question. I thank him and the member for Barron River, the member for Cook and yourself, Mr Speaker, for your persistent advocacy for health services in the Far North. It was a result of that advocacy that we were able to announce last week that we would work with JCU to plan and deliver a new university hospital in Cairns. It will mean that young people in Cairns can train locally, they can stay locally and they can be part of helping us deliver more and better health services locally. At the same time we announced a \$52.9 million package of investments in the hospital including a new emergency department, a new endoscopy suite and a new operating theatre. It will create 159 jobs in construction and it is all part of our plan to unite and recover, to create jobs and to keep our economy moving.

We could not be announcing—

Mr Hunt interjected.

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

Dr MILES: We could not be announcing plans like this if it were not for our strong health response, including keeping our borders closed while those opposite demanded we open them 64 times. We could not be doing it if we had not rebuilt frontline services after they were decimated by those opposite. I was particularly disappointed to yesterday hear the Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition say that they would fund their \$23 billion of election commitments by cutting. One would think they would have learned from their time under Campbell Newman—

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The Deputy Premier is blatantly lying. I take offence and I ask for him to withdraw.

Mr SPEAKER: First of all, please resume your seat. Leader of the Opposition, you will not use that term in parliament. I ask you to withdraw that term.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I withdraw.

Mr SPEAKER: I ask you to restate your point of order.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Mr Speaker, I take personal offence and I ask that the Deputy Premier withdraws.

Mr SPEAKER: Deputy Premier, the Leader of the Opposition has taken offence to those remarks. Will you withdraw?

Dr MILES: I withdraw. Those opposite cannot cut \$23 billion without cutting health care. Health is one-third of the budget. They cannot cut \$23 billion without cutting health care, like they did last time.

Opposition members interjected.

Dr MILES: They do not like their record being repeated in this place, but Queenslanders know that under Campbell Newman they cut health services and they know that their plan to fund \$23 billion is to cut health services again. Queenslanders deserve to know which services they will cut. Will they cut the Chief Health Officer's team, like they did last time? Will they cut the public health units, like they did last time? Will they cut pathology services, like they did last time? Will they cut the 48 nurses they sacked in Cairns last time, or the 22 in the cape and the Torres Strait that they cut last time? The Leader of the Opposition has to be honest: tell us which health services she will cut.

Productivity Commission

Mr BLEIJIE: My question without notice is to the Premier. Recently the Queensland Productivity Commission reported that the state's economy was in poor condition before the coronavirus. Is this why Labor has revoked the independence of the Queensland Productivity Commission, because of the honest and scathing assessment of Labor's handling of the Queensland economy before coronavirus?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I reject the proposition that is being put by the member for Kawana. What the Treasurer has done is no different to what the federal government has done, and that is basically to merge the Queensland Productivity Commission into Treasury—

Mr Dick: New South Wales.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Sorry, New South Wales—and look at red-tape reduction for small business. This is the most effective way that we can work with small businesses. Of course, Treasury is the right place for that unit to be located. We make no apologies for doing that. It is no different to what the LNP's counterparts in the southern state of New South Wales are doing. We believe it has worked well there and we believe it will work exactly the same here.

Coronavirus, Economy

Mr STEWART: My question is of the Treasurer and Minister for Infrastructure and Planning. Will the Treasurer update the House on how the Palaszczuk government will fund further stimulus measures to strengthen Queensland's economic recovery, and is the Treasurer aware of any alternative practices?

Mr DICK: I thank the member for Townsville for his question and his interest in the ongoing recovery of the Queensland economy from COVID-19. Yesterday I said that when the private sector falls down government must stand up and do the heavy lifting to help support the economy and create jobs. Already our government is delivering \$7 billion in stimulus measures to support Queensland Health, the health of Queenslanders, the jobs of Queenslanders and the businesses of Queenslanders. Yesterday I announced we would borrow an additional \$4 billion for further stimulus measures, including two new \$500 million business investment funds. We will set aside the remaining \$3 billion to support necessary stimulus measures in the next term of government. We know the threat from COVID—

Mr Boothman interjected.

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

Mr DICK:—remains as deadly and as debilitating as ever to lives, jobs and businesses. As the Governor of the Reserve Bank, Dr Philip Lowe, has said, by borrowing today to support the economy, we are avoiding an even bigger loss of output in jobs that would damage our economy and society for years to come, which would put an ongoing strain on the budget. It is the right thing to do to borrow today to help people, keep them in jobs and boost public investment at a time when private sector investment is very weak. It will help us support jobs.

Let the record show that before COVID, trend unemployment in Queensland was at 5.7 per cent, the lowest since May 2012. Under the LNP, trend unemployment reached a peak of 6.7 per cent and seasonally adjusted, 7.2 per cent—without a pandemic. That is what Queensland got under the LNP. However, 120,000 full-time jobs were created before COVID in Queensland by the Palaszczuk Labor government. Under the LNP, 8,400 full-time jobs were lost. That was their record. We will not be lectured to by the Leader of the Opposition or the LNP on economic management, because they think they are better than the Governor of the Reserve Bank.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. The member for Theodore is warned under the standing orders. The member for Cooper will cease her interjections.

Mr DICK: Yesterday the Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition talked about 'stabilising debt and cutting waste'. When did we hear that before? In 2012, before they were elected, they were telling Queenslanders that they had nothing to fear. That was before they sacked 14,000 workers. They have said it before and they will do it again. Queenslanders should not listen to what they say; they should look at what the LNP does. There is no magic cure; there is just pain, suffering and austerity under the LNP. That will happen again. Some 1,100 days—

Mr Watts interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Toowoomba North, I just tried to give you some guidance. You are warned under the standing orders. I will not tolerate a revolving door of interjectors coming into this chamber.

Mr DICK: It is now 1,100 days since the member for Nanango and her hapless deputy took over the leadership of the LNP. In this last sitting week before the election, they have another chance to do what they have not done for 1,000 days and come clean with the people of Queensland. The LNP has to tell Queenslanders who, what, when, where and how much it will cut to fund \$23 billion in election commitments. They must do that today.

Mrs Gerber interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Currumbin, you are warned under the standing orders. You have continually not put your comments through the chair. I have made myself clear today.

Treasurer, Minister for Infrastructure and Planning, Taxation

Mr PURDIE: My question is to the Treasurer. When the Treasurer was the attorney-general in the former Bligh Labor government, a senior public servant from his own department referred him to the Crime and Corruption Commission for directing public servants not to report over \$600 million of SPER debt. How can Queenslanders trust the Treasurer on tax compliance?

Mr DICK: I would like to talk to the parliament about my achievements as the attorney-general a decade ago, but—

Dr Miles: No, go on.

Mr DICK: I take the interjection from the Deputy Premier. I assure members that it is a very long and distinguished list of achievements. I am very happy to put my record as attorney-general up against the record of the member for Kawana every day of the week, but I have more pressing matters to deal with as we go through the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression. I do not know whether the honourable member was set up by the leadership group to ask such an irrelevant question to the future of Queensland, but the member for Nicklin needs to learn that when he is on the frontbench leaders will ask him to do things that are not necessarily relevant or important to Queensland.

We will focus on recovering money that is owed to Queenslanders. I make no apologies for that. We want to recover more than \$400 million over three years—we will spend \$74.9 million to do that—by way of greater compliance, greater auditing work for state taxation and revenues, and greater recovery from SPER. I am absolutely dedicated to doing that, because the people of Queensland deserve it. I will put my record up against the LNP's record on tax recovery.

It is my intention to recover money for Queenslanders every day of the week, because Queenslanders deserve a strong compliance approach from the Office of State Revenue. I thank the officers of Treasury for their work in pulling that together to ensure that money can be recovered. That is the effective work of Treasury. There is \$3 billion in savings over four years—prudent, sensible and achievable—not \$23 billion in cuts that have to be inflicted on Queensland to deliver on the economic plan of the Leader of the Opposition. There is some \$15 billion for the New Bradfield Scheme and \$8 billion in additional announcements already, before the election has started.

We will focus on recovering revenue in a sensible, practical and reasonable fashion, because Queensland taxpayers deserve it. We will focus on delivering \$3 billion in savings over four years to make sure the Public Service focuses on frontline service delivery, delivery of infrastructure and creation of jobs. The Public Service is responding—I thank it for that—under the leadership of the Premier. We cannot find \$23 billion—no party can—to fund election commitments unless we cut, sack and sell. Today I call on the Leader of the Opposition, as I will every day until the election, to release her secret cuts plan so that Queenslanders know precisely what she will cut to fund the \$23 billion in election commitments. Queenslanders deserve that.

(Time expired)

Mr SPEAKER: The member for Ninderry was interjecting whilst on a warning. You will leave the chamber under standing order 253A for one hour.

Whereupon the honourable member for Ninderry withdrew from the chamber at 10.54 am.

Job Creation

Mr MELLISH: My question is of the Minister for State Development, Tourism and Innovation. Will the minister please update the House on the Palaszczuk government's plan to create local jobs and deliver projects that support local businesses in Queensland?

Ms JONES: I thank the honourable member for Aspley not only for his question but also for his continued advocacy on behalf of his local community. What a great job he is doing as the member for Aspley! I have had the privilege of going to his electorate and seeing firsthand the Carseldine Urban Village, part of our government's plan to create jobs in his region and to deliver them with the infrastructure that local community needs. In fact, more than \$20 million worth of public infrastructure has been delivered and opened as part of the Carseldine Urban Village. It is being utilised by local residents—three soccer fields, two volleyball courts—

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

Mr Powell interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Broadwater, you are interjecting while you are on your feet and not in your seat. You are warned under the standing orders. The member for Glass House will cease his interjections.

Ms JONES: There are basketball courts, public amenities, playgrounds, exercise circuits and barbecues. The member for Aspley and I have seen firsthand how this is being embraced by the local community. Interestingly, I want to also really advocate—

An opposition member interjected.

Ms JONES: Do not worry, I am getting there—just a bit of patience on that side. I really want to thank the member for Aspley for knocking on the head the development on the western side. That land will be retained as green space for everybody in that local community, as will the creek. The other thing I have seen firsthand is the bridge we have built over the creek which links the urban village to Aspley State High School. There is only one person who does not support that bridge being built: Amanda Cooper. That is right: the LNP candidate for Aspley wants kids to continue to walk over a drainpipe to get to school rather than a safe bridge. It gets better.

A government member: There's more?

Ms JONES: There is more. One would think that the LNP candidate, who is a former planning chair of BCC, would know that the EDQ act was introduced by the Newman government—now the LNP opposition that she wants to be a part of it. She is slamming the very act that her own side of politics put into place.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Ms JONES: I take the interjection from the Leader of the Opposition. The Leader of the Opposition has said that she wants to do better planning to kick-start the economy. Let's not have one Coordinator-General; let's have two! Who knows their names or who they are, but duplication is the answer! Will the Leader of the Opposition stand by her LNP candidate and wind back the powers of the EDQ act that she introduced when she was in government? Will the Leader of the Opposition wind back the legislation that she introduced, or will she clarify that the LNP candidate is completely—

Mrs Frecklington: Under pressure.

Ms JONES: There is only one person under pressure in this House—that is, the Leader of the Opposition, who called 64 times for the border to be opened. We know what happens to an economy when they do not safeguard their residents. Their economies go into debt. Their economies are failing. Their economies are locked down.

Mr SPEAKER: The honourable member's time has expired.

An opposition member interjected.

Ms JONES: You need to do some homework.

Mr SPEAKER: The member's time has expired. The member for Cooper has been cautioned today. The member for Cooper is warned under the standing orders.

Infrastructure, Funding

Mr POWELL: My question without notice is to the Premier. Will the Premier advise why her government cut the promised capital budget by over \$1 billion, from \$13.7 billion to \$12.4 billion, last financial year at a time when Queensland desperately needed more infrastructure spending, not less?

Ms PALASZCZUK: We have one of the strongest infrastructure plans that Queensland has ever seen—over \$51 billion over the next four years. One of the clear things that I mentioned was that we would keep our \$51 billion over four years as part of our strong economic plan which keeps people in jobs. I am happy to talk about our infrastructure plan because just last week I was in Cairns inspecting the great Smithfield bypass that is going to shorten travel times. Those people on that site said to me very clearly—we were talking about construction—

Mr SPEAKER: Sorry, Premier. Can you please put approximately two minutes and 45 seconds on the clock, or we will give the full three minutes? Okay; three minutes. The clock was not started.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I am happy to start again, Mr Speaker. What I said very clearly is that our infrastructure program can be seen right across the state. On the Smithfield bypass what I was talking about with the construction workers is the fact that in Victoria some construction is only at 25 per cent and in other parts of the world it has shut down. What did the workers say to me? They said that it is so good to have a job, and the job continues.

Mr Dick: That's more than Morrison's spending.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right; I will come to that. I take the interjection from the Treasurer now because my understanding from memory is that Scott Morrison, the Prime Minister, is spending \$100 billion nationwide over the next 10 years. That is \$10 billion a year for the whole country. Ours is \$51 billion over four years.

Mr Powell interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Glass House.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I see the member for Mundingburra in the chamber. I know that the member for Mundingburra and her colleagues were very proud of the great investment we put into the Townsville Stadium. That will be part of her legacy given that she has announced her intention to retire. I wish her all the very best, and I will have more to say about that later in the week. The Minister for Main Roads is here. One only has to look at the infrastructure on the Gold Coast—

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Pause the clock. Member for—

Ms PALASZCZUK:—to see our investment there—the M1, the massive—

Mr SPEAKER: Premier, please resume your seat. The member for Glass House is warned under the standing orders.

Ms PALASZCZUK:—investment in the M1, improving travel times and connectivity not just within the Gold Coast area but also between the Gold Coast and Brisbane. Then of course in Minister de Brenni's area we have had the upgrades that we visited on a couple of occasions.

Mrs Frecklington: How are those sports upgrades happening in your area?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I am glad to also mention schools. I am happy to talk about our infrastructure in schools and our strong track record in investment in the schools that are needed. In fact, I have visited a number of schools on the Sunshine Coast and I look forward to going back to the Sunshine Coast in the very near future, opening new schools in growth corridors. Once again we are doing the planning that is needed for new schools. With regard to my good colleague the Deputy Premier and Minister for Health, there is our expansion of capital infrastructure for hospitals such as at Caboolture, the car parks at Redcliffe, the expansion of hospitals in Logan and the new paediatric ward in Townsville. This was a great question I was asked!

Dr Miles: Kingaroy Hospital. Don't forget Kingaroy!

Ms PALASZCZUK: Oh, sorry—Kingaroy Hospital, Roma Hospital, Atherton Hospital.

Mrs Frecklington: Take it on notice, Premier.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Oh, no, I am happy to keep going. In fact, it might be time for a trip out to Kingaroy I think!

(Time expired)

Mr McArdle interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Caloundra, I realise that there is three days to go, but I ask you to cease your interjections.

Queensland Border, Security

Ms RICHARDS: My question is of the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice. Will the Attorney-General provide an update on any steps the Palaszczuk government is taking to keep our borders secure?

Mr Stevens interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Mermaid Beach, welcome; you are warned under the standing orders.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr Bleijie: He just got here!

Mr SPEAKER: It does not take long.

Mrs D'ATH: I thank the member for her question. When we were last in the parliament I mentioned that there was a Federal Court matter ongoing referred by the High Court in relation to Clive Palmer's challenge in the Western Australia borders matter and that Queensland was supporting Western Australia in that case, and we know the Morrison government was in there supporting Clive Palmer.

Last time I said that the Morrison government was claiming that, no, it was there just to assist the court and was not there intervening on behalf of the applicant, but we now have the Federal Court judgement that clearly states that the Morrison government was there supporting Clive Palmer in his challenges to force borders open. Not just that; the court actually said in relation to Western Australia's challenge that the Morrison government's intervention prejudiced the proceedings and that the Commonwealth's withdrawal after the hearing had been completed was tokenistic and could make no practical difference to the outcome and that the respondents have not been disadvantaged by the withdrawal because they had already been disadvantaged by the Commonwealth's participation in the hearing—the fact that it intervened in the first place.

Also, the court made a decision not to allow a new hearing, but this is why: because there is no point trying to avoid the prejudice because the prejudice had already occurred because Clive Palmer had said, 'It doesn't matter if the Commonwealth is part of a new hearing because we will use all of their evidence, all of their witnesses and run their case.' It is a fact that the Morrison government basically ran Clive Palmer's case for him in that Western Australian challenge and the Leader of the Opposition is on the record as saying that she is on a one-unity ticket with the Morrison government, so she supports forcing open the borders despite the health advice.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mrs D'ATH: The important Federal Court judgement also said this and the Leader of the Opposition might want to listen—

The border restrictions have been effective to a very substantial extent to reduce the probability of COVID-19 being imported into WA from interstate.

It also found that there was a high probability that the virus would be transmitted through the state if infections had come in and, if it became uncontrolled in a worst case scenario, the health consequences could be potentially catastrophic. That is the fact, but we cannot have a strong economy without a good health response and all those on the other side want to do is attack our Chief Health Officer. The Leader of the Opposition needs to explain why she supports the members for Callide, Surfers Paradise and Kawana attacking our Chief Health Officer.

(Time expired)

Water Prices

Mr DAMETTO: My question is to the Premier. It is estimated that hosting the AFL grand final will generate 80 jobs and give a \$17 million boost to our economy. A 25 per cent reduction in state water tariffs will add \$220 million to the Queensland economy, supporting jobs over the next four years—the equivalent of 11 AFL grand finals. Will the Premier commit to meeting with the KAP and the sugar industry to discuss our plan to reduce water prices?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I am always happy to meet with members of the Katter party.

Small Business, Grants

Ms McMILLAN: My question is of the Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development. Will the minister update the House on the support that is available for small businesses in Queensland and is the minister aware of any alternative approaches?

Ms FENTIMAN: I thank the member for Mansfield for her question. She is a tremendous advocate for small businesses in her community. I believe that 177 small businesses in Mansfield have received one of our small business grants. I recently enjoyed a visit there meeting with businesses along Logan Road to talk to them about the support that is available because we on this side of the House know that small businesses are the engine room of our economy.

We are the only state to have \$1 billion in no-interest loans and \$10,000 adaptation grants. Some 17,000 businesses across Queensland have received some of our \$10,000 grants. It is the Premier's tough stance on the borders that has meant that our small businesses can keep operating, because we can see from what is happening in Victoria that a second wave here would be absolutely devastating for our small businesses. That is why small business operators tell me when I travel across the state that they are so appreciative of our Premier standing up and being strong on the borders.

Our strong economic performance is only doable by managing the COVID-19 health response and we have done that through borders, in stark contrast to those opposite. How many times was it that the Leader of the Opposition called for the borders to be opened? Sixty-four times! Let us not forget the member for Burleigh and his billboard calling for the borders to be open.

Mr Lister interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Southern Downs, welcome to the hot seat! You are warned under the standing orders.

Ms FENTIMAN: Let us not forget about the LNP's petition calling for the borders to be open. We had the member for Everton who called our Chief Health Officer power hungry, we had the member for Broadwater calling our Chief Health Officer a punch-drunk bureaucrat and, just this week, we have had the member for Surfers Paradise with his absolutely offensive sharing of a cartoon demonising our Premier and the Chief Health Officer, describing COVID-19 as a fear campaign. This is just a few months after, of course, he was caught posting a little selfie on his Facebook not social distancing.

It is time for the member for Nanango, as the Leader of the Opposition, to actually step up and be a leader. She either shares these views of her front bench or she does not. It is absolutely time for the member for Nanango, the Leader of the Opposition, to step up; but, of course, she will not. She absolutely will not act to pull her front bench into line. It is clear that at this election there is a clear choice. Who do you trust to manage borders? Who do you trust to manage the health response and who do you trust to get our small businesses back up and running.

Treasurer, Minister for Infrastructure and Planning

Mr MINNIKIN: My question without notice is to the Treasurer. On radio this morning the Treasurer claimed the Palaszczuk government could not hand down a budget before the election because the Commonwealth government had delayed its budget. The Treasurer then categorically denied the Palaszczuk government's announcement from early this year, before coronavirus, of its plan to deliver the budget in April before the Commonwealth government's budget. How can Queenslanders have confidence in the Treasurer when he did not know the size of Queensland's debt and does not know basic facts about the budget process?

Mr DICK: Well, I know the size of the debt because you keep talking about it because you want to sell government owned corporations.

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

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I draw to your attention that the Treasurer is on a warning from you for not directing his comments through the chair.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Kawana, and I also realise that ministers are having to respond to questions and so I will provide some degree of leniency in doing so.

Mr DICK: The reason I know the state of public debt is because (a) I published it and (b) the members of the opposition talk about it. We are the only state in Australia, I might make this point, to report on non-financial public sector debt—the only state. The Commonwealth government does not do what we do.

If the Commonwealth government was to do what we do the member for Chatsworth would have the Prime Minister and the Treasurer reporting on the debt of the Snowy Mountains Scheme and the debt of the NBN. So why, I ask through you, Mr Speaker, to the member for Chatsworth, would you hold us to one standard and the federal LNP government to another standard? Why would you do that? Because it is politics. The reason the member for Chatsworth and the members of the opposition talk about \$101 billion in debt is because the surest and quickest way to reduce that is to sell government owned assets and that is exactly what they will have to do to fund \$23 billion in election commitments. The only way they will be able to fund \$23 billion in election commitments is to sell public assets, to sack 14,000 staff—most likely more—and to cut services to Queenslanders.

Dr Miles interjected.

Mr DICK: Particularly health services says the Deputy Premier. On 15 November last year the member for South Brisbane and then Treasurer announced that the Queensland budget would be held on 28 April. On 20 March, after a meeting of national cabinet, the Prime Minister announced the Commonwealth would delay its budget until October 2020 and all states until after that date. It is a pity the member for Chatsworth does not listen to the Liberal Prime Minister of the country.

On 7 September I announced that if I have the honour of being Treasurer after the election I will hold the 2020 budget in the week commencing 30 November—not January. I will not be bludging during December like the members opposite. We will be getting back to work if we have the privilege of serving this state again. We will do that straight away. I hope the member for Chatsworth is ready for the Labor campaign that I know we are running in his electorate. I know that we have a terrific candidate who is ready to take you on, member for Chatsworth. I would not worry about the budget date in November, I would worry about the election date of 31 October.

I am not worried about the rats and mice of the opposition. I am worried about getting Queenslanders back to work, delivering \$11 billion of stimulus and calling on the Leader of the Opposition, as I will every day until the election, to tell Queenslanders what her secret plan is to fund \$23 billion in election commitments.

Gold Coast, Public Transport

Mr KING: My question is to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. Will the minister update the House on the Palaszczuk government's public transport investment plan for the Gold Coast?

Mr BAILEY: I thank the member for the question. This government has backed the Gold Coast all the way when it comes to infrastructure and jobs. We duplicated the heavy rail line from Helensvale to Coomera. We built stage 2 of the light rail and we are doing stage 3—it is fully committed. We have also done M1 upgrades. There was not a single new dollar spent on the M1 under those opposite in the three years they were in government. We have upgraded the bus station at Helensvale, put in 1,000 commuter car-parking spaces at Parkwood and spent \$150 million worth on roads before the games. We have backed the Gold Coast all the way.

Those opposite cut nearly \$100 million in road and transport infrastructure from QTRIP on the Gold Coast. That is their record. In contrast, we have created nearly 850 jobs on the M1 upgrade from Varsity Lakes to Tugun and nearly 760 jobs on stage 3 of the light rail—which is coming—from Broadbeach to Burleigh. We have backed light rail from the beginning. We have been very clear that the light rail will run down the Gold Coast Highway, which is the logical place to go. We have a coordinated comprehensive transport plan for the southern Gold Coast. It involves light and heavy rail and the M1 upgrades all working together in a coordinated plan. The LNP position on light rail is absolutely conflicted. The member for Surfers Paradise bagged it out when he was leader. The member for Mermaid Beach has called it an infliction in this term of office and now we see that the LNP want to put it on an obscure dogleg route around the west of Burleigh.

The LNP need to be honest about what the member for Burleigh's clear conflict of interest is. It was recently revealed by the media—not by the member for Burleigh—that he lives in a Palm Beach apartment on the current proposed stage 4 light rail route. He has been a vocal opponent of that route, the same route that our two-year study says is the best route. Instead, the member for Burleigh wants the tram to go out west past the Burleigh Brewery that he has invested in it. He has said forget heavy rail to the airport but he dictates policy on the LNP when he has a clear conflict of interest.

What do we get from the Leader of the Opposition? Absolutely no action. The member has investments on both routes yet he does not excuse himself from this issue whatsoever. He is actually driving policy on the opposition side. This is the LNP all over. They have transport policy for the LNP,

not for Gold Coast residents. The Leader of the Opposition should stand the member for Burleigh aside on all matters to do with light rail on the Gold Coast because he clearly has financial interests where he is conflicted. This is a weak Leader of the Opposition. She does not discipline the member for Surfers Paradise, she does not discipline the member for Burleigh, she does not discipline her candidate in Redlands and she does not discipline the member for Callide. This is weak leadership, which is not what Queensland needs.

Credit Rating

Ms LEAHY: My question is to the Premier. Will the Premier guarantee that Labor's \$18 billion debt blowout will not result in another credit rating downgrade as occurred when Queensland lost its cherished AAA credit rating when she was a minister in the Bligh Labor government?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I have confidence in the Treasurer and in the workings of the Treasury department which have been absolutely thorough in ensuring that we do everything we possibly can to prevent a downgrade. That is why we have taken this responsible and measured approach to our recovery where we have borrowed within the limits of what we know we can do while absolutely concentrating on getting people back into work. Fundamentally, that is what people want. They want to be safe, they want their health to be good and they want to be able to get back to work.

Whilst I am on my feet, I say hello to the students in the gallery. Isn't it wonderful that in our state students can go to school and they can come out into the public. In other countries they cannot do that and in some states they cannot do that.

Mr SPEAKER: The period for question time has expired.

MOTION

Business Program



Hon. YM D'ATH (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (11.19 am): I move—

1. That the following government business will be considered this sitting week, with the nominated maximum periods of time as specified:
 - (a) the Criminal Code (Child Sexual Offences Reform) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, a maximum of one hour to complete all stages;
 - (b) the Meriba Omasker Kaziw Kazipa (Torres Strait Islander Traditional Child Rearing Practice) Bill, a maximum of 1.5 hours to complete all stages;
 - (c) the Criminal Code and Other Legislation (Wage Theft) Amendment Bill, a maximum of two hours to complete all stages; and
 - (d) the Public Service and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, a maximum of two hours to complete all stages.
2. The following time limits for the bills listed in 1. apply:
 - (a) consideration in detail to be completed by three minutes before the expiry of the maximum hours;
 - (b) question on third reading to be put by two minutes before the expiry of the maximum hours; and
 - (c) question on long title to be put one minute before the expiry of the maximum hours.
3. If the nominated stage of each bill has not been completed by the allocated time specified in 2., or by 5.55 pm on Thursday, 10 September 2020, Mr Speaker:
 - (a) shall call on a minister to table any explanatory notes to their circulated amendments, any statement of compatibility with human rights or any statement relating to an override declaration;
 - (b) shall put all remaining questions necessary to either pass that stage or pass the bill without further debate;
 - (c) may interrupt non-specified business or debate on a bill or motion to complete the requirements of the motion; and
 - (d) will complete all stages required by this motion notwithstanding anything contained in standing and sessional orders.

In moving this motion, I welcome members to the final scheduled sitting week of this parliamentary term. This week is certainly historic because, for the first time in Queensland's history, we know when the election will be due to the legislative reform passed through this chamber to establish four-year fixed terms. It will be in the interests of all Queenslanders to have four-year fixed terms. Moving forward, that reform gives certainty to Queenslanders and, more importantly, to the business community. Never has there been a more critical time to have that certainty.

Queenslanders need a government that will provide stability for the next four years and that has a plan to protect our health and a plan to allow our economy to open and grow. That is what this government has been doing and it is what we will do if we have the privilege of being re-elected on

31 October. The Palaszczuk government is getting on with the job of ensuring that we protect Queenslanders and, while doing so, is making sure that the Treasurer can help drive economic growth in this state through great reforms, working with the business sector—small, medium and large—right across Queensland to get us on the right track.

However, this week we also need to deal with important legislation to make children safer through the child sex offence reforms that have come out of the royal commission. That massive body of work was very important to this nation and to this state. The royal commission uncovered shocking child sexual abuse in institutions. It showed up the lack of scrutiny and accountability in how institutions handle complaints around child sexual abuse and how we protect children in this state. In this chamber we will be dealing with another piece of historic legislation, and I am glad to see that the member for Cook is here. I refer to the Torres Strait Islander traditional child-rearing practice bill. It is a very important piece of legislation that I am glad we can debate in the last week of this parliament.

We will be debating the Criminal Code and Other Legislation (Wage Theft) Amendment Bill to protect workers' rights. That bill is about ensuring that employers who deliberately go about stealing workers' wages will be held to account. We will also be debating the Public Service and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, which is a really important piece of legislation about job security. Again, there has never been a more important time to ensure that people have job security. If you want a loan, whether for a small purchase such as a car or for something bigger such as your first home, being a casual worker is an impediment to getting that loan. This bill is about ensuring job security going forward. It is about recognising as permanent employees public servants who work day in and day out to serve the people of Queensland.


This week the Treasurer will be introducing and we will be debating appropriation bills, which are really important in laying the groundwork for Queensland's economic recovery plan, which we have already released, and our fiscal and economic review. They are also important to the commitment of this government, if we have the privilege of being re-elected, to immediately come back, provide a full budget and go into a full estimates hearing.

Critical work is to be done this week. I hope that members recognise that this is an important week. Never before have we known that it is our last sitting week before an election. Let us take full advantage of that. Let us show our best side in these debates. Let us show the people of Queensland what true parliamentarians look like through our debates. Let us show respect and get on with this important work.

I finish by saying that valedictory speeches are to be made this week and I will work with the Manager of Opposition Business on an appropriate time for that. I want to thank all of the clerks and the parliamentary staff for their work during this important term, which course included the Townsville regional parliament.

In these last few seconds I pay tribute and pay my respects to the former member for Mackay, the Hon. Tim Mulherin. His title says it all: he was an honourable man and we will miss him.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stewart): Before I call the member for Kawana, I remind the House of those who have been given warnings by the Speaker. It is quite an extensive list. They are the members for Gympie, Buderim, Everton, Kawana, Woodridge, Burleigh, Maroochydore, Warrego, Nicklin, Theodore, Toowoomba North, Currumbin, Broadwater, Cooper, Glass House, Mermaid Beach and Southern Downs.

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (11.25 am): I start by also acknowledging and thanking all of the parliamentary staff for the tremendous work that they have done over the past three years. I know that it has been very difficult for them having to work with this lazy Labor government, trying to work out what is on the agenda and what is happening. It has been as difficult for the parliamentary staff as it has been for the opposition to work with this incompetent and lazy government over the past three years. It has been difficult also because of the arrogance and the hubris of the government—

Mr Dick interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE:—and, in particular, the Treasurer who cannot stop himself from interjecting. If I have learned anything from 11 years in this place it is that when a minister is hot under the collar, under pressure and probably has not lived up to his or her own expectations in a media performance, he or she comes in here and delivers a ministerial statement that is all about attack and defence. That is what we saw from Treasurer Dick this morning. He would have looked at the media reports last night and said, 'Oh my gosh! That is not how it was planned.'

Mr BAILEY: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. This is clearly not related to the business program motion. He is straying to other topics and wasting the time of the chamber.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Kawana, I was giving you a little bit of latitude there. Let us come back to the business program motion.

Mr BLEIJIE: The Business Committee process has been a complete farce. The Leader of the House stands here today still trumpeting the idea that we should all be respectful of each other, saying, 'Let's hold hands and show Queenslanders what parliamentarians do.' I will tell the Leader of the House what Queensland parliamentarians do: they come here and they work hard, which is not what that lot has done over the past three years. Family friendly hours are a complete failure. In fact, yesterday in the Business Committee meeting we talked about debating six bills this week, the four bills named in the business program motion and the appropriation bills that the Treasurer will introduce after this motion. Appropriation bills are usually designated to a budget but these will not be. The government will introduce appropriation bills designated to the economic statement that the Treasurer made yesterday. Then they say that they will be declared urgent and they will be passed this week.


Yesterday at the meeting I asked, 'Why don't we simply sit longer this week? Why don't we sit past six o'clock or seven o'clock?' The member for Noosa said, 'I think that's a good idea.' She supported me on that. The response from the Leader of the House was that the government does not intend to sit past the scheduled sitting hours, that is, the government does not like debate; it does not want anyone else to have a say in this place. They put that under the guise of us 'working together'. They say, 'Let's all be friendly in the House and show Queenslanders what parliaments can achieve.' It is like that old song, *Whatever Lola Wants*, except in this business program motion it is, 'Whatever Labor wants, Labor gets'. There is no form of discussion or debate. The business program motion is a waste of space and a waste of time, so much so that in the meeting yesterday I hung up when Minister Bailey started speaking, because it was not worth it and we can see why when we look at the motion put forward today.

The Leader of the House talks about the Criminal Code (Child Sexual Offences Reform) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill being important. They are granting one hour to debate and finalise that very important bill on child sex offence reform. The adoption bill will get 1.5 hours, there will be two hours for the wage theft bill and two hours for the Public Service and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. If we divide that by two it means an hour for the opposition to debate each bill. This week 93 members of parliament will be debating six pieces of legislation which, of course, includes the appropriation bills that will be introduced with little notice and debated on Thursday.

The government says that it is the first fixed term and that this is all new, but we have known about it for three years. No questions on notice will be answered. I asked the government whether questions on notice asked this week will be answered before the election, because the House will dissolve before the election. I received a response this morning: 'No, the standard rules apply.' So for questions on notice no answers will be coming from the minister.

The Leader of the House talked about the government's economic response and said that they want to make sure that is fully debated this week. One day for economic response in Thursday's debate is not sufficient, considering the government does not have a budget. The Treasurer denied on radio this morning that the Queensland government said we would have a budget in April. It was his own government that was going to have the budget in April. Now he denies that was even the case. This shows what I have been saying for years about Premier Palaszczuk and this Labor government: they hear nothing, they see nothing and they know nothing. They are completely bereft of ideas. The only way to get Queensland working again is to elect an LNP government on 31 October.

(Time expired)

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (11.30 am): I endorse the motion moved by the Leader of the House. Here we are again, witnessing this paradox: the opposition complains about not enough time to debate but then wastes the chamber's time debating debating. I have said many times that this is an amateur thespian stage for the member for Kawana. It was absolutely proven when he just sang to us in his speech. Let's hope he does not start dancing as well! This is what we get from the member for Kawana: the same old speech, the same old routine. He gets a little bit of air time. Having been on the Business Committee since replacing the member for Murrumba, I have nothing but sympathy for the Attorney-General for the inane, boring and repetitious responses from the member for Kawana. The meetings are the same because he says the same things.

In this place he makes the same speech and wastes the time of this chamber. It is embarrassing. It is embarrassing for someone with such poor judgement to waste the time of this chamber every session, like a needle skipping on a record. That is the member for Kawana, every sitting week.

It is very clear that the bills proposed by the Attorney-General are important bills. They should be debated. As does any other chamber in the democratic world, we have to prioritise. We all have to prioritise. This is a great opportunity for the opposition to start prioritising. If you look at their policy platform you know that there is not a lot of prioritisation going on there. The child sex offenders bill is obviously important. The Torres Strait Islander traditional child-rearing bill—

Mr Crandon: Stuck in the slow lane on the northern Gold Coast—

Mr BAILEY: The member for Coomera is obviously under a lot of pressure. He is a little unhinged.

Mr Crandon: You're under a lot of pressure on the northern Gold Coast. You are stuck in the slow lane when it comes to the northern Gold Coast.

Mr BAILEY: He is starting to feel the pressure.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stewart): Order! Pause the clock. Member for Coomera, your interjections are not being taken. They are directed at the minister. They need to come through the chair.


Mr BAILEY: The wage theft bill—we all know that the opposition is not very supportive of industrial justice. The Public Service and other legislation bill—the LNP might not support that because we know what their plan is. They want to cut, they want to sack and they want to sell after the next election. We know what their agenda is.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr BAILEY: We do have a known date, because this government reformed legislative terms to be fixed and for four years—the first time ever. This is the government that had the courage to get it done. I look forward to the last speeches of the members for Mundingburra, Caloundra and Hervey Bay. I think it is important to acknowledge the contribution of those people from both sides of the chamber, and I look forward to hearing their final speeches.

Mr Crandon: Full funding—exits 41 and 49 and no action on the construction.

Mr BAILEY: More bleating from the member for Coomera. He is under a lot of pressure from Chris Johnson. We saw it last session; we are seeing more of it now. He doth protest too much. I, too, would be embarrassed to be a member of a team that called 64 times for the borders to be opened. I would be absolutely humiliated to see my leadership doing such bizarre things that would harm Queenslanders. What we see here is the predictable and repetitive effort from the member for Kawana. It is not worth listening to his contribution. This is a logical business program motion and I commend it to the House.

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (11.35 am): We are now in the last week of the 56th Parliament. There is no greater example of what is wrong with this government than the business program motion that has been moved by the Leader of the House. The Leader of the House stood up quite proudly to talk about the fact that this is the first time we have known when the election would be held. That means that there is no excuse with regard to planning and making sure these bills were on the agenda and scrutinised well before the last sitting week of parliament. This just shows that this government has no idea about planning, not just here in the parliament but right throughout the government—whether it is budgets, legislation, backflips or whatever it might be. This government has proven that it cannot plan.

This business program motion also speaks to the government's priorities, as has already been mentioned by the Manager of Opposition Business. In terms of time allocated to debate bills this week, there are two hours for the Public Service and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, two hours for the wage theft bill, 1½ hours for the Torres Strait Islander traditional child-rearing practice bill and one hour for the child sexual offences reform, a bill that the Attorney-General herself said was incredibly important. We agree with that. There is one hour allocated for debate of that bill—half the time that has been allocated to Public Service reform! Queenslanders know that this government has its priorities all wrong? What drives it is its union masters telling it what they want, not what the people of Queensland want and what our most vulnerable kids deserve.

This motion shows the lack of transparency and the lack of planning that this government has exercised. There is no greater example of that than the Treasurer's refusal to have a budget before the election. Government members came into the House today and said they could do it in November. The preparation involved in formulating a budget means that you cannot do it in four weeks.

Mr BAILEY: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Clearly, the member for Everton has strayed well off the topic and is onto topics that are totally unrelated to the business program motion.

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Deputy Speaker, on the point of order—this coming from the man who just spoke about Queensland borders being closed.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stewart): What is your point of order?

Mr BLEIJIE: My point of order is that the member who just raised a point of order about relevance spoke about things not relevant to the motion. I think he should apply the same standard.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Miller. Member for Everton, I am happy to give you a little bit of latitude. Come back to the motion too, please.

Mr MANDER: I was talking about the lack of planning and lack of transparency demonstrated by the business program motion and by the behaviour of the government. To not have a budget before the election is simply unacceptable. The Treasurer did not know that the original budget date was April and he misled the morning radio program by saying it was going to be in June. He did not know it.

Mr BAILEY: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. My point of order is the same. The member was asked to come back to the motion and then he willingly avoided the motion altogether and got into very broad debating points about the budget. He is not speaking to the motion.

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Deputy Speaker, on the point of order—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Can I first make a ruling?

Mr BLEIJIE: Can I take a point of order on that point of order, though? I am responding under the standing orders to that point of order. The Attorney-General, when moving the motion, talked about economic recovery and in fact talked about a budget being delivered if the Labor government was re-elected. As part of this motion debate now, I think the shadow Treasurer is responding to the points the Attorney made in her own speech.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: We are not going to debate the points of order. Member for Miller, I was happy with the way the member for Everton was articulating his points. I said I would give him some latitude. I will give him a little more.

Mr MANDER: I go back to the lack of transparency and lack of preparation. We have a Treasurer who did not know the debt level, is not going to deliver a budget and this morning did not know that the original budget was going to be delivered in April, which was well before the federal budget was going to be introduced. The member for South Brisbane is now laying back thanking her lucky stars that she is no longer the worst treasurer in the nation. We have a Treasurer who simply knows nothing about the facts and is refusing to be open and transparent and let Queenslanders know what the true state of the finances are as we go into a state election.

Mrs D'ATH: Mr Deputy Speaker—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Pause the clock. I think I am going to pre-empt your point of order, Leader of the House. Member for Everton, I did give you some latitude. You have now strayed from the motion before the House. I now ask you to come back to the motion being debated.

Mr MANDER: There are so many other things that we could discuss this week if we had what we call a normal parliament—a parliament that sits into the night if that is what is required or sits into the early hours of the morning if that is what is required or sits on Friday if that is what is required. Would there be a better example of needing to go into Friday of this week given that it is the last week of the 56th Parliament?

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr MANDER: I will take the interjection from the Leader of the Opposition. It is actually budget week. Those opposite said today that they wanted to hear our plan. Bring down a budget and we will do a budget reply speech. They will not because they do not want to hear our plan. They do not want to hear about debt. This Treasurer is a debt denier. In fact, he said moments ago that the only reason he knows about debt is that we keep reminding him of it.

Mr DICK: I rise to a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. I take offence at those words. I ask the member for Everton to withdraw and to also tell us how he is going to fund \$23 billion worth of—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Treasurer, I think you have overstepped the mark there. Member for Everton, the Treasurer takes offence and I ask you to withdraw.

Mr MANDER: I withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I ask you to come back to the motion being debated.

Mr MANDER: I am doing that, Mr Deputy Speaker. I was just accepting the invitation from the Treasurer who wants to know our plan. We will tell those opposite our plan. We have the greatest vision that has been delivered to this state in decades—a vision that will result in a decade of jobs and not two or three years worth of jobs. It has been delivered under visionary leader Deb Frecklington. It includes building the New Bradfield Scheme, building the Queensland Dam Company, building the second M1 and making electricity cheaper in the regions.

(Time expired)

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

AYES, 47:

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

NOES, 43:

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

Grn, 1—Berkman.

KAP, 3—Dametto, Katter, Knuth.

NQF, 1—Costigan.


PHON, 1—Andrew.

Ind, 1—Bolton.

Resolved in the affirmative.

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL

Message from Deputy Governor

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Infrastructure and Planning) (11.48 am): I present a message from Her Excellency the Deputy Governor.

Mr SPEAKER: The message from Her Excellency recommends the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill. The contents of the message will be incorporated in the *Record of Proceedings*. I table the message for the information of members.

MESSAGE

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL 2020

Constitution of Queensland 2001, section 68

I, CATHERINE ENA HOLMES AC, Deputy Governor recommend to the Legislative Assembly a Bill intitled—


A Bill for an Act authorising the Treasurer to pay amounts from the consolidated fund for the Legislative Assembly and parliamentary service for the financial years starting 1 July 2019 and 1 July 2020

DEPUTY GOVERNOR

Date: 8 SEP 2020

Tabled paper: Message, dated 8 September 2020, from Her Excellency the Deputy Governor recommending the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2020 [[1556](#)].

Introduction

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Infrastructure and Planning) (11.48 am): I present a bill for an act authorising the Treasurer to pay amounts from the consolidated fund for the Legislative Assembly and parliamentary service for the financial years starting 1 July 2019 and 1 July 2020. 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: Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2020 [[1557](#)].

Tabled paper: Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2020, explanatory notes [[1558](#)].

Tabled paper: Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2020, statement of compatibility with human rights [[1559](#)].

I table the Consolidated Fund Financial Report for 2019-20 which outlines, by department, total appropriation from the Consolidated Fund for the financial year.

Tabled paper: Consolidated Fund Financial Report 2019-20 [[1560](#)].

I also table the *COVID-19 Fiscal and Economic Review*, which I released publicly yesterday.

Tabled paper: Queensland government, Unite & Recover report titled 'COVID-19 Fiscal and Economic Review' [[1561](#)].

I look forward to the opportunity to talk more about this important economic and fiscal strategy with members of this House and the Economics and Governance Committee.

I am pleased to introduce the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2020. The objective of the bill is to seek supplementary appropriation for 2019-20 for unforeseen expenditure comprising \$519,000 for the Legislative Assembly and Parliamentary Service. Due to the current circumstances we face, in which all jurisdictions agreed to defer their budgets for 2020-21, it also appropriates the amount of \$50.5 million additional interim supply for 2020-21 for the Legislative Assembly and Parliamentary Service. I reiterate the fact that all jurisdictions have agreed to defer their budget this year. The Commonwealth government will deliver a budget on 6 October and the states will follow after the federal government delivers its budget.

Unforeseen expenditure represents the portion of expenditure from the Consolidated Fund by individual departments that exceeds the amount approved for in previous appropriation acts. Pursuant to section 35 of the Financial Accountability Act 2009, unforeseen expenditure on my recommendation as Treasurer is to be approved by Governor in Council within four weeks of the end of the financial year. Unforeseen expenditure must also be formally approved by parliament via appropriation bills.

On 1 July 2020, the Governor in Council authorised unforeseen expenditure incurred during the 2019-20 financial year of \$1.115 billion. Parliamentary approval for the unforeseen expenditure is now being sought. Total unforeseen expenditure includes \$519,000 for the Legislative Assembly. As a result of the COVID-19 crisis, the Queensland state budget has been deferred, consistent with the approach taken in all jurisdictions.

Given the fixed date of the October 2020 election and additional expenditure measures associated with COVID-19, it is expected that existing interim supply amounts will be inadequate to carry the Legislative Assembly and Parliamentary Service through to the assent of the 2020-21 annual appropriation bills. To mitigate this risk, the bill has been developed to increase interim supply amounts for 2020-21.

The Appropriation (Parliament) Act 2019 provided interim supply for 2020-21 equal to half the original 2019-20 appropriated amount of \$50 million. The bill now increases the interim supply amount for 2020-21 to the full amounts appropriated for the 2019-20 financial year, being \$100.5 million for the Legislative Assembly and Parliamentary Service to ensure interim supply amounts will be adequate to carry the Legislative Assembly and Parliamentary Service through to the assent of the 2020-21 annual appropriation bill.

First Reading

Hon. CR DICK (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Infrastructure and Planning) (11.52 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 Stewart): Order! In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Economics and Governance Committee.

Declared Urgent; Allocation of Time Limit Order

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Infrastructure and Planning) (11.53 am), by leave, without notice: I move—

1. That, under the provisions of standing order 137, the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill be declared an urgent bill and not stand referred to a committee, with all remaining stages to be completed by this week's sitting; and
2. If all stages have not been completed by 5.55 pm on Thursday, 10 September 2020, Mr Speaker shall put all remaining questions necessary to pass the bill including clauses and schedules en bloc and any amendments to be moved by the minister in charge of the bill without further amendment or debate.

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (11.54 am): We are not going to be opposing the urgency of the appropriation bills because one needs a good opportunity to look at what is in the appropriation bills. Ordinarily what happens with appropriation bills is that they are introduced as bills into the parliament and they then go through an estimates process through a proper committee undertaking. Then the committees report and we debate the reports. Then the parliament votes on the appropriation bills.

What we have here is appropriation bills being introduced and declared urgent. They will be voted on on Thursday and then the Treasurer, in all his good grace, will appear before a committee to do what, because the parliament will have already passed the appropriation bills! The whole estimates process is to inquire into the appropriateness of the appropriation bills—what is in them and the detail.

Mr Bailey: Of a budget that's passed. The budget is passed at estimates.

Mr BLEIJIE: I would not be interjecting about budgets, mate, because you do not have a budget. The government has no budget, no plan. What we have here is appropriation bills being introduced—

Mr Bailey: You are a nong—a total nong!

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection from the minister. He still does not get the process of the budget. It is hubris and arrogance when one thinks they can just introduce appropriation bills, declare them urgent and then let a committee look at them after the parliament has already looked at them and, within 48 hours in fact, passed them as law in the state of Queensland.

We have no budget. This is the history as far as this urgency motion and appropriation bills are concerned. Ordinarily a budget is handed down in June. The government this year said, 'We're going to hand down a budget in April.' Guess what? That was before the federal government budget. It has been okay to pass every Queensland budget before a Commonwealth budget. Under the guise of coronavirus, now everything has to be done after the federal budget.

Now we have a situation where the Treasurer said on radio in Brisbane this morning that he did not even know that his own government was going to hand down a budget in April. The member for South Brisbane had announced that the government would hand down a budget in April. This morning he denied that it ever existed. He sat around a cabinet table. With the urgency motion now—the appropriation bills have just been introduced by the Treasurer after his statement yesterday—the parliament will debate them on Thursday and then we will have a committee hearing—and I thank the Leader of the House, who has given me a copy of the motion we are going to debate next setting up the committee. It is after the fact. It is after the event of parliament already having passed the appropriation bills. That flies in the face of all accountability and transparency with respect to a budget process and the transparency around the appropriation bills: the committees examine the bills through the estimates process and then the parliament votes on the appropriation bills.

As I said, we are not going to vote against the urgency motion right now because I am not sure what is in the appropriation bills, because ordinarily they would now go off to the committees and we would examine the appropriation bills. We are not sure whether this is just the government's pre-election spendathon or whether it is actually the state having to pay public servants between now and Christmas. We do not know. The appropriation bills have just been introduced. We do not know whether this is just an election splash of cash with the \$101 billion debt and \$4 billion of additional expenditure. We do not know that. It could be in there but it might not be. What we do not know yet is whether the appropriation bills are required to ensure that the state continues to provide teachers, nurses, doctors and our Public Service. We do not know that. We have just got the bill, so we will have a look at it.


As I said, I am not going to oppose the urgency motion because I would be opposing something when I do not know what is actually in the bill. If it is the case though that it is just a spendathon and it is not required to keep the state running as a normal appropriation bill would, then it would be a purely political exercise and a clear case that the government is using the coronavirus as political exploitation for re-election. That is it. We will find that out not this week but on Friday with a semi-estimates committee set-up. I might add that it should be a full day of estimates on Friday, because in the motion that I have seen which is about to be moved by the Leader of the House it is for three hours. It is a disgrace.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.


SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

School Group Tours

 **Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Stewart): Members, joining us in the gallery today are school leaders from Everton Park State School—my old primary school—and Mount Maria College, which are in the electorate of Everton. Welcome.

APPROPRIATION BILL

Message from Deputy Governor

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Infrastructure and Planning) (11.59 am): I present a message from Her Excellency the Deputy Governor.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stewart): The message from Her Excellency the Deputy Governor recommends the Appropriation Bill. The contents of the message will be incorporated in the *Record of Proceedings*. I table the message for the information of members.

MESSAGE

APPROPRIATION BILL 2020

Constitution of Queensland 2001, section 68

I, CATHERINE ENA HOLMES AC, Deputy Governor, recommend to the Legislative Assembly a Bill intitled—


A Bill for an Act authorising the Treasurer to pay amounts from the consolidated fund for departments for the financial years starting 1 July 2019 and 1 July 2020

DEPUTY GOVERNOR

Date: 8 SEP 2020

Tabled paper: Message, dated 8 September 2020, from Her Excellency the Deputy Governor, recommending the Appropriation Bill 2020 [[1562](#)].

Introduction

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Infrastructure and Planning) (11.59 am): I present a bill for an act authorising the Treasurer to pay amounts from the Consolidated Fund for departments for the financial years starting 1 July 2019 and 1 July 2020. I table the bill, the explanatory notes and the statement of compatibility with human rights. I nominate the Economics and Governance Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Appropriation Bill 2020 [[1563](#)].

Tabled paper: Appropriation Bill 2020, explanatory notes [[1564](#)].

Tabled paper: Appropriation Bill 2020, statement of compatibility with human rights [[1565](#)].

I am pleased to introduce the Appropriation Bill 2020. The objective of the bill is to seek supplementary appropriation for 2019-20 for unforeseen expenditure of \$1.114 billion incurred by 13 departments. The bill also appropriates the amount of \$28.635 billion additional interim supply for 2020-21 for departments. As mentioned when delivering my first reading speech on the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2020, unforeseen expenditure represents the portion of expenditure from the Consolidated Fund by individual departments that exceeds the amount approved for in previous

appropriation acts. Parliamentary approval for the unforeseen expenditure authorised by the Governor in Council on 16 July 2020 is now being sought. The total unforeseen expenditure includes \$1.114 billion incurred by 13 departments.

Additionally, as it is expected that existing interim supply amounts will be inadequate to carry departments through to the assent of the 2020-21 annual appropriation bills, this bill has been developed to increase interim supply amounts for 2020-21. The Appropriation Act 2019 provided interim supply for 2020-21 equal to half the original 2019-20 appropriated amounts at \$27.349 billion. The Appropriation (COVID-19) Act 2020 provided an additional \$1.615 billion for departments in 2020-21. This bill now increases the interim supply amount for 2020-21 to the full amount appropriated for the 2019-20 financial year, being \$57.599 billion for departments. This is to ensure interim supply amounts will be adequate to carry departments through to the assent of the 2020-21 annual appropriation bills.

I want to address the misrepresentations made by the member for Kawana in the debate on the Appropriation Bill for the parliament. These are necessary measures that any government, whether it be a Labor government or an LNP government, would move through the parliament at a time of crisis. As the member for Kawana and members of the LNP have clearly heard me articulate, these two bills—the parliamentary appropriation and the Appropriation Bill for the general supply of funds to the government—have been moved in the House to ensure we can deal with additional expenditure that has been incurred in the previous financial year and to provide for additional expenditure for this financial year. We are doing no more than ensuring the parliament and the government, regardless of who forms government after 30 October, have sufficient supply for this financial year. As the member for Kawana and other members of the opposition have heard, the amount that we are appropriating for this financial year is no more than the amount appropriated for the 2019-20 financial year.

I must say, it comes as a surprise to hear the criticism of the member for Kawana, a member who served in government for three years, as he does not understand the appropriation process for the state. When the budget is passed, appropriation is made for 18 months. That is the truth; it is made for the financial year plus an additional six months. This parliament has approved supply to the Legislative Assembly, Parliamentary Services and the government until the end of this calendar year. There was an additional appropriation that this parliament—all members of this House—passed in April for urgent and special measures that were required to respond to COVID-19.

I thank the opposition for acting in the state's interest to support the appropriation of that money. It was the appropriate thing to do. One thing we do not hear in this House often enough is people acknowledging the actions of each other on the other side of the House. I play it hard in this place and I do not apologise for that, but when the opposition does something that is in the state's interest like the April Appropriation Bill, like supporting the Queensland Future Fund—a central element of our economic recovery strategy—while supporting the review and reform of petroleum and gas royalties in the state—another central platform of our economic policy the opposition supported—I will acknowledge them.

There is no secret plan here. There is no secret plan other than to ensure the government of Queensland can operate during a pandemic. All we are seeking to do is appropriate additional supply for the parliament and additional supply for the government through to 30 June 2020. The appropriation is the same amount as the 2019-20 financial year. We are not seeking any additional funding; we are not seeking any more support. We are not seeking to implement any new programs. We are seeking to implement what we have already appropriated for 2019-20 to ensure that whatever government is formed—a majority Labor government, a majority LNP government, a minority government or whatever complexion the government forms—after the election and beyond 31 December that the government, Legislative Assembly and Parliamentary Services have appropriate supply. I can assure all members of the opposition and all crossbenchers that that is what we are seeking to do in these bills.

There is no plan. There is no secret plan. There is nothing that we are seeking to do other than act in what we say is a prudent and necessary fashion to ensure funds are allocated according to law and according to the Constitution from the Consolidated Fund to fund the services of government. When I say the services of government, what I mean is funding fever clinics, our public hospitals, and our police and emergency services on the front line of the border working hard to keep Queenslanders healthy. As members of this House we have to find that money. Regardless of what happens in the election and regardless of how long it may take to form a government—I hope very much the result is clear on the evening of 31 October, and I personally hope there is a majority Labor government—I hope that regardless of what happens we have a clear result on 31 October and government can continue to operate.

I say to the member for Kawana and other members opposite that of course we will bring into this House a budget. I want to address the deliberate, consistent and intentional misrepresentation of the budget position in Queensland by members of the LNP—led notably by the member for Everton, the member for Kawana and the member for Nanango—that there is no budget this year and that somehow we are different to any other part of Australia. We are not. If the member for Everton does not have Dominic Perrottet's telephone number, the Liberal Treasurer of New South Wales, or Josh Frydenberg's number, the federal Treasurer of the Commonwealth, I am happy to provide that to the member for Everton.

Mr Mander: They don't have an election.

Mr DICK: I take that interjection. If they do not have an election, member for Everton, why not do a budget now? Why not do it according to their budget cycle? They could have easily delivered a budget according to their budget cycle, but they are waiting for the Morrison government's budget because that is what every government agreed to do. This was an idea of the Liberal Prime Minister of the Commonwealth—the man whom the member for Everton and the member for Kawana laud across Queensland. In fact, I note that in literature being circulated across the state in anticipation of the state election the face of the Leader of the Opposition does not appear. They are not willing to promote the Leader of the Opposition in relation to fiscal positioning and budgets. The Leader of the Opposition has been airbrushed from their material and they promote the face of the Prime Minister.

Ms Farmer: She who shall not be named.

Mr DICK: I take the interjection from the member for Bulimba—not only she who shall not be named but she who shall not be seen.

I urge the member for Everton to stop this deliberate misrepresentation—a forlorn hope, I know. I urge the Deputy Leader of the Opposition to stop blatantly misrepresenting the situation of all states and territories. It does not matter that there is a state election on 31 October. If the position of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition was true and correct, then the governments of South Australia, which is a Liberal government, and New South Wales, which is a Liberal government, and Tasmania, which is a Liberal government, would have all delivered a budget according to their normal budget cycle, which is not October and November. As I have said, I play it hard in this place, but when I hear deliberate and consistent misrepresentations they must be called out and they must be addressed. I call on all members of this House to support this legislation.

Can I just put on the parliamentary record the nature of parliamentary appropriations, otherwise called budgets, for this financial year. Not one Australian state or territory is delivering a budget before the federal government's budget on 6 October. The Commonwealth will deliver their budget on 6 October. Western Australia will deliver their budget on 8 October. South Australia and the Northern Territory will deliver their budgets on 10 November. I note that the Northern Territory government issued a fiscal and economic review before their budget. To the best of my recollection—and I am happy to be corrected by members opposite—I did not hear the CLP in the Northern Territory criticising the Labor government in the Northern Territory for doing that. The Liberal Tasmanian government will deliver a budget on 12 November. To the best of my recollection, that is not the budget cycle in Tasmania. They are not facing an election. The Liberal government in New South Wales is delivering a budget on 17 November. To the best of my recollection, that is not the budget cycle in New South Wales. If we have the privilege of being returned to government, we will deliver a budget commencing in the week of 30 November.

Victoria have not even announced a budget date. Do you know what? That is not surprising. They are in the grips of the worst pandemic this nation has faced since 1917 and they are fighting every day to save lives. That is their priority, and I will not criticise Tim Pallas and the Victorian government for not announcing a budget date when every day they are trying to save lives in nursing homes, save lives in public hospitals and save lives in the community. It is about time the Liberal National Party in this state stood up and backed in the state interest. They should stand up and back in Queensland at a time of crisis.

Later in the week, to address again the misrepresentation of the member for Kawana, the Premier and I will stand before a parliamentary committee to deliver on the promise we made in May when we announced there would be a fiscal and economic review in September. What did we say in May? We said that there would be a fiscal statement setting out the financial position of the state prior to the election. That is what we promised and that is what we delivered. We said there would be appropriations. That is what we are delivering. We said there would be parliamentary accountability

because the Premier and I would appear before a parliamentary committee to examine the fiscal and economic review that I released yesterday. We are doing all of those three things. If you wanted to, Mr Deputy Speaker, you could see that they are the elements of a budget—an appropriation, financial statements and public accountability. Again, to the best of my knowledge, I am not aware that the Chief Minister and the Treasurer in the Northern Territory agreed to appear before a committee, but I have. I have agreed to do that and I have agreed to take questions on that. I am sure the committee will examine all views on the economy, including those of the LNP.

I did not want to speak at length on this. I did not want to waste the parliament's time, but I am not going to be silent when the financial position of the state, the budgetary position of the state in a time of crisis, is deliberately misrepresented by those members opposite. I expect we will hear the talking points going forward. I made a mistake on radio. I made a mistake, and I am big enough to acknowledge when I make a mistake. I have spent my whole life acknowledging when I make errors and apologising to people. I apologise to anyone who took offence or otherwise thought I was misleading them.

Being the Treasurer in a pandemic and the greatest crisis since the Great Depression is an incredible responsibility and I take that seriously. I take that deeply seriously. My late father was born in 1921. He was eight years old when the great crash happened and that impacted him and his family, and the echoes of that resonated in his family for his entire life and in my late mother's life who was born in 1930. It takes a lot of effort to get up every day and keep fighting for Queensland—as every minister in this government is doing, including the Premier, who has been subject to the most intense criticism.

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. This is a second reading of a bill introduction.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stewart): It is an introduction.

Mr BLEIJIE: The Treasurer is debating the bill which we will be debating on Friday. This is purely the first reading where the government introduces the bill. That is it. He is debating points that I suspect will be debated during the debate on the second reading on Thursday.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Kawana, I am sure come Thursday you will have your opportunity to debate those points as well.

Mr DICK: I am debating nothing that is in the bill. What I am doing is acknowledging when I make a mistake. When I mislead the parliament unintentionally I apologise, and I have done that consistently. When I make those sorts of mistakes I apologise, and I would urge all members of parliament to comply with the standing and sessional orders. I am not above apologising for mistakes, and I apologise to 4BC, I apologise to the listeners of 4BC and I apologise to those members opposite if they think I was misleading them. I was not. I made an error in an economic crisis that is meaningless—that is entirely meaningless.

We will stick to the business of government. We will get these appropriation bills through with the support of the House—and I call on all members to support them—and then we will appear before an estimates committee, and the members for Everton, Kawana and Nanango can ask me whatever questions they like on Friday.

First Reading

Hon. CR DICK (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Infrastructure and Planning) (12.17 pm): I am very pleased to 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 Stewart): In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Economics and Governance Committee.

Declared Urgent; Allocation of Time Limit Order

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Infrastructure and Planning) (12.17 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—

1. That, under the provisions of standing order 137, the Appropriation Bill be declared an urgent bill and not stand referred to a committee, with all remaining stages to be completed by this week's sitting; and
2. If all stages have not been completed by 5.55 pm on Thursday, 10 September 2020, Mr Speaker shall put all remaining questions necessary to pass the bill including clauses and schedules en bloc and any amendments to be moved by the minister in charge of the bill without further amendment or debate.


Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL

APPROPRIATION BILL

Cognate Debate

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (12.18 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—

That, in accordance with standing order 172, the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill and the Appropriation Bill be treated as cognate bills for their remaining stages, with:


- (a) separate questions being put in regard to the second readings;
- (b) the consideration of the bills in detail together; and
- (c) separate questions being put for the third readings and long titles.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.


Motion agreed to.

MOTION

Referral to Economics and Governance Committee

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (12.19 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—

1. That the Economics and Governance Committee inquire into and report to the Legislative Assembly on the Queensland government's COVID-19 Fiscal and Economic Review (C-19 FER) provided by the Treasurer, Minister for Infrastructure and Planning on Monday, 7 September 2020.
2. In doing so, the committee should consider within the context provided in the C-19 FER document:
 - (a) the outlook for the Queensland economy and how this compares with other Australian jurisdictions;
 - (b) the revisions to the state's revenue sources including grants received from the Australian government;
 - (c) the Queensland government's response to COVID-19 in relation to the cost of the response, recognising there are separate inquiries underway by Queensland parliamentary committees in relation to the economic and health responses; and
3. That the Economics and Governance Committee hold a public hearing on matters outlined in 1. and 2.:
 - (a) for no longer than three hours on Friday, 11 September 2020 at 8 am in the Undumbi Room; and
 - (b) with the Premier and Minister for Trade appearing for one hour and the Treasurer, Minister for Infrastructure and Planning for two hours with no other witnesses to ensure a COVID-safe hearing.

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (12.20 pm): What a sham of a motion! This is the big estimates that the Treasurer just spoke about, the big day on which he is going to come in and answer the questions, and he is coming in for two hours. The Premier is going to grace us with her presence for one hour and, once we take out the Dorothy Dixers, it will be half an hour. That is what this is, a three-hour estimates process, and the Treasurer wanted to lecture me before about budget processes. The Treasurer wants to brief me and lecture me on budget processes. That comes from a guy who has never delivered a budget as Treasurer.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stewart): Order! We need to direct all our comments through the chair.

Mr BLEIJIE: That is the Treasurer who refuses to deliver a budget. He said just before, 'If the Labor government is re-elected we will deliver a budget a month after the election.' If it is okay to deliver a budget a month after the election, why is it not okay to deliver a budget a month before the election? If the figures are there, if it is all there, why not disclose it? I will tell honourable members why. They do not want the Queensland people to know the truth. They do not want the Queensland people to know the truth of how bad it is. That is why they are doing everything they can. They say, 'The Prime Minister doesn't want us to deliver a budget. The federal government doesn't want us to deliver a budget. Talk to New South Wales. Talk to Victoria.' No!

Do honourable members know who we will talk to? We will talk to Queenslanders, to our electorates; we will talk to the people. We will talk to the businesses that are still struggling to open their doors. This mob over here in the Labor Party think that because the borders are closed business is booming in Queensland. It is not booming in Queensland. Cafes are still restricted. Weddings are still restricted. People gathering in public in Brisbane, Ipswich and the Gold Coast are still restricted. This mob over here would have us believe that it is all good; it is all better. It is not. Businesses are still closing their doors and 72,000 more Queenslanders will lose their jobs because of Labor's incompetence, and this Treasurer has the hide to lecture me on budget processes. He has a hide because he is not delivering a budget.

He says, 'This is a budget that usually gets delivered, but the Prime Minister doesn't want us to deliver a budget,' but then he says he is ready to deliver a budget. Having come straight out of the next election he will be ready to deliver a budget. He may not be ready to deliver a budget. Because of the way Labor have gone through treasurers in the last five years, he may not be delivering any budget. Hopefully the Queensland public will look at the economic credentials of both a Labor economic recovery out of COVID and an LNP economic recovery out of COVID. They will see they will be far better off under an LNP government in terms of an economic recovery from coronavirus than under the Labor government.

What the Labor Party will not allow people to talk about is the last five years. They want everything in this election to be about the last five months, not the last five years—not the highest unemployment rate in the country, not the biggest debt, not the lowest business confidence in the nation, not the bankruptcy capital of Australia. No! Labor would have us forget all of that. This Treasurer does not want to do any of that. We only have to look at him every time he appears on TV or at a press conference as 'Queensland's new Treasurer'. He should stop reminding us that he is the Treasurer. We know.

For me, going from one bad Labor treasurer to another does not make anything different; it is still the same bad Labor policies—the same bad Labor policies that got us into this mess and the same bad Labor policies that will not get us out of this mess or crisis. Once coronavirus disappears, a vaccine is available, borders open up and people return to normal, the debt will still be there, unemployment will be high, business confidence will be low and the bankruptcies will still continue because businesses can least afford it under a Labor government at the best of times, let alone at the worst of times.

This motion is a farce. We were handed the motion just before the debate after hearing the Treasurer saying repeatedly for two months that he is going to front up to the committee and he is happy to be peppered with questions. If he is, if he is happy to be grilled—

An honourable member interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection. If he is happy to be grilled, he should give us more than two hours. He should sit there all day like in a normal estimates process. He lectures us on estimates. Do honourable members recall when years ago this parliament changed the estimates process and truncated it to a day? Do they recall the screaming that came from that side of the House about how antidemocratic it was?

An honourable member interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: Two days, I take the interjection. They said then that estimates should be a full two-week process and ministers should be called to account. Yet this estimates—he even used his own words—will run for three hours and will not be for the ministers, just for the Premier and the Treasurer. That is not an estimates process. That is a tick and flick to an ad hoc interview the Premier gave months ago when she said, 'We will hold an open inquiry in relation to not having a budget.' She came under pressure—rightfully so—for not having a budget, not having a plan. Queenslanders are crying out for

it. That is why I have to say there is a mood for change across the electorate. There is a mood for change that I am feeling across Queensland. I can say the way that this mob are acting this morning is exactly how they were acting during the last sitting week before Anna Bligh and the Labor Party lost the election in 2012. This is how they were acting, all smug, with hubris and arrogance. People will judge their credentials on the 31st, and I hope they judge them harshly.

We have the Premier appearing for one hour and the Treasurer appearing for two hours. They say we should be following the federal government. Why was it okay to have a budget in April without the federal government budget being brought down beforehand? Why was it okay then? Surely the Queensland government have enough people in Treasury to forecast expenditure and all the sort of things that Treasury departments do. One would think that is why they have an Under Treasurer. I remember when Karl Stefanovic interviewed the Treasurer: he did not know the debt level. Now he says he knows the debt level because the LNP keep telling him what it is. Why is it that the LNP have to keep telling the government what to do? Why is it that the LNP has to keep telling the government what to do so they can copy our policies? It is because they have no plan, they have no budget and Queensland has no future under a Labor government.

All that is guaranteed by this Treasurer is higher taxes because he did not rule it out yesterday. When we have a Labor Treasurer who is not able to utter the words, 'I rule out tax increases,' it signals guaranteed tax increases under Labor. Under this Labor government there will be guaranteed tax increases because he could not bring himself to utter the words, 'I rule it out.' Say it now.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, members.

Mr BLEIJIE: He can say it now. Rule it out. Rule out tax increases. Rule out increased taxes or any new taxes. He cannot because it is not the Labor way.


Mrs D'ATH: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The Manager of Opposition Business has now strayed significantly from what is a motion in relation to the procedures for Friday's committee. He has strayed significantly from that debate. I ask that he be brought back to the motion.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Leader of House. Member for Kawana, I will give you a little latitude, but we need you to come back to the motion before the House.

Mr BLEIJIE: I will, and she will love this one. I move the following amendment—

That all words after 'on matters outlined in 1. and 2.:' be deleted and the following words inserted:

- (a) for no longer than eight (8) hours on Friday, 11 September 2020 from 8 am in the Undumbi Room;
- (b) with the Premier and Minister for Trade and the Treasurer, Minister for Infrastructure and Planning to be available for examination as required;
- (c) the Director-General of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet and the Under Treasurer, together with the chief executives of the relevant agencies listed in schedule 7 to the standing orders, be available for direct questioning; and
- (d) the members for Nanango, Everton and Kawana be entitled to appear at the hearing and ask questions to witnesses as of right.

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (12.32 pm): I rise to speak to the motion. This week we had a Clayton's budget—the budget you have when you're not having a budget—with the Treasurer simply delivering an economic statement, a statement of facts. At one stage the Treasurer proudly mentioned that we had a two-year forecast, not a four-year forecast. This is not a two-year forecast; this is a 10-month forecast. First we had a budget that is not a budget. Now we have Clayton's estimates hearings—the estimates hearings you have when you're not having estimates hearings. This is typical of this government. It is all about smoke and mirrors and about trying to hide from transparency.

Earlier the Treasurer quite pathetically apologised for the mistakes he has made today. In fact, if I am right, I am pretty sure he said, 'I have spent my career apologising for my mistakes,' or something similar. He has made many mistakes, and they are not basic mistakes. These are mistakes that are fundamental to the financial operations of our economy. That is why the Manager of Opposition Business has moved this amendment. We want full and open scrutiny of this week's economic statement, because there simply is not enough information here. Instead of a 1,000-page budget, we have a 41-page glossy brochure. I thought the Treasurer said that no longer would they have the glossy brochures and all that rhetoric. We want to be able to, as the Treasurer himself said, grill them—and grill them we will with whatever time we are given, but we deserve longer.

Dr Rowan interjected.


Mr MANDER: I take that interjection from the member for Moggill. The people of Queensland deserve to have this fully scrutinised. There are so many things that need to be questioned, some of which I have mentioned already. There are projections of only nine months rather than four years or even two years. It was not a two-year forecast. It told us what happened in the last financial year and what is happening in this financial year. That is not a two-year forecast; that is a nine-month forecast. The economic strategy was simply a rehash, simply announcing things that have already been announced. This was a Clayton's budget and this will be a Clayton's estimates hearing. This is all because we have not had a budget.

I restate the point made by the Manager of the Opposition Business. Being able to deliver a budget in November, as the Treasurer outlined, means that a budget can be delivered now. Do people think that miraculously over four weeks, from 1 November to 30 November, the Treasury department will put together a budget? It takes months and months. They are doing it now. They have done it now. The only thing that the Treasurer claims is missing is the information he received two months ago about GST allocations going forward.

I raise that point because the Treasurer's statement yesterday was not significantly different from his statement two months ago, because the information has not changed that much. The same applies to the GST estimates by the federal government. There is no reason for this government to not have a full budget and a full estimates scrutiny process. It is afraid of that occurring. We look forward to Friday, but we want it to be fair dinkum. We want access to public servants and heads of GOCs, as we normally would have, to ask proper questions about the future of this state.

I agree with the Treasurer that we are in the most dire economic situation in the history of this state. This government has put us in an even more vulnerable position with record debt and the highest unemployment rate. At the moment, our unemployment rate is higher than Victoria's and it is in lockdown! The scary forecast over this financial year is not that we will have more people in work but that 72,000 more people will be out of work, because the government does not have a fair dinkum economic plan. As the CCIQ said, it is simply rehashing what it has already announced.

The Queensland Productivity Commission said—no wonder they are reducing its independence—that it cannot be the 'same old, same old' again and acknowledged that the Queensland economy was wobbly well before COVID—and that theme continues. That is why we are passionate about this issue. We believe that the public deserves not three hours but a full day of questioning of the Premier, the Treasurer, heads of departments, heads of GOCs and all of those people who are responsible for the financial future of this state. It is only fit and proper that that happens.

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Infrastructure and Planning) (12.38 pm): Imagine being lectured to on accountability by the LNP!

Ms Farmer interjected.

Mr DICK: I take the interjection: what a joke. When they entered government—I am sorry that the member for Everton cannot stay; I have a lot to say about the member for Everton—

Mr STEVENS: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. There are standing orders that provide that absences or movements of members of parliament are not to be mentioned in the parliament.

Mr DICK: On the point of order, I made no comment about the member for Everton not being in the chamber. I was regretful that he was leaving because I had much to say about him.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stewart): Order! There is no point of order, member for Mermaid Beach. The member for Everton was still in the chamber and was referred to in that manner.

Mr DICK: Being lectured to on accountability by the LNP is like being lectured to by Donald Trump on responsibility on the use of Twitter accounts. This is the party that is carrying on endlessly about accountability and when it had its one chance in government—I remember very clearly seven Labor members in this House; seven Labor members of the opposition—what did it do in the budget debate?

Mrs D'Ath: Shut it down.

Mr DICK: It shut it down; I take the interjection from the member for Redcliffe because she, of all members of this House, knows how—

An honourable member interjected.

Mr DICK: They put up with the most terrible abuse from the LNP in government—the most terrible abuse and a shocking abuse of power. When those opposite had their chance to govern, they collapsed the entire estimates process into one day. In the budget debate they would not let seven—

Mr Stevens: Two days!

Mr DICK: I take the interjection from the member for Mermaid Beach, who was the leader of the House at that time. The member for Mermaid Beach was the then leader of the House and engineered—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr DICK: I take the interjection. The member for Mermaid Beach was the then leader of the House and he engineered and he organised and he designed the silencing of the opposition. That is what he did. That was the member for Mermaid Beach's legacy as the then leader of the House. He was very happy, along with the members of the government, to collapse estimates hearings into one day. When he was the leader of the House when there were seven members of the opposition, the member for Mermaid Beach would not even let seven people speak on the budget. That is his legacy. That is the legacy of the member for Mermaid Beach and the member for Southport, who was here. That was their legacy. We have a fiscal and economic review, and it is not a budget and I have outlined at length why it is not a budget—again, deliberately misrepresented by the member for Everton in his address.

Mr Molhoek interjected.


Mr DICK: The member for Southport was a member of the Newman government—I take his interjection—and he sat meekly and did nothing when the executive abused a seven-member opposition. I will tell you this, Mr Deputy Speaker: we are not going to be lectured to on parliamentary democracy and accountability by the LNP when it entirely abused it when it was in power. I apologise to the House: estimates was not one day; it was two. It was two days. That made all the difference—trying to shut down opposition lines of questioning. It is not a budget—and for the reasons I have explained, it is not a budget—but we have set time aside for members of the opposition to ask the Premier and me questions through the Economics and Governance Committee. To the best of my knowledge, no other government in Australia has done that. No other government has done that at a state level. I may be corrected, but on a fiscal and economic statement we are one of the few, if any, to put themselves before an estimates committee to be addressed.

There are a number of things that I regrettably have to address because they are more misrepresentations by the member for Kawana. The LNP goes on about the bankruptcy capital of Australia. Let us make this clear: under the LNP, an average of 2,000 more businesses went bankrupt every year. That is the legacy of the member for Mermaid Beach and the member for Southport and all of those people in the Newman government. If those opposite want to talk about private sector investment, there was a 15 per cent fall in private sector investment in Queensland in their final year of government. On the latest data to the June quarter there is a 7.6 per cent fall. The difference is there is a pandemic—the worst pandemic in a century—and even in the worst pandemic in a century the fall in private sector investment is half of the private sector fall under the LNP. Public investment fell 29 per cent in the final year of the LNP—29 per cent. I am happy to put our economic record up against the LNP every day of the week.

Let us look at full-time jobs. Those opposite talk about employment endlessly. Some 120,000 full-time jobs had been created in Queensland by the Labor government before COVID. Under the LNP, 8,400 full-time jobs were lost from Queensland. Let us turn to the unemployment rate. There was a trend rate of 5.7 per cent before COVID. The peak under the LNP was 6.7 per cent without a pandemic and 7.2 per cent seasonally adjusted. Those opposite have an appalling record in economic management, and then of course there was the cruel way that they dealt with people in employment—threw them out, threw them under, threw them away. That was what their legacy was—sacking nurses and midwives, shutting down the public health system in Queensland, and I was very proud to restore that.

What we heard from the Deputy Leader of the Opposition demonstrated that he is entirely unfit to be the Treasurer of Queensland—entirely unfit—when he talks about us being the only state that does not have a budget. He just reiterates the same mistruths over and over again, but I tell members this: the people of Queensland will not believe it. The people of Queensland know when someone is misleading them. They know when they are being treated like mugs, and that is exactly what the LNP is doing. The LNP cut estimates hearings, it cut opposition resources, it threw them off the parliamentary precinct and it cut public scrutiny and transparency at every opportunity. That is its record. I speak in favour of the motion and against the amendment. This is an appropriate mechanism to put in place for a fiscal and economic review, and I will be ready for the LNP on Friday.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stewart): Members, just to alert you, the clock in the chamber does not appear to be of correct time. One is okay; one is not.

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (12.46 pm): I rise to support the amendment moved by the Manager of Opposition Business. I have been in this parliament for 14 years last weekend, and I have never seen such a display of hubris and arrogance in my whole time in the parliament as I have with this motion today. I will run through the premiers that I have been here with—former premier Beattie, former premier Bligh, former premier Newman and current Premier Palaszczuk. I have never, ever seen such arrogance and such hubris to the Queensland people as this important financial expose of Queensland's wellbeing rushed through with a couple of days to go and to be heard for three hours on Friday.

The Treasurer himself has previously said that he would make everything available and make it open and transparent. Those opposite cannot spell 'transparent'. They are hiding everything they can in this MYFER to ensure that Queenslanders do not understand the gravity of the dire economic situation that this government put us in before coronavirus. Coronavirus has added to the problem, yet this government has no way out of the economic financial dire straits that Queensland will be in—except for its hidden agenda of taxes which the Treasurer will not rule out for the future. It will be called the COVID tax. One does not have to be Nostradamus to work out that a taxing government like this particular one, with nine new taxes in this 56th Parliament, will be making Queenslanders pay for its mistakes prior to coronavirus. This election is not just about coronavirus; this election is about this particular document that it wants to deal with and hide away in three hours on Friday. The motion moved by the Leader of the House says that we can only have three hours, including 1½ hours of Dorothy Dixers—or Lane Calcutts, as they are now known—so there will be 1½ hours of Lanes followed by 1½ hours of questions from existing EGC members.

I will add, and I am not breaking any confidences of the committee, that it was announced through the media last week that this was a process that the Premier would be following. The EGC had a meeting on Monday at which I asked the committee secretariat had they heard anything about a proposed meeting, and they had not. This has been rammed through on a Tuesday so that it can be hidden as much as possible by this government. They will provide the minimum of scrutiny to the Queensland people. That is what the estimates process is all about.

It is one of the guiding principles of the Westminster system that the opposition gets to grill the government to make sure the government is doing a good job. That is what the opposition gets paid to do. Guess what? That has been chopped to 1½ hours on Friday with, unless we can get this amendment to the motion up, no opportunity for the opposition leader or the shadow Treasurer to have questioning and input. It will be left to the existing three members of the EGC. The shadow Treasurer and opposition leader would have a far greater grasp of all matters Queensland rather than the three members of the EGC. That in itself is an embarrassment because in opposition Labor Party leaders and shadow Treasurers have always had the opportunity to question the budget through the estimates process.

The Treasurer himself said they would make it open and accountable. The EGC does not have time to meet between now and Friday, so this amendment is the only way to allow the opposition leader and shadow Treasurer to ask questions of this government. Does that tell you that they have plenty to hide, Mr Deputy Speaker? I am afraid it tells not only you that that is the case; it tells the whole of Queensland that this government is all about hiding the financial position that this Palaszczuk Labor government has got this state into. It is a very grim and dire situation. This amendment gives an opportunity for Queenslanders to be heard. Opposition members are paid to represent Queenslanders who want to know about the current budget, the current CFER that is being put out by the Treasurer, and where they are going to go.


As the Manager of Opposition Business said, it is beyond belief that the Treasurer can stand up here with a straight face and say, 'We will not be able to deliver a budget until a month after the election. We do not want to do it a month before the election but we can do it a month after, on 1 December.' That smells to me like a government flying like a crow, squawking like a crow and basically should be shot like a crow that is hiding from Queenslanders all the financial evidence of a dim and dire situation.

In my 14 years in this parliament, this is the most embarrassing time I have witnessed. It is a shame and is absolutely a comment on the way that this Palaszczuk government wants to treat Queenslanders. It wants to hide the truth from them and to put spin on it and not allow the opposition leader and the shadow Treasurer to ask pertinent, relevant questions that Queenslanders are searching for answers to. It is okay to put on the fairy show of the AFL grand final, have movie stars coming into

Queensland and those glamorous events that the Premier likes to associate herself with. We have here an opportunity for this government to be open and accountable, and they are shutting it down to an hour and a half. That is a total embarrassment.

If the Leader of the House is genuine about accountability and being open and transparent for the people of Queensland, she should make sure her side supports this amendment, which gives us eight hours of questioning. It will be four hours when taking into account Dorothy Dixers plus ours. If those opposite support the amendment which allows the opposition leader and the shadow Treasurer to be present at our committee, which is always the way for estimates since time immemorial, that will show this government is prepared to have relevant, hard questions asked on the way forward in this particular CFER that will be brought down on Friday. To ram it across to the EGC for an hour and a half on Friday morning is basically not worth doing. It is an embarrassment to the government, it is an embarrassment to the Treasurer and it will be an embarrassment to the Economics and Governance Committee to have just 1½ hours to run through the whole documentation, the whole future of Queensland, for the next four years.

This is not just a budget that is for the next six or nine months. Normally we are looking at the whole four years. This one is reduced to a very minimal period to get us through until the COVID virus is not destroying the Queensland economy. All in this House agree that this is a very sad time for Queenslanders. We do know that there is economic heartache across the board in Queensland. Government, please, open up the doors to accountability and transparency and support the amendment to the motion moved by the manager of opposition business—which will not affect anything—to have a reasonable accountable process on Friday morning.

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (12.56 pm), in reply: I rise to state that the government will not be supporting the amendment. I agree with the member for Mermaid Beach: it is a sad day when the member for Mermaid Beach, a former leader of the House, makes a comment that the government should be shot like a crow. It is extremely unparliamentary. It is inciteful and I will be writing to the Speaker on that. It is offensive.

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

AYES, 42:

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

Grn, 1—Berkman.

KAP, 3—Dametto, Katter, Knuth.

PHON, 1—Andrew.

NOES, 47:

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

Resolved in the negative.

Non-government amendment (Mr Bleijie) negatived.


Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

Sitting suspended from 1.03 pm to 2.00 pm.

MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance; Liberal National Party, Commitments

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (2.00 pm): In 53 days Queenslanders will have the chance to change their state government. It will be a chance to bring to an end the failed Palaszczuk Labor government. Failure has been a hallmark of the Palaszczuk Labor government. No government in history has failed across the board like this one. They have failed on

education, they have failed on health services, they have failed on crime, they have failed on infrastructure, they have failed on integrity, they have failed on the economy and, worst of all, they have failed on people's jobs. Queensland has endured five years of failure from the Palaszczuk government and we cannot afford another four years of the same failure.

In our schools, the NAPLAN results are going backwards. We are below the national average on every measure in every age group. Labor's answer to those failing NAPLAN tests is to dump the tests. Is it any wonder that Queensland is falling behind when that is the attitude of the state government? They do not like the results so they get rid of the tests!

In health, the improvements in patient care that were achieved by the last LNP government have been wiped out by this incompetent Labor mob. The LNP ended the surgery waiting list, but under Labor it has grown by 20,000 patients—that is, an 86 per cent growth in the waitlist under the Palaszczuk Labor government. Hundreds of millions of dollars have been lost on failed IT projects in our hospitals. Instead of fixing our hospital failures, Labor's answer is to just change a name. The decision to rename the Lady Cilento children's hospital was a waste of time, a waste of money and an absolute insult to a Queensland icon.

Youth crime rates have exploded, especially in places such as Townsville, Cairns and the Gold Coast. Regional Queenslanders have had to pay for Labor's soft laws with more assaults, more robberies, more car thefts, more break-ins and, worst of all, more hoons.

Our state's infrastructure has also been neglected. Labor has spent almost one-fifth—that is right, one-fifth—less than the LNP on infrastructure. Our urban and regional roads have been starved of investment. Plans for water projects such as new dams have gathered dust for the past five years because the Labor Party has no plan for dams or water in this state.

The Palaszczuk Labor government's integrity is in tatters as well. New laws had to be introduced after the former deputy premier's secret purchase of a Woolloongabba investment property. A CCC inquiry into the Premier's former chief of staff is ongoing after a company he co-owned received a \$267,000 grant from Labor. The list of ministers and Labor members of parliament who have had integrity scandals is too long to go through in the time that I have today. However, let us remember that Premier Palaszczuk herself was found to be in contempt of parliament for threatening the crossbench.

In the past two months, Labor has failed to show compassion, consistency or common sense on the borders. Yes, we need to keep Queenslanders safe, but we do not do that by refusing treatment to cancer patients and pregnant mums or poor little boarding school kids who just want to see their parents. We do not do it by saying that Queensland hospitals are just for Queenslanders. That is un-Australian. Labor has been busy rolling out the red carpet for celebrities and AFL bosses rather than looking after the sick. Something is badly wrong when pool parties matter more than patients.

The Palaszczuk Labor government's most expensive failure has been its economic failure. Queensland started 2020 with the worst unemployment rate in the nation. We had the highest number of bankruptcies and the lowest rate of economic confidence. That dire performance was caused by five years of Labor incompetence and mismanagement. It should come as absolutely no surprise to any Queenslanders that the coronavirus crisis has hit Queensland's economy so badly when we started off in such dire straits. Today Queensland still has the highest unemployment rate in the nation. Around 234,000 Queenslanders are unemployed. That is almost a quarter of a million people—mums and dads, sons and daughters, aunts and uncles, grandparents—and the Palaszczuk government has no economic plan for those people. It has no economic plan to deal with the worst crisis in Queensland's history. No state budget means no plan for recovery. Members should not take just my word for it. Michael Ravbar of the CFMMEU said—

You've got to have leadership and strategy in regards to jobs and job security.

That's where I think the government is certainly lacking.

You've got to look after the whole Queensland economy—which they ain't doing at the moment.

Stephen Tait of the Chamber of Commerce & Industry Queensland said the Palaszczuk Labor government's economic response was 'neither visionary nor detailed ... more a rehash of announcements'. The CCIQ's Amanda Rohan said—

You'd expect they'd have more meat on the bones about where they want to take the economy.

There's a lack of transparency and leadership.


The CCIQ and the CFMMEU do not agree on much, so when they both say it is a dud government you know it is true. No-one should be surprised by Labor's economic incompetence. The Palaszczuk Labor government cabinet has next to no experience or common sense. In fact, the biggest skills shortage happening in Queensland is actually in the Palaszczuk government cabinet. Labor is clueless in the face of this crisis.

In stark contrast, the LNP does have an economic plan to drag Queensland out of this recession and the contrast could not be clearer. Ours is an ambitious plan to stimulate the economy, create a decade of secure jobs and get the economy out of recession. The LNP's vision is to make Queensland an economic powerhouse again, which is so important if Queensland is again to be the best place to raise a family, get a job and make sure that our kids have a secure future. The LNP's plan for a strong economy and secure jobs is based on investing for growth, unleashing Queensland's industries, supercharging the regions and securing our children's future. Only the LNP has a plan to get Queensland working again.

The LNP will immediately establish the economic recovery agency to kickstart stimulus projects and create jobs. The agency will be our economic recovery department of grunt. In its first 100 days the agency will coordinate action for delivering the New Bradfield Scheme. It will establish the Queensland Dam Company to progress the Nullinga, Urannah, Rookwood and Emu Swamp dams, complete the Burdekin Falls Dam upgrade and fix the Paradise Dam. The agency will audit all the stalled major projects and will fast-track approvals. It will issue tender documents for the \$1 billion South-East Queensland road stimulus package and fast-track approvals for the second M1. The agency will deliver four new ice rehabilitation centres. It will promote Queensland as the low-tax state for investment through our no-new-tax guarantee. The agency will implement Queensland investment partnerships to secure \$1 billion worth of private sector investment. It will reduce water prices by almost 20 per cent for Sunwater irrigators. The agency will establish an industry skills council to ensure vocational training meets skills shortages and it will fast-track air conditioning in every state school classroom to support local tradies' jobs.

An LNP government will deliver a full state budget within the first 100 days so we can fund Queensland's road to recovery. It is only the LNP with a plan to get Queensland working again.

Liberal National Party, Economic Management

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (2.10 pm): This week the government announced even more job-creating stimulus investment—new investment that will create jobs across Queensland as we unite and recover from COVID-19. It is part of our thorough and detailed economic plan—an economic plan that we can only implement because of our strong health response, one of the best in the world. It is detailed and costed and will create jobs while keeping Queenslanders safe. In contrast, the LNP has revealed it has a secret plan to cut jobs to pay for its \$23 billion of promises. The member for Nanango says—

Mr Lister: Why don't you table it?

Dr MILES: I will quote her. Hang on.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Order! Pause the clock. Member for Southern Downs, you are warned.

Dr MILES: The member for Nanango said yesterday that she will pay for her \$23 billion worth of promises by getting rid of waste. Right now there are thousands of frontline health staff wondering if they are the waste that the LNP wants to get rid of. I am sure the people of Queensland would like to know exactly what she considers 'waste' in our healthcare sector. Is it the 2,450 doctors we have hired since we took over? Is it the 7,359 nurses and midwives we have hired? Is it the 1,758 health professionals or the 720 extra ambos that they think are waste? Each and every one of them is a Queenslanders wondering if they are the waste the LNP wants to get rid of, whether they will again be the victims of another cruel LNP sacking spree.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition said that he would get expenses under control. Well, expenses are nurses. Expenses are doctors. Expenses are healthcare services. That is what government expenses are. When he says that he will get them under control, he means that he will sack them. That is what he means.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Direct your comments through the chair, please, Deputy Premier.

Dr MILES: The economics brains trust on the other side of the chamber said that he would stimulate the economy by cutting. I will lend the member for Everton a first-year economics textbook to swear on, but you do not stimulate the economy by cutting. LNP members should have learned that


when they were last in government. Campbell Newman's cruel cuts put people out of work. In fact, we had only just reversed the unemployment they created between 2012 and 2015. We had only just got back to the low level of unemployment we had at the start of 2012.

When will we learn the details of the secret plan of those opposite to cut health services, to sack nurses and doctors? The member for Everton said that he will outline them during the election campaign. That is too late. Our hardworking health staff deserve to know if their necks are on the LNP's chopping block well before then. It is the only way the LNP can possibly fund \$23 billion worth of promises. There is no such thing as a magic pudding.

Those opposite say that they will not increase taxes and will not increase debt. The only other way to do it is by cutting expenses. Most expenses are staff. A third of expenses are in health. In 2012 they promised not to cut health staff, right before they sacked 14,000 Queenslanders including 4,400 health staff including 1,800 nurses and midwives. They cut 177 preventive health staff in the public health units, the very people keeping us safe right now. They cut \$3.8 million in funding from NGOs like the Red Cross. They left 104,000 Queenslanders not on a waiting list but on a waiting list just to get on the waiting list. They cut \$36 million from 153 health service projects run by NGOs like Diabetes Queensland, Drug Arm, the Eating Disorders Association, the Royal Flying Doctor Service, the Lung Foundation, the Kidney Support Network, Mission Australia, Lupus Australia and the National Heart Foundation. The list goes on and on and on. They cut \$45 million from mental health. They have never apologised to the families of the Barrett patients who lost their lives. They sacked 40 people from the Patient Safety Unit.

It is very clear that those opposite are just planning to dust off Campbell Newman's plan, because the only way to fund their \$32 billion of promises is to sack the very health staff who have kept Queensland safe, just like they did last time.

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Economic Management

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (2.15 pm): The financial update provided by the Treasurer yesterday was an insult to the record 234,000 Queenslanders who are out of work. Labor had no economic plan before coronavirus and still has no economic plan now. Instead of a 1,000-page budget, yesterday the Treasurer delivered a 41-page glossy brochure. The *Australian Financial Review* scathingly wrote that this was an anchor on the economy and a nightmare for business. Queensland Economy Watch labelled it as a 'woefully inadequate' Queensland budget update. The *Courier-Mail* rightly slammed Labor, stating that the Palaszczuk Labor government was hiding the state of the economy until the October election.

Yesterday the Palaszczuk Labor government delivered the worst set of financial statements in Queensland's history—a record \$18 billion debt blowout, a record \$5.9 billion operating deficit last financial year, an even larger record-breaking \$8.1 billion operating deficit in this financial year and a record \$102 billion state debt. This Treasurer has the gall to stand in front of Queenslanders and say it is not the highest debt in the nation. Before coronavirus, the Palaszczuk Labor government had already racked up the worst state debt in the nation, and Queensland's record \$102 billion debt continues to be that highest state debt in Australia. Those opposite cannot use coronavirus as an excuse because 93 per cent of that debt was already racked up before coronavirus struck.

On top of having the worst unemployment rate in the nation currently, with a record 234,000 unemployed Queenslanders, Labor's own forecast, even with \$18 billion of new debt, is projecting 72,000 more Queenslanders to lose their jobs by the end of the financial year. The financial statement provided by the Treasurer yesterday was not just a continuation of Labor's business-as-usual approach that had given Queenslanders the highest unemployment, the most bankruptcies and the lowest business confidence prior to coronavirus; it was a ham-fisted attempt to deceive Queenslanders ahead of the state election.

Mr DICK: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take personal offence at the suggestion that I was deceiving anyone and I ask the honourable member to withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): The member has taken personal offence. I ask you to withdraw.

Mr MANDER: I withdraw. Treasurer Cameron 'Glass Jaw' Dick—have you ever met anybody—

Mr DICK: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The honourable member knows the standing orders of the parliament. He is out of order and I ask him to withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: That language was unparliamentary and I ask you to withdraw.


Mr MANDER: I withdraw. Instead of an infrastructure funding guarantee, Labor cut infrastructure spending by \$1.3 billion last year. Labor failed to rule out new taxes, failed to create new jobs and failed to outline an economic plan. Labor broke every single one of their fiscal principles—whether it was debt, operating surpluses, the capital program or public servant growth. Labor's failure to produce a full budget before the election shows that they do not have an economic plan and that they are hiding from scrutiny.

Incredibly, an extra \$4 billion in borrowings, which were not included in yesterday's financial statements—to fund the Labor government's slush fund on the Queensland taxpayer credit card—were announced yesterday. The Treasurer outlined that part of the \$4 billion election slush fund will be used to invest in Queensland businesses, giving the example of buying back the Dalrymple Bay Coal Terminal. This is a coal terminal which was sold by the Beattie Labor government for a reported \$630 million in 2001 and is now reported to be valued at \$2 billion plus. Only a Labor government would be willing to buy something that they previously sold for four times the price.

This reckless fiscal management of taxpayer money is a continuation of Labor's decision to spend \$200 million to buy a shareholding in Virgin Australia, which has not ruled out sacking thousands of Queensland workers. Our economy is hurting like never before, but Labor has no plan to drag Queensland out of recession. Only the LNP has a plan to stimulate the economy, create a decade of secure jobs and drag Queensland out of this recession. Our plan for a stronger economy and secure jobs is based on four foundations: investing for growth; unleashing Queensland industry; supercharging the regions; and securing our children's future. The LNP is the only party that has a plan to create a stronger economy and more secure jobs. This election will be on the economy and which side of parliament the public has confidence in dragging us out of debt and recession.

(Time expired)

Liberal National Party, Performance

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Infrastructure and Planning) (2.21 pm): Our government was the first in the nation to identify the threat presented by coronavirus and we were the first to move against it. It was interesting to hear the Leader of the Opposition at her press conference yesterday delve into the Donald Trump world of alternative facts and declare that the LNP were in fact the first to move on COVID. It may have escaped her memory that when we moved a motion in this House in February they were not fulsome in their support of that motion at all, particularly when we called on the Morrison government to act and support Queensland communities struggling as we saw the coronavirus wave hit Queensland. We saw the danger. Labor saw the danger and Labor acted.

This week we again acted by delivering a fiscal statement that provides a reckoning of the economic impacts of the virus and the measures to help Queensland recover from it. We know that the LNP has an alternative approach. Some 64 times they called for the borders to be opened early. Then two weeks ago we heard the Leader of the Opposition's grand plan, reiterated today—a second Coordinator-General. That is the Leader of the Opposition's response to the greatest health and economic crisis in a century—C1 and C2 coming down the stairs.

Then we discovered that not only did the Leader of the Opposition not know the name of the current Coordinator-General, she did not even know their gender. It was such an epic fail it made it on to *Have You Been Paying Attention?* The answer for which, in the Leader of the Opposition's case, is self-evident. If you want to make a bad situation worse, who are you going to call? It is the member for Everton. You cannot make this stuff up. Appearing on 4BC with his former colleague Scott Emerson, the member for Everton was unable to name the Coordinator-General two hours after the Leader of the Opposition was asked the same question. 'I have not met him,' said the member for Everton.

We know the Leader of the Opposition is weak on detail, but compared to the member for Everton the member for Nanango looks like a champion on *Mastermind*. The Leader of the Opposition was also asked how she would fund her shopping list of unfunded promises. Her immediate answer was: 'Ask the shadow Treasurer.' That is what she said. At least we had an insight into the Leader of the Opposition's transport policy—train wreck interview and deputy under the bus. What we did not get from either of them is how they are going to fund the \$23 billion in promises they have made to Queenslanders. They doubled down today. We heard the list of promises enunciated by the Leader of the Opposition today. She went through them one after another—one at a time—in the parliament. She said, 'We are going to deliver this.' If the Leader of the Opposition is going to deliver that she needs to find a way to fund the \$23 billion in promises.


On Monday the leader and deputy leader of the LNP said that there will be no new or increased taxes and no borrowings. They are not going to borrow anything. They said that they are going to stabilise debt and not borrow any more. It is clear what Queenslanders will get if the LNP is elected—cuts to education, health care, emergency services; fewer doctors; fewer nurses; fewer police officers; and fewer childcare workers. We know that because we have seen this movie before. They promised one thing before the 2012 election—and I know you, Deputy Speaker Kelly, the member for Ferny Grove and a whole range of members in this House warned Queenslanders about exactly what they would do—

An honourable member interjected.

Mr DICK: I will take the interjection. They said Queenslanders had nothing to fear and public servants had nothing to fear—except the 14,000 they terminated as soon as they could get their hands on Treasury.

Queenslanders do not have to listen to the LNP; they just have to look at what they do. If they cannot be competent—and we sure as heck know that—at least they could be honest and tell Queenslanders just who, what, when and where the axe will fall to fund \$23 billion in election commitments. We heard them all this afternoon. We heard them again. They have to come up, not with some never-never plan, with the list of cuts that they have clearly prepared. They cannot make those sorts of commitments without having a funding envelope that they will use. That is exactly what they need to do. They do not need to wait until the election. They do not have to wait until the caretaker period. They can announce that today. I am calling on the leadership of the opposition to do that. They made fun of the member for Surfers Paradise when he was supporting conspiracy nuts. This is the most serious crisis in our time and only Labor can be trusted.

Bowen Rail Company

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (2.26 pm): On 18 August I attended the launch of the Bowen Rail Company, another project that is creating jobs in regional Queensland due to the resources industry. I cannot recall the last time a rail company was launched in this state. The Bowen Rail Company will be headquartered in Bowen, part of the Burdekin electorate, and increases the diversity of the electorate even more so.

Over 150 years of combined experience is already in place. I am pleased to advise the House that four state-of-the-art locomotives have been ordered, along with the relevant rolling stock. Recruitment for 50 employees has commenced and half of those employees will be new to the industry. Once again, the resources industry is providing new opportunities for Queensland despite the hurdles and delays put in its way by this Palaszczuk Labor government.

Despite the fact that royalties from Queensland's resources sector pay \$1,000 a year for each and every Queensland, this government continues to impede the resources industry. I can prove that in two words—New Acland. Over a year ago employees from New Acland travelled all the way to Townsville to be heard, but this government still ignores them.

While the Palaszczuk government does everything it can to push coalminers to reskill, while the Palaszczuk government pokes coalminers in the eye and uses them as pawns, the LNP continues to support resources and, more importantly, the coalmining industry. While the member for South Brisbane and the former member for Bundamba tell the truth about Labor's attitude to coal, those opposite continue to lose support.

Why does the LNP support the resource sector? I will make it very easy. It is jobs. To see Labor's true attitude towards resources, I again only need to say two words—Carmichael mine. The truth is that projects like the Carmichael mine not only create jobs on site but also create new jobs throughout North Queensland in places like Bowen. In fact, if it were not for coal Bowen would be a ghost town. Almost 400 staff and contractors work at Abbot Point located just north of Bowen. As I mentioned, an extra 50 jobs will be created in Bowen by the Bowen Rail Company and there will be flow-on jobs from other resource projects throughout the Bowen Basin.

It is not just Bowen that benefits from resources. Those benefits run throughout the length and breadth of our state, and the resources industry will play a key role in Queensland's recovery from the current pandemic. If it were not for the Palaszczuk government's delaying tactics, the resources industry could play an even larger part in that recovery. If it were not for the member for South Brisbane's dream to re-skill mining communities—a dream that is shared by each and every member of this government—

Ms TRAD: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Those comments are inaccurate. I find them offensive and I ask that they be withdrawn.


Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): The member has asked that those comments be withdrawn.

Mr LAST: I withdraw—we may already have some of those jobs in place now. Just this morning the Treasurer spoke about counting days. Maybe the Treasurer could explain to the people of Bowen why the Palaszczuk government delayed the Carmichael mine for 1,581 days. Despite the \$9,893.46 that this government earns in royalties every minute from resources, it is no secret that this government has turned its back on our miners.

The Palaszczuk government delayed the creation of jobs like those at the Bowen Rail Company. The Palaszczuk government's delays put jobs at risk at New Acland and the Palaszczuk government delayed over \$1 billion in contracts that have been awarded as part of the development of the Carmichael mine and rail project. As the shadow minister for mines, I have a very clear message for every mine and quarry worker in Queensland, from Nebo to New Acland: despite the actions of this Palaszczuk government, the vast majority of Queenslanders support you. Despite the delays put in your way by the Palaszczuk government, the vast majority of Queenslanders appreciate the jobs that you create and the royalties that you generate for this state.

The other message for every mine and quarry worker in Queensland is simple: on 31 October, you have a clear choice. You can choose to work in an industry that will create even more jobs, just like those at the Bowen Rail Company, or you can choose another four years of the Palaszczuk government's delays, another four years of being told to re-skill and another four years of being demonised. The LNP is proud to support the resources sector and I will be reminding our miners of that fact every single day between now and 31 October.

East Shores Stage 1B

 **Hon. GJ BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing) (2.31 pm): I rise today to talk about the opening of the fantastic job-generating East Shores 1B parklands in my electorate of Gladstone. The Palaszczuk government invested more than \$25.9 million in this development, supporting jobs for regional Queensland—in fact, 300 jobs. That is 300 local jobs. On this side of the House, as we know, we are focused on creating jobs for Queenslanders.

East Shores stage 1B really has to be seen to be believed. I refer to the spectacular and expansive harbour views, the open green spaces, the outdoor boot camp equipment, the new cruise ship terminal, amphitheatre and outdoor screen and so much more on this beautiful parkland. Projects like this not only create jobs and contribute to the local economy but also build capacity across the construction industry, giving small businesses in Gladstone the chance to participate in work they might not otherwise get.

With this project, the Gladstone Ports Corporation has not only created an entertainment and tourism hub for Gladstone but also provided a much needed injection for the region's economy and the businesses there. One of the centre points of the development is the addition of a restaurant and craft brewery right on the harbour. You can take in the best of Gladstone while enjoying a beer that has been brewed on site at Auckland House. Each beer—and, Mr Deputy Speaker Kelly, I am sure you will appreciate this—is named after local sites in the region and has been paired with an item on the menu to enhance that experience. I dined at Auckland House last weekend with my family, and the food, the service and the atmosphere there was outstanding.

Auckland House has also employed a further 60 people including chefs, wait staff, kitchen hands and of course our craft brewer Alex, who I met recently. The craft brewing industry in Queensland is worth \$62 million to the Queensland economy, employing more than 1,700 Queenslanders. By 2024, it is anticipated that the industry's contribution to the state's economy will be well over \$100 million.

As the minister responsible for craft brewing in Queensland, I am excited to see another craft brewery open in our state but especially in my own electorate of Gladstone. I am focused on helping more craft brewers establish themselves in Queensland—particularly in regional Queensland—to grow their businesses and to employ more Queenslanders.


The incredible development at East Shores is only possible because our government kept our income-generating assets in Queenslanders' hands. We stopped the Gladstone port from being sold and then we invested to create this spectacular community place.

I have mentioned this before and I will mention it once again seeing as this is our last sitting week: when the LNP were last in power they had an LNP candidate in Michael Duggan, who worked for the Gladstone port and was part of their 'asset transaction team'. He was sent there particularly to set up the Gladstone port ready for sale or for a 99-year lease. The people of Gladstone know the history of the LNP and government owned corporations in Queensland.

They know what they do. They did not accept it last time, and they will not accept it from them this time either. Instead of new swings and basketball hoops for the kids and barbecues for families, that waterfront land would be fenced off—the property of international owners. We know that for a fact. The LNP only know how to cut, sack and sell. As we head into the election, they have to make it clear whether they intend once again to sell off the Gladstone port to pay for the \$23 billion of election commitments they have. They need to let the people of Gladstone know whether the port and East Shores are at risk.

The government owned Gladstone Ports Corporation is a massive employer in Gladstone, but it is also one of the best examples of industry giving back to the community. In Gladstone we have seen just how popular East Shores 1A has been with families and visitors, and I am certain stage 1B will put East Shores on the map as a premier destination for locals and tourists in Central Queensland. The Gladstone Ports Corporation, Hutchinson Builders, Light Group and all of the subcontractors involved in this project should be congratulated on a fantastic project for the Gladstone region.

COVID-19 Financial and Economic Review

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (2.36 pm): The financial and economic review provided yesterday was the worst set of financial accounts ever delivered in Queensland's history. It is like the Treasurer was gunning for multiple new entries in the Guinness book of records. The Treasurer's statement yesterday outlined a record \$18 billion debt blowout, a record \$5.9 billion operating deficit last financial year, an even larger record-breaking \$8.1 billion operating deficit in this financial year, and a record \$102 billion state debt—the worst in Queensland's history and reportedly more than any other state in Australia. What is more, as mentioned in question time this morning, is that we discovered an additional cut to infrastructure spending of more than \$1.2 billion last year.

Labor broke every single one of its fiscal principles, whether it was debt, operating surpluses, capital program or public sector growth. Sadly, behind each one of those records is a mum or a dad, a son or a daughter out of work, about to be out of work or staring down the barrel of even more and higher taxes. Why? Because the Treasurer could not even rule out new taxes if re-elected on 31 October.

Instead of creating jobs, Labor's \$18 billion single year debt blowout will lead to another 72,000 Queenslanders—72,000 mums, dads, sons or daughters—losing their job this year. Instead of producing a full 1,000-page budget, all Labor delivered yesterday was a 41-page glossy brochure. How was that 41-page glossy brochure received? As the shadow Treasurer mentioned, the *Australian Financial Review* scathingly wrote that it was an anchor on the economy and a nightmare for businesses. Queensland Economy Watch labelled it a 'woefully inadequate Queensland budget update'. The *Courier-Mail* rightly slammed Labor stating that the Palaszczuk Labor government was hiding the state of the economy until after the October election.


The Property Council of Australia yesterday attacked the Palaszczuk Labor government's election slush fund stating that 'rather than encouraging more private investment, this decision risked placing government in competition with private capital'. They further outlined that it is 'concerned that the integration of functions of Building Queensland and the Queensland Productivity Commission to within Queensland Treasury will hamper their ability to undertake independent reviews and provide frank advice to government and transparency to industry'.

Sadly, this fiscal review is the latest in a long line of Labor's economic failures. Before coronavirus Queensland had the highest unemployment rate, the largest government debt, the lowest business confidence and the highest number of bankruptcies in the nation because Labor had no economic plan. They still do not have an economic plan. It is no wonder that last week the CCIQ savaged the Palaszczuk Labor government's response to the economic crisis, stating that its so-called recovery strategy was a rehash of earlier announcements that left the state without any real plan.

This is, of course, on the back of the government's own Queensland Productivity Commission's stark warning that our economy cannot recover with 'business as usual' and that a return to pre-crisis economic growth will leave the economy running below its potential, limiting growth in the living standards of Queenslanders. We also heard from others. One of the state's biggest unions told Queenslanders they would not be campaigning for the Labor government. The CFMMEU's withdrawal of support for the Palaszczuk Labor government comes just days after respected Labor figure Cameron Milner savaged the government for arrogantly assuming it had already won the election while having no plan to fix Queensland's battered economy.

Queenslanders do not just want to be kept safe from coronavirus; they want—they need—a government that has a vision to stimulate growth, to create a decade of secure jobs and to drag us out of the economic recession we are in. The LNP will be that government. The LNP will get Queensland working again.

Small Business

 **Ms TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (2.41 pm): Like many Queenslanders, particularly like many Queenslanders from migrant backgrounds, I grew up in a small business family. There were long hours, mandatory shifts every school holiday, and you could not think about taking a sickie—ever. It was our family's commitment to our family's financial security. These were the days when I learned about hard work. It is this hard work—the blood, sweat and tears of small businesses right across our state—that we need to continue to support as a key mechanism to steer both our state economy and the federal economy out of this COVID infected recession.

We all love our local small businesses: our local coffee shop, our local fruit and vegetable store, our local florist, our local pharmacy or our local bookstore. They all play a very important role in the fabric of our community and in our connection with that community. There was no keener example of how much we love them that, when restrictions lifted and the Palaszczuk Labor government went out with a very strong message to support local, we all flocked to them. We all could not wait to go back to our cafes and local businesses to support them, to make sure they kept their doors open, and to make sure their families had the economic security they needed in order to put food on the table. There is no wonder this is the case. We all know that small businesses are the engine room of the Queensland economy. They make up 97 per cent of all businesses statewide—more than 445,000 of them right across our state—employing 44 per cent of all employees within the private sector.


I have been visiting many of the local small businesses within my community, and I am very proud to say that I have quite a lot. I have been speaking to them about their use of the adaptation grants, and can I say they have been very thankful that the Palaszczuk Labor government has rolled out these adaptation grants. During the very worrying, anxiety filled period when they could not operate, many of them used this money to pivot and adapt their businesses to having an online presence. A number of businesses, like Covent Garden in Boundary Street at West End or Medley at Kangaroo Point, encouraged an online presence which they say has had an enormous impact on ensuring their businesses have increased and grown out of the COVID recovery.

Additionally, the low-interest loans announced earlier this year ensured that a lot of the ongoing costs associated with small business could be met when businesses were hibernating and could not operate at full capacity. The payroll tax refunds and relief measures that were first announced earlier this year have continued to be extended, as per the Treasurer's announcement yesterday, as well as land tax refunds and relief. But the most important thing we can do for the small business economy in Queensland—a very important economy to Queensland—is to provide economic stability and security. The most important thing we can do is to make sure we do not have to shut down our economy for a second time because coronavirus has broken out within the state of Queensland. That would be a catastrophe for small businesses, and all of them are saying that to me. That is why it was so reckless of those opposite to call for the borders to re-open without understanding the impact that would have on our economy and the small business community.

Very soon Queenslanders will have a choice. They will have a choice between a government that has their back, that understands what needs to be done to ensure they have the economic security to put food on the table, or a political party who, last time they were in government, was dishonest about what it would do. I remember there were so many shopfronts that closed because of the Newman government sacking, cutting and selling. Let us be really clear: Queenslanders remember the closed shops, the sacked workers and the cut services.

(Time expired)

Operation of Parliament

 **Ms BOLTON** (Noosa—Ind) (2.46 pm): It was to be a great honour again to deliver the end-of-year valedictory speech on behalf of the crossbench; however, even though this is the last sitting of the 56th Parliament it is not to be. Instead, I have been advised that it will be delivered after the election, in the first sitting of the 57th Parliament. This is very strange given that elections can bring many changes, and potentially those who have been here all year and part of that 'wrap' may not be here come November.

This is another flaw in our sessional and standing orders—rules, regulations and policies that need to be revisited as part of modernising an aged system that no longer serves well this chamber or the communities we represent. There are many examples we all must work on to see a more efficient, fair and collaborative parliament. The adversarial nature of endeavours between the two sides of the House leads to many hours spent in a contest of wills versus the concise debate of bills. The inability of the Business Committee, with representatives from both sides, to extend sitting hours as needed to accommodate extensive agendas or even utilise lunch breaks leaves many scratching their heads.

Even though I have been mostly supportive of the business program motion to get through as many bills as possible by allocating time for debate, I query why standing orders are not amended to ensure all members have opportunities to speak. This is not difficult. As one wise person once said to me, 'If you can't get your main point across in three minutes you're missing the point.' For those in parties, members can always donate their three minutes to others, giving plenty of flexibility where needed. I have spoken before of bills and amendments introduced the night before, leaving little time to thoroughly investigate them, and a committee system that would be better served by following the models of other jurisdictions with a chair that is independent or from the opposition as part of holding the government to account.


We must do whatever it takes to create a space where the framework we operate within gives flexibility to work whatever hours are required to reduce wasted time and that an increasing number of independent entities be utilised to ensure parliament operates more in line with Queenslanders' expectations. We need an environment that is appropriate to ensure effective decision-making and not constricted through outdated modes and restrictions.

Out of every challenge we are confronted with, there is an opportunity for refinement and betterment. COVID-19 has been a mirror. It has reflected our shortfalls as well as our enormous strengths. Importantly, it has highlighted what is relevant and what we need to concentrate on. Queenslanders seek the simplicity of getting straight answers to questions and having systems that ensure we can deliver, yet the most basic of requests are often caught in the machine of government and it takes years instead of months to get a resolution for a constituent or our community.

This is not the fault of anyone. It is the very system itself and a reactive culture that has developed over many decades. How often do we hear to our suggestions all the reasons why we can't versus how we can? We shelved that 'can't' culture during the COVID emergency and now we must leave it on that shelf where it was put. We do not have the luxury, as we did pre COVID, to work through endless reviews, take years to develop strategies and then wrangle for funding. We must get on with it now.

There are no guarantees that any one of us will be here after the October election. To each and every one of you, I send you the very best for your campaigns and teams, electorate staff and families. Please join me in rejecting the poor behaviours, the election tokenisms that are being touted across our communities and the ugliness that is already pervading across social media and headlines. Please show respect to our communities by not engaging in the dangling of carrots and disingenuous promises that Queenslanders are so weary of. Put your best foot forward with dignity and passion. May we all have the honour again of standing here after 31 October in this chamber of the people's house—united in our efforts to resolve issues confronting our communities across the state and build that future sought by the people we represent. Blessings to you all, and thank you.

Coronavirus, Response

 **Hon. KJ JONES** (Cooper—ALP) (Minister for State Development, Tourism and Innovation) (2.51 pm): I pick up where the member for Noosa left off when she said we should put our 'best foot forward with dignity and passion'. That is exactly what our Premier has demonstrated to the people of Queensland throughout the coronavirus pandemic. We have had to make some very tough decisions from right at the very beginning. Back in January, we were the first government in the country to recognise how significant this pandemic was going to be—not only on the health of ordinary, everyday Queenslanders but also on our economy. We were the first state government in Australia to pull together industry leaders and business leaders in this very House to talk about how we could work with them and support them to keep jobs here in Queensland.

If we look at the most recent data at what is happening nationally, we can compare how our economy is bouncing back from coronavirus compared to what we are seeing in New South Wales and Victoria. In comparison, Queensland is continuing ahead. We are able to talk about economic recovery in this parliament where we come together face to face because we made those tough decisions around protecting the health of Queenslanders to reopen our economy.

I take this opportunity to commend the Premier in her steadfast leadership against what can only be described as bullying and deliberate attacks not only from those opposite but from our federal politicians who launched an orchestrated attack. Those federal politicians should be doing their job, which is trying to get Australia's economy back on track and working with the Victorian government to get the Victorian cases under control, not sending questions to the Queensland press gallery to try to put our Premier under pressure. She has actually stood up against that pressure day in, day out—more than 200 days since we had our first case of coronavirus.

Mr Hart: Are you serious?

Ms JONES: I am absolutely bloody serious. I withdraw that. I am absolutely serious. You bet I am serious because this is serious. Do you want to talk about serious? We heard the cries from those opposite about advice around Father's Day and how we as responsible Queenslanders who have acted responsibly throughout the pandemic should act. What we know is that here in Queensland we have our fathers still. There have been six deaths here in Queensland. I just looked at the total figure in Victoria and more than 675 Victorians have lost their lives to coronavirus to date.

My brother went through 10 years of IVF to have his first baby. They had Father's Day in quarantine and the baby's grandfather—who lives two kilometres away—could not see his very first grandchild. That is what is happening in Australia right now. They are our fellow Australians, but that is not happening here in Queensland because we did not listen to the cries of those opposite, including the big sign from the member for Burleigh. It is about time he did something; he booked a billboard.

Mr Hart interjected.

Ms JONES: I will take your interjections any day of the week, member for Burleigh. He booked a billboard to say open up the border—64 times.

Mr Last: Is that the best you've got?

Ms JONES: No, we are way better than your mob. On 64 occasions the Leader of the Opposition called to open up the borders. We only have to compare our economy and our health results with those of their colleagues in New South Wales, for example. We have a clear plan, a plan that we have backed from day one. We do not knock science and we do not knock the health experts. We listen to that health advice and we implement that. We listen to the business community and we implement the support they say they need. We listen to industry and we back them to expand new industries to create jobs and keep jobs in Queensland at the very time that we need it most. We even listened to the Prime Minister—sometimes we probably should not—when he said we actually need states with strong economies to borrow to build the infrastructure we need to create jobs and growth for the future. That is exactly what we have done.

Our economic plan released by the Treasurer yesterday clearly shows a strong pathway forward where we together as Queenslanders can rebuild our economy and create the future that our children deserve. I do not want to be sitting in Victoria where more than 660 families woke up on Father's Day with a family member missing. I am very proud to be part of a Palaszczuk Labor government here in Queensland that has looked after our economy and kept Queenslanders safe.


(Time expired)

CRIMINAL CODE (CHILD SEXUAL OFFENCES REFORM) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from 13 August (see p. 2130), on motion of Mrs D'Ath—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mrs McMAHON** (Macalister—ALP) (2.56 pm), continuing: In continuing from where we left off in the last sitting week, I refer to recommendation 21 that applies to retrospectivity and acts done and offences committed prior to 3 July 1989. The amendments also provide that, in relation to a charge of maintaining a sexual relationship with a child, particular sex acts are not specifically relied upon to prove the offence but rather evidence that establishes an unlawful relationship. It should be noted that I found submissions to the committee around the use of the word 'relationship' troublesome. It was felt that even the mere use of the word 'relationship' used in the context of these offences in establishing and using the term 'sexual relationship' may normalise or lend legitimacy to such behaviour. I note the department's response to consider appropriate wording.

Recommendation 26 of the royal commission recommended that jurisdictions extend their definition of 'grooming' to include persons other than a child if those actions are intended to gain access to a child for the purpose of facilitating sexual abuse. Clause 13 expands section 218B of the Criminal Code and is aimed at actions towards people who have care of a child under the age of 16, such as a parent, guardian or other adult in charge of a child. The establishment of a relationship with this adult must be accompanied by the intent to facilitate the procurement of the child to engage in a sexual act or expose a child to any indecent matter to enliven the charge. We have heard that single parents are often targeted by predators in order to gain access to a child. Let us consider not only the damage done to the child victim but the guilt that a parent lives with and the relationship that is forever impacted. Recommendation 30 of the *Criminal justice report* proposed the removal of any remaining limitation periods for historical child sexual abuse complaints, and clause 21 abolishes provisions which limited the period within which a prosecution could commence.

One of the more contentious amendments contained in this bill is the amendment to remove the protections of the confessional seal. This reform comes from the *Criminal justice report*, recommendations 33, 34 and 35. It recommended that each state and territory government introduce legislation to create a criminal offence of failure to report child sexual abuse in an institutional context which specifically addresses religious confession. I note that in comments made to the royal commission, Bishop Curtin explained that if a child revealed to a priest confessor that they had been abused, the child should be advised to report it to someone else, the priest confessor would not be free to act on this disclosure and the initiative must be taken by the child victim.

Anyone who has worked with victims of sexual abuse, particularly highly vulnerable victims, knows that it takes immeasurable courage in many instances to come forward and disclose such abuse. For that victim to have mustered up the courage to disclose this information to a person in whom they trust and seek comfort to then be told to go tell someone else is devastating. I do not care how understanding, compassionate or encouraging that priest confessor is; they have turned away a vulnerable victim seeking help and assistance. I cannot see how anyone who has a role in pastoral care of their community can see that as something worth protecting.


In his submission, Archbishop Coleridge used a quote which referred to this particular amendment as 'irreligious people trying to address a religious problem with brute secular force'. If we are going to talk in this House about brute force, perhaps we should be recounting the horror stories of actual brute force being used against children—actual brute force, not hyperbole or rhetoric—but no, we heard from some submitters that adults, regardless of their role in the community or the church, should not have to act to protect children as it impinged upon their religious freedoms, so I turned to the Human Rights Commission's submission and their consideration of the matter of religious freedoms. Its submission contends that—

The Commission is of the view that non-exemption of religious confession, while limiting the right to freedom of religion, is "demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society based on human dignity, equality and freedom" and therefore lawful pursuant to—

the Human Rights Act.

Recommendation 74 seeks to amend section 9 of the Penalties and Sentences Act to prohibit the reliance on character as a mitigating factor in sentencing for a child sexual abuse offence. This is applicable in instances where a person's good standing in the community has allowed them apparently unfettered access to a child victim. In these instances a defendant cannot rely on submissions of good character in sentencing considerations.

The last suite of changes I wish to speak to is in relation to the recommendations from the Queensland Sentencing Advisory Council's child exploitation material report. I note clause 11 of the bill inserts a new definition of child abuse objects that captures any doll, robot or other object which is representative of a child or part of a child under the age of 16. I note that it is immaterial that the object or doll has some adult-like anatomical features. The bill introduces two new offences relating to supplying or producing a child abuse object and possessing a child abuse object. These offences carry a maximum sentence of 14 years imprisonment. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr ANDREW** (Mirani—PHON) (3.03 pm): I rise to speak on the government's Criminal Code (Child Sexual Offences Reform) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2019. I wish to make it absolutely clear that just because I would like to point out certain human rights and the dangerous precedent-setting implications of this bill does not mean that I do not believe that child sexual abuse is one of the most horrible of all crimes, and nor do I wish to mitigate in any way past errors of any church on this issue that caused so much harm to so many innocent people.


Nonetheless I have decided to use my time today to give a voice to the very large section of our community who are extremely worried about the provisions in this bill as well as many secular professions who see the precedent being laid down here as a very real danger to their own areas of work. For the record, I am not a Catholic myself but there are many in the electorate of Mirani who are, just as I am sure there are many in the electorate of the other members who will be speaking on this bill today. I wish to speak to this bill not to support child abusers, not to support any church or not even as a religious person, but simply to give a voice to some of the concerns I have heard from the ordinary Queenslanders who I believe do have a right to be heard today.

The problem with a bill like this one is that child abuse is so repulsive and abhorrent to every civilised human being that it is now the No. 1 trigger issue of our age. That can be a good thing if it means that we redouble our efforts to abolish it or punish its perpetrators more harshly. The problem here is that an important principle of our democratic common law heritage will be impacted by the bill's provision. Many people in the community have raised an extraordinary restriction it will place on the freedom of religion in Queensland and the unintended consequences such a precedent will set for laws that exempt a number of other secular professions from reporting crimes. For example, if priests must break the confessional seal, surely lawyers must report evidence strongly indicating their client has abused a child. This is a direct threat to the cornerstone principle of legal privilege regardless of any protest from the government to the contrary.

The bill's provisions will inevitably be expanded in time to include all other crimes confessed to in the confessional such as murder, rape and corruption. If we accept the logic of the argument on this one abhorrent crime we must accept it for all others. The same goes for other professions that may be privy to confidential knowledge such as doctors, lawyers, psychologists and journalists. Any anti-discrimination lawyer in the country will now be able to legitimately argue why these other professions should have the right to protect their sources when they in effect serve to protect criminals.

At stake here is not just freedom of religion but all rights to legal privilege, freedom of the press and confidentiality provisions of any and all kinds no matter our past cornerstone principles. Such power will be paramount over all other democratic principles in our society and there will be no getting them back. This is a real threat and a danger posed by this bill. Removing the privilege associated with religious confession will therefore set a dangerous precedent which may be relied on in the future to remove or restrict other forms of professional privilege including client legal privilege. The church, which is in disgrace after recent scandals and revelations, is the wedge that executive government is using to enact this dangerous precedent. Make no mistake though: other professions will eventually be made subject to the precedent set here today.

Finally, I would like to say that the bill also poses a real danger for public trust and cohesion in our community. Many priests, including bishops, have publicly stated that they will go to jail before obeying these laws and our judges will be required to send them there. How confident can the people of Queensland be that they live in a free and open democracy governed by the rule of law where the state jails its bishops?

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services) (3.07 pm): Queensland has the strongest laws in the nation when it comes to child sex offenders. One year ago this month the government made our laws even stronger. Those changes mean reportable child sex offenders continue to be monitored, even after their supervision orders have been expired, and in some instances those offenders will be monitored for the rest of their lives. We backed our tough laws with more than \$27 million for monitoring and enforcement and, as a result of this funding and our tough laws, 150 child sex offenders have been charged with over 350 offences but, more importantly, 16 children have been rescued from harm.

There are more than 500 Child Protection and Investigation Unit officers working across Queensland and they work closely alongside child protection offender register coordinators to manage reportable offenders. This government recently announced a boost in the number of these specialist coordinators, from 22 to 40, almost doubling the number. On top of that, we are also providing them with extra vehicles to support their good work. These specialist investigators and the Child Protection and Investigation Unit officers are supported by officers from all over the state, State Crime Command, detectives, intelligence specialists and general duties officers.

The bill we are debating today builds on the work of this government to protect vulnerable children. This bill comprehensively reforms the criminal justice response to child sexual abuse through a range of amendments that implement recommendations of the *Criminal justice report* and the Queensland Sentencing Advisory Council.

One key recommendation is that anyone who becomes aware of concerning conduct towards a child has a responsibility to report the matter to the authorities. There has been a lot of debate about this requirement, especially in relation to confessions made to the clergy, but let us be clear about one thing: the requirement and, quite frankly, the moral obligation to report concerning behaviours towards children applies to everyone in this community. No one group or occupation is being singled out. It applies to everyone. After all, child protection is everyone's responsibility.


Another key recommendation to be implemented relates to sentencing. This amendment stipulates that, when sentencing offenders for historical child sexual offences, the court is to sentence in accordance with the standards at the time so that the sentence does in fact reflect contemporary community expectations. Another important element of this bill is to exclude alleged good character as a mitigating factor. Quite clearly, this is common sense. Someone convicted of a child sex offence can hardly rely on their alleged good character to be taken into account. That is quite clearly an absurdity.

The bill will also create a new offence of failure to protect a child from institutional child sexual abuse. Of course, we all accept that this is critical. We all have seen the damage done over decades to thousands of individuals who have been betrayed by institutions that were supposed to protect them.

I now turn to new offences relating to child abuse objects. These are lifelike child replicas used for sexual gratification. It is, quite frankly, disgusting. The bill amends the Criminal Code to create two new offences criminalising the possession, supply and production of dolls of children intended to be used for sexual interaction, child abuse objects. The offences applying to child abuse objects will carry 14 years imprisonment, increasing to 20 years imprisonment for supply or production done for a commercial purpose.

Further, the serious organised crime circumstance of aggravation, carrying a mandatory minimum of seven years imprisonment, will also apply to new offences. I particularly thank the Attorney-General for including this amendment. I know that it has been raised by the Queensland Police Service's child sexual abuse team with her department previously. To have this now in law will not only support the good work of police but ultimately protect children by catching people who are engaged in these quite dangerous activities which could escalate into further danger towards children.

These are just some of the amendments but they convey the serious intent of this bill to protect children from harm and, of course, the seriousness with which this government considers these matters. This government has a track record of putting in place laws that keep the community safe. Our laws are amongst the strongest in the nation. They protect children, they hold those people who harm children to account and, ultimately, they improve the safety of our community. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr BENNETT** (Burnett—LNP) (3.12 pm): We all, including the LNP, acknowledge that the interests of the protection of our vulnerable children should prevail in making sure that legislation is reflective of those desires. The LNP will always support more laws and stronger penalties aimed at child sex offenders to send a message that these types of crimes against children will not be tolerated.

This bill is well overdue. It has taken the advocacy of survivors over a long period to get to this point in our Queensland parliament. We must applaud the continued push for a royal commission and those who participated in the royal commission. For many, the royal commission was confronting. The hearings—both public and private—research, correspondence and much more uncovered the real impacts of child sexual abuse and, importantly, the impacts of institutions involved on the victims and their families. The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse made 409 recommendations aimed at making institutions safer for our children.

The royal commission recommended that all Australian jurisdictions introduce legislation to create a criminal offence for failure to report. The bill before us today seeks to improve the responsiveness of the criminal justice system to child sexual offending and the victims of child sexual abuse. Included in the formation and the drafting of the bill are key recommendations of a series of other reports: the *Criminal justice report*, which made 85 recommendations aimed at providing a fairer response to victims of child sexual abuse; and the Queensland Sentencing Advisory Council's *Classification of child exploitation material for sentencing purposes*, recommending changes to sentencing guidelines. Those guilty of child sex offences need to be convicted and punished, and we need laws to support this outcome. It is incumbent on us to move to support stricter penalties and more safeguards and accountability for all involved in protecting and caring for vulnerable children.

The bill proposes amending the Criminal Code to provide for retrospective application of the offence in section 229B; extend the grooming offence; provide for retrospective application of the removal of limitation periods on prosecutions for certain offences; create a new offence for failure to

report in relation to a child sexual offence; create a new offence of failure to protect a child from sexual abuse in an institutional context; and ensure that the new failure to report and protect offences apply to information or knowledge gained during, or in connection to, a religious confession. It also amends the Penalties and Sentences Act 1992 to exclude good character as a mitigating factor and provide that, when sentencing offenders for historical child sexual offences, the court is to sentence offenders in accordance with sentencing standards.


There has been much discussion about the bill and how it affects and breaks the seal of the confessional. Submissions to the committee highlighted the concern of some that the bill interferes with the freedom of religion as it breaks the seal of the confessional. Many concerned about this important issue have contacted me; however, the royal commission did find evidence that disclosures of child sexual abuse were made in religious confessions from perpetrators and from victims. I understand the concerns and I refer to the royal commission's reporting that there should be no exemption from reporting an offence received by the clergy during religious confessions. I feel that the right decision has been made.

Following the LNP government's introduction of the offence of child grooming in 2012, we see the current child grooming offence in the Criminal Code being extended to the grooming of parents and carers of children under 16 years of age. We welcome that inclusion. We all need to be extremely careful in using social media, sharing photos et cetera as predators are using these forums more and more. We all know how careful we have to be in our jobs when sharing pictures of kids, particularly on social media, as we know that offenders use social media in particular. Recent appalling examples of offenders using the internet to disguise their age and identity and arranging contact with children by deceit highlight why provisions such as 'Carly's Law', currently in South Australia and federally, should be considered for introduction into Queensland. We have committed to introducing 'Carly's Law' as it will give police the tools they need to stop sexual predators before they have a chance to groom children.

The first law will make it an offence for an adult to communicate with a child while claiming to be younger than they are, or another person altogether, in order to meet that child. That offence will carry a penalty of five years imprisonment. The second law will make it an offence for an adult to communicate with a child while claiming to be younger than they are, or another person altogether, with intent to commit an offence against the child. The offence will carry a penalty of 10 years imprisonment. That is why the LNP government introduced, amongst other things, life imprisonment for repeat child sex offenders with a minimum non-parole period; increased penalties for child exploitation material; and introduced a mandatory sentence of one year imprisonment for those sex offenders who tamper with or remove their GPS monitoring bracelet. In opposition we fought to strengthen the laws aimed at child sex offenders but without much support.

The LNP is also committed to introducing a public sex offender register to allow parents to check on the background of anyone who has regular unsupervised access to their children. In 2018 we saw laws passed in this place to ensure that child sex offenders were continued to be monitored even after their supervision orders had expired. We have also raised the issue of whether these policies are strong enough. That is for others to decide, but I would have thought that we need to ensure that people who are required to wear tracking devices do so and for a long time after they are released. We need to ensure that these laws apply to sex offenders engaged in 'concerning conduct'. I believe that the laws are still weak in that respect. We must get on with the job of ensuring that the laws applying to sex offenders in our community reflect community expectations.

I commend the bill to the House and I encourage all to continue the good work of the royal commission. I acknowledge the dignity that will now come to survivors of child sexual abuse in institutions.

 **Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Child Safety, Youth and Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (3.19 pm): I rise in support of the Criminal Code (Child Sexual Offences Reform) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. This bill will strengthen the criminal justice system response to child sexual abuse by progressing wideranging legislative reforms to implement key recommendations of the *Criminal justice report* of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse and it sends a clear message that behaviours to conceal sexual abuse and heinous failures to protect children from sexual abuse will not be tolerated.

I know that members of our Truth, Healing and Reconciliation Taskforce, chaired by a former police commissioner Bob Atkinson, which we established specifically to guide the implementation of the royal commission recommendations, has been consulted about the bill and was very pleased to


hear that individuals concealing child sexual abuse in institutions will be held accountable. While I am referring to that task force, I do want to thank Bob and all members of the task force for their great work and for the strength and courage that all of its members have shown. A number of them are people who have suffered historical sexual abuse and who were willing to take part in that task force and progress these reforms because they did not want children now and in the future to suffer what they have suffered, and it has been the greatest privilege for me to work alongside those people.

I commend that the bill imposes retrospectivity to the offence of maintaining a sexual relationship with a child; expands the way the Criminal Code deals with grooming; eliminates the limits placed on when prosecution can be commenced for child sex offences, allowing prosecution for historic offences; provides that reliance on good character as a mitigating factor is prohibited where it assisted the offender in the commission of the offence; and criminalises the production, supply and possession of child abuse objects such as child sex dolls. If anyone in this House has ever spoken to even one person who suffered sexual abuse as a child and never had a voice or has suffered it at any time in their lives—these people are the most vulnerable people in our society—they will know why this bill is so important. To have a conversation with even one of those people impacts on your soul for life.

I want to focus on just two areas of the bill—the failure to report and the failure to protect. These proposals arise from recommendations 33 to 36 of the *Criminal justice report* of the royal commission. The bill creates a new offence of failure to report belief of a child sexual offence which requires all adults in the community to report child sexual abuse to the police. It creates a new offence of failure to protect a child from a sexual offence which requires particular adults associated with an institution to take action to protect children and it ensures that the new failure to report and protect offences apply to information or knowledge gained during or in connection with a religious confession. Paedophiles should have nowhere to hide, and that includes the confessional. This approach to religious confessions is consistent with the views of the royal commission.

I acknowledge that there have been a number of public figures who have commented against our including this particular amendment and I acknowledge the people who have personally come to raise concerns with me about doing so. It is common in those conversations to hear the phrase that some things should be sacred, referring to conversations that are had during a confession. I am afraid that I have spoken to too many survivors who have been abused as children who just cannot see that go past. I remember how I felt when reading the story of a priest who made an affidavit in 2004 stating that he had confessed 1,500 times to molesting children to 30 different priests over a 25-year period and he was told to pray for forgiveness after each confession. We cannot let those children down ever again.

The proposals in this bill establish a clear and simple obligation to report suspected child abuse. This week is Queensland Child Protection Week, so there is no better time for us as a parliament to reinforce the principle that child safety is everyone's responsibility. This bill reinforces that. We are doing this on behalf of forgotten Australians. We are doing this on behalf of the children who have suffered in the past and we need to stop that in the future. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr McDONALD** (Lockyer—LNP) (3.24 pm): Today I rise to make a contribution to debate on the Criminal Code (Child Sexual Offences Reform) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. Let me state from the outset that I will be joining my colleagues in the LNP in not opposing this bill. Is it not a relief to finally see the Palaszczuk government taking steps, no matter how small or how heavily prompted, towards safeguarding Queensland's children from sexual violence? Given this government's track record on child safety, this bill really comes as quite a shock. One need only look back to earlier last month for a common example of our Labor government's complete disregard for Queenslanders' safety, but I will elaborate further on that shortly. Before I continue, I offer my thanks to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee, its secretariat and all of the submitters to this bill for their efforts.

This bill is one which many hold very personally. The stories, personal reflections and findings offered to the committee during its hearings on the bill reflect this and showcase just how critical it is for us to get this right. The primary policy objective of this bill is to improve the responsiveness of the criminal justice system towards child sexual offending and the victims of child sexual offences. To achieve this objective, the bill implements the recommendations of a series of reports into child sexual offences, including some of the 405 recommendations made through the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. These recommendations include amendments to Queensland's Criminal Code and Penalties and Sentences Act in line with similar legislative changes recommended and completed in several other Australian jurisdictions. For once the Palaszczuk government is not last to bring in some reforms. If only the same could be said about our state's economic performance under this government!

Predominantly supported by the 26 stakeholders who took the time to contribute to the bill, this bill introduces several new offences relating to child sexual offending. The personal stories of many of those stakeholders would break anybody's heart. These new offences include making it an offence for an adult to fail to adequately report their belief that another is committing a child sexual offence and making it an offence to possess, produce or supply a child abuse object. The bill will also make it an offence for an adult associated with an institution to fail to protect a child within that institution from sexual harm. This offence, like the failure to report offence introduced through the bill, stems directly from the recommendations made by the royal commission and has already been legislated into existence in Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania and the ACT. I suppose fifth place is not horrible. It is certainly higher than Queensland has found itself on other performance lists under this government.

Speaking of performances, it remains to be seen as to how these essential inclusions will perform under a government intent on undercutting their ability to be enforced. As I mentioned earlier, even as recently as last sitting week we witnessed another move by the Palaszczuk Labor government to undermine Queenslanders' safety. On that day, my colleague the member for Ninderry moved a disallowance motion calling on this government to scrap—

Mrs D'ATH: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance. The member is now talking about a debate that occurred last sitting week and not speaking to the bill. I ask that the member be brought back to the bill.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Weir): I allowed a little bit of leeway earlier to the police minister, but I will not be allowing much more. I would urge you to come back to the long title of the bill.

Mr McDONALD: In regard to sex offences, sex offenders and the supervision of sex offenders, recently a disallowance motion was moved in regard to the safety of children and monitoring of sex offenders. Unfortunately, on that day stubbornness prevailed and those opposite used their numbers in the House to show Queenslanders that sadly they do not care.

Mrs D'ATH: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance. This is not relevant to the bill and this matter has been already debated and determined before the parliament.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much.

Ms Grace interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for McConnel, you will be warned—

Ms Grace interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for McConnel, you are now warned. I was speaking. Member for Lockyer and Leader of the House, that bill was debated earlier but that does not mean it cannot be spoken of again. We are talking about sentencing in this bill. What you are straying into is not in this bill. I would urge you to move on.

Mr McDONALD: Thank you. The new offences and sentencing changes included in this bill may well suffer from the same stubbornness that we have seen in the past. I have no doubt that this bill will pass. However, its effectiveness under a government content with just getting by remains very questionable. In comparison to this Labor government's tried and tested strategy of ticking a box and moving on, the LNP has a real plan to safeguard Queenslanders and their children from sexual violence. The LNP will support any measure in the interests of vulnerable Queenslanders. This is a fact we have acknowledged many times and one that will never change. That is why when last in government the LNP introduced mandatory life sentences for repeat child sex offenders, increased penalties for child exploitation material offences, created a new grooming offence and introduced a mandatory sentence of one year's imprisonment for sex offenders found tampering with or removing their GPS monitoring bracelet.

Mrs D'ATH: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I am expecting that the member is going to try to use these next four minutes to talk about LNP policy, some of which is in a private member's bill still to be debated this evening, but I can certainly say is not in the bill that is currently before us, so I ask that the member be brought back to the bill.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Lockyer, you can wrap it up around the long title of the bill.


Mr McDONALD: Queenslanders need an assurance that the promises that this bill makes will not be broken as well. I for one will not be holding my breath that this government does deliver on those promises. Fortunately for Queenslanders an alternative is on the horizon and on 31 October Queenslanders will have the opportunity to end a painful period of economic mismanagement, broken

promises and skyrocketing crime rates. A Deb Frecklington led LNP will protect Queenslanders and their children from violent sexual offenders. We will introduce a public sex offender register and we will commit to providing the police the tools that they need to stop sexual predators from grooming children. We will ensure that dangerous offenders are tracked.

Mrs D'ATH: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. As I said less than a minute ago, the member is seeking to just go through his shopping list of what the LNP's election commitments are and not what is in this bill. I ask the member be brought back to the bill.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Lockyer, have you concluded your contribution? You need to talk to the bill or it will be concluded.

Mr McDONALD: Only an LNP will keep Queenslanders safe and get Queensland working again.

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (3.34 pm): While I still have a high opinion of the member for Lockyer, it is somewhat tarnished. We will not be lectured to by a party that cut 225 staff from the child safety unit. Never have we heard anything positive from those opposite about the fact that we put over 400 people into child safety. We have never heard anything positive about creating a new district—

Mr PURDIE: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance. If the member could come back to the long title of the bill.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am sure the member for Bancroft was just about to do that.

Mr WHITING: I was indeed. I was going to commend the government on the creation of the new child safety district around Caboolture which looks after the families in my area. Those opposite would never do that.

I rise to speak in favour of the bill that is before us. Like many of us here, I have heard firsthand about the lifetime effects of childhood sexual abuse. I know victims of child sexual abuse. I have listened to their stories. A friend of mine broke down one night and told me of the years of abuse that she had suffered at the hands of a family friend. The consequences of that were years of failed relationships, irreparable relationships with her family, a history of mental illness and ongoing substance abuse. Another person I knew was a victim of the notorious Kevin Lynch who worked for years at Brisbane schools who, we have heard reported, abused a large number of children in Queensland from the 1970s through to the 1990s. That particular offender committed suicide the day after he was charged with nine offences against a student. The victim that I met, and his family, had suffered a lifetime of effects, all of which he lived with every day, and his relationship with his family was permanently ruptured by that.

This bill implements recommendations from the *Criminal justice report* by the royal commission. I want to focus on the beneficial impact of implementing recommendations 33 to 36 of that report which are the introduction of offences that are targeted at reporting to police and a new offence of failing to protect a child from abuse by moving around the abuser or covering up the actions of a known abuser. I think everyone in the House supports that—nearly everyone. I will come back to the member for Mirani in moment.

We know that the impact on victims of adults not reporting these offences to the police or covering up for offenders is breathtakingly massive. That has led to an institutionalised pattern of abuse in some parts of our society which this bill is aiming to break. The worst case in Australia shows this pattern. In Victoria Gerald Ridsdale was convicted of sexually abusing 65 children. He held 16 appointments over 29 years as a priest. His appointments were typically short and when allegations against him were made he was often transferred to a new role or location. The royal commission reported on the local bishop. His concern was overwhelmingly about protecting the reputation of the church and avoiding scandal. There was little evidence that he was concerned to protect children from these priests.


On the issue of the member for Mirani, and I needed to listen to him twice, maybe three times, but I think his point was that the breaking of the power of the confessional would set a dangerous precedent to other professions such as lawyers. My question to him would be how can a party that poses as a party of law and order want to protect people who are protecting abusers? How can a person want to protect a person who is protecting someone who has committed hundreds of crimes and not being punished for that? I will let the member for Mirani justify that in the coming weeks.

I have spoken about Kevin Lynch. It was reported that two former headmasters had been informed of allegations against him and had not taken any action. Indeed, it was reported that one of them informed the abuser about the complaint. This bill aims to break that pattern of behaviour.

This bill is about making sure that institutions and the people inside them are accountable and liable. The bill tells those people that we will hold them complicit if they move around or cover-up for offenders. If the LNP is talking about a register, I point out that none of the institutions would have been

on that register. None of the men I have talked about would have been on the register until after they had been in jail for a long time or were dead. In the meantime, for decades they were free to practise abuse because they were so-called trusted members of our local communities. I hope this bill puts an end to the practice of moving around and hiding abusers. I hope they face justice much earlier instead of having decades of impunity in which to operate.


I end by paying tribute to the victims of childhood sexual abuse who have spoken out and called attention to how perpetrators have persisted and been protected. I echo the fine sentiments of the Victorian Premier, Daniel Andrews, when he said to those victims: I see you, I hear you, I believe you. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr DAMETTO** (Hinchinbrook—KAP) (3.40 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Criminal Code (Child Sexual Offences Reform) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. I will keep my contribution short because I am under threat of becoming very emotional and angry about the fact that paedophiles and child sex offenders still walk amongst us in this state. It is absolutely vile to think that those people are getting away with the things that they do to young children. The thought that it has taken some time and a royal commission to bring some of this stuff to light must anger victims. I commend the hard work of the royal commission, which produced the *Criminal justice report*, for helping some victims tell their stories so that people on both sides of this House can work to make sure that we do all we can to rid this state of people who seek to hurt children through the most heinous of crimes.

The policy objectives of the bill are to implement recommendations contained in the *Criminal justice report* of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse; to implement recommendations contained in the Queensland Sentencing Advisory Council's report, *Classification of child exploitation material for sentencing purposes*; and to create new offences criminalising the possession, production and supply of anatomically correct lifelike replicas used for sexual gratification and other minor and technical amendments. The fact that such products exist disgusts me. It disgusts me not only that people have been producing things such as dolls and other objects used by paedophiles for sexual gratification but also that, prior to the passing of this legislation, people have made money out of that. Across the world a movement has brought paedophilia rings to light and in this country our police are working hard to bust those paedophile rings. That brings hope to victims. It makes me happy that in this state we are working to pass legislation such as this to ensure that no rock is left unturned and no legislative back door exists for those people to escape through if charged with these heinous offences.

The bill will amend the Criminal Code to provide retrospective application of the offence in section 229B, maintaining a sexual relationship with a child; it will extend the grooming offence in section 218B, grooming a child under 16; it will provide for the retrospective application of the removal of limitation periods on prosecutions for certain sexual offences; and it will create a new offence of a failure to report the belief of a child sexual offence that requires all adults to report sexual abuse to police. That amendment in particular grabs my attention. Whether an institution, a church, a business or any other profession, no-one should protect an abuser. You should be ashamed of yourself if you are protecting paedophiles and people who commit these offences against children in our community. I commend anyone in the House who backs this legislation and I commend the state government for introducing it.

I could go on for hours about this stuff but, as I said, I will not go too far into it for fear of getting too wound up. I support the passage of the legislation through the House. I hope everyone in the House backs the legislation.


 **Ms LUI** (Cook—ALP) (3.44 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Criminal Code (Child Sexual Offences Reform) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2019. The bill was introduced into the Legislative Assembly and referred to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee on 27 November 2019. I acknowledge the committee chair, Peter Russo, the committee members and the secretariat for their hard work in the examination of the bill. On 3 December 2019 the committee invited stakeholders and subscribers to make written submissions on the bill. Twenty-six submissions were received. On 10 December 2019 the committee also received a public briefing on the bill from the Department of Justice and Attorney-General. The committee received written advice from the department in response to matters raised in submissions. The committee held a public hearing on 17 January 2020.

The objectives of the bill are to implement recommendations of the *Criminal justice report* of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse; to implement recommendations of the Queensland Sentencing Advisory Council's report, *Classification of child exploitation material for sentencing purposes*; and to create new offences criminalising the possession, production and supply

of anatomically correct lifelike child replicas used for sexual gratification. The government consulted widely on the bill and the recommendations of the *Criminal justice report* were informed by extensive public and private consultation undertaken by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. Subsequent to that report being released, consultation on its recommendations was conducted by key legal and non-legal stakeholders between December 2018 and February 2019. Further feedback was sought from stakeholders in April 2019 in relation to recommendations 44 to 51.

I will now deal with some of the issues raised with the committee during its examination of the bill. From 2012 to 2017, the royal commission undertook a comprehensive inquiry into institutions' responses to allegations of child sexual abuse in Australia and made 409 recommendations across various reports. The *Criminal justice report* was released in August 2017 ahead of the royal commission's final report in December 2017. It contained 85 recommendations for reforms to the Australian criminal justice system that were aimed at providing fairer and more effective responses to victims of child sexual abuse, including child sexual abuse in an institutional context. The June 2018 Queensland government response to the royal commission's recommendations accepted or supported in principle more than 240 of the recommendations, including some of those from the *Criminal justice report*. The bill contains amendments to implement a number of key recommendations from the *Criminal justice report*.

Our children are our future, but they are also our most vulnerable. As a mother of three and like any parent I believe it is important that we do all that we can to protect our young people from child sex offenders in our society. I stand here today wholeheartedly supporting this bill. Our most vulnerable need us to make decisions that put all the right mechanisms in place to make sure that they are safe from harm and that they are safe from predators who lurk in our communities. We need this place to be a much better and a much safer place—a wonderful place—for our children to be raised in. Children should never be placed in situations that rob them of their innocence. The effects of abuse are long term and for many they last a lifetime. We need strong mechanisms in place to keep everyone accountable so that we can continue to protect our children well into the future. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (3.49 pm): There is no doubt that we all support the aim of toughening the Criminal Code in respect to child sexual offences and acknowledge the need to have stronger laws that deter people from committing heinous, horrible and evil criminal acts that damage the lives of children and then, generationally, see those children living lives that can also end up damaging other people's lives. This issue has become one of plague proportions.

There is a question that remains unanswered with regard to the amendments that are before the House; that is, why another amendment is not part of this legislation. I would certainly appreciate the government providing an explanation as to why a recommendation relating to teachers having sexual relationships with their students was not included as an offence. As I understand it, that matter has been canvassed as one of real concern in terms of the abuse of that very important role. It is not enough simply to have disciplinary actions against people. There have to be far greater penalties to recognise that teachers who are entering into sexual relationships with students, some of whom may be over the age of consent, are using and abusing their position as a teacher and that that situation is potentially exposing children to abuse. There is a question mark as to why that particular recommendation has not been adequately addressed by the amendments before the House.

Given that, as I understand, this bill is supposed to be about implementing some of the recommendations of the royal commission in regard to child sexual offences, why have these provisions not been addressed? We really need to understand where they went. How did they disappear from the legislation that we see before us? How do we know that the mechanisms that are in place are truly satisfactory to address what has been acknowledged in recent cases as an area potentially of great abuse? We do not want to see any child groomed, be it by people they know or by people who come into their lives through their network of relationships.

In regard to teachers, a small number—still significant enough to have been acknowledged in recent cases—have groomed and abused young people who have been in their care. They can still be in their care when they are technically over the age of consent. Let us talk about this issue, but let us have an explanation as to why this additional mechanism was not included in the legislation before us.

I know that there is a debate still to occur with regard to the LNP's proposal to toughen legislation relating to child sexual abuse. That bill is still to come before the House. I understand that it will come forward for debate—and so it should. I cannot pre-empt that debate, but I will say that Labor's bill still does not go far enough. Children are so precious but so vulnerable, and they rely on adults for

protection. Tragically, as we know, some of those who are closest to them have abused that trust in a way that we find hard to imagine when that has not been our life's experience. I think we all know people who, as adults now, are able to tell their story. The impact it has had on their lives is devastating. It may be decades later that they share those very personal and harrowing stories.

We do not want any child to suffer this evil, but we also do not want any loopholes in the law that allow perpetrators to avoid facing justice. We want them to know that the justice system and the Criminal Code that is there to underpin it are sufficient to provide greater protection for our most vulnerable. That is why I raised a question about why a certain aspect of the royal commission's recommendations has been omitted from this bill.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Weir): Under the provisions of the business program agreed to by the House and the time allocated for this stage of the bill having expired, the question is that the bill be now read a second time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Consideration in Detail

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Weir): 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 clauses 1 to 71, as read, stand part of the bill.

Motion agreed to.

Clauses 1 to 71, as read, agreed to.

Third Reading

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

Long Title


Question put—That the long title of the bill be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

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

Resumed from 16 July (see p. 1742).

Second Reading

 **Hon. CD CRAWFORD** (Barron River—ALP) (Minister for Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (3.55 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

I would like to thank the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee for its examination of the Meriba Omasker Kaziw Kazipa (Torres Strait Islander Traditional Child Rearing Practice) Bill 2020. I would like to thank the community members and the organisations who provided written statements and submissions to the committee inquiry and also thank the witnesses who appeared at the committee hearings on Saibai Island and Thursday Island as well as in Bamaga, Cairns, Townsville and Brisbane. I note the overwhelming support from submitters for the passage of the bill.

As the member for Cook said in her introductory speech, this bill is the first of its kind in Australia and delivers on our election commitment to introduce new laws that recognise the outcomes achieved by Torres Strait Islander families' continued use of Torres Strait Islander traditional child-rearing

practice. The member for Cook also recognised the significance of the inclusion of Torres Strait Islander languages in the title of the bill and that this honours the legacy of the Kupai Omasker Working Party, formed in 1990 by the late Uncle Steve Mam.

I would once again like to acknowledge the Kupai Omasker Working Party, who have been such strong advocates for the legal recognition of Torres Strait Islander traditional child-rearing practice for over 30 years. I would also like to acknowledge Ms Ivy Trevallion, Mr Charles Passi and the Hon. Alastair Nicholson, former chief justice of the Family Court of Australia, as the eminent persons who guided community consultations and provided extensive feedback on the bill.

Under the bill, a cultural recognition order will result in a completely new birth certificate being issued to the person who is the subject of the application. Being able to obtain a new birth certificate will result in positive flow-on effects that many of us take for granted such as obtaining other legal identity documents like a passport or driver's licence, access to government services and school enrolments.

Consistent with community feedback, we have worked to ensure that the bill incorporates cultural considerations including requiring that an appropriately qualified Torres Strait Islander person will be appointed as the commissioner to make decisions on applications for cultural recognition orders. We have also included in the bill the requirement for a two-year operational review of the framework. This will provide the opportunity to review the operation of the legislation and service model and consider how well it is working in practice for the families involved.

I would like to turn to the recommendations made in the committee report. I table the response to the six recommendations contained in the committee's report.

Tabled paper: Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee: Report No. 40, 56th Parliament—Meriba Omasker Kaziw Kazipa (Torres Strait Islander Traditional Child Rearing Practice) Bill 2020, government response [[1566](#)].

I thank the committee for its detailed consideration, noting recommendation No. 1 of the report, that the bill be passed. Recommendation 2 of the report recommends that the department prioritise the implementation of education programs as well as explore opportunities for the provision of independent counselling and support to be made available to people who may experience trauma as a result of their interaction with the legal recognition process. We are very aware that there will be a need for extensive community engagement to support awareness and understanding of the legal framework and for appropriate support for applicants throughout the process.

Committee report recommendation No. 3 was that the department establish offices for the office of the commissioner in both Cairns and Thursday Island in facilities separate to departmental offices. This recommendation is supported in principle, noting that it is proposed to establish the office of the commissioner in Cairns, with office space also available on Thursday Island. The Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships will take this recommendation into account when determining the final location of these facilities, subject to availability of accommodation.

Recommendation No. 4 of the report recommends that section 44 of the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 2003 be further amended to explicitly instruct the registrar to remove the names of the birth parents from the new birth certificate. I acknowledge the importance of this point. I am advised that a change to the bill is not necessary as the bill combined with the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act already works to achieve this outcome. The names of the birth parents will not appear on the new birth certificate issued.

Committee recommendation No. 5 also recommends amendments to section 44 of the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 2003 in this case to ensure that the registrar may only give information to a child about a closed entry with the consent of one of more of the child's cultural parents or guardian. I am pleased to advise the House that this is already addressed in the bill. Only adults—namely, the adult applicants for a cultural recognition order or an adult who was the subject of a cultural recognition order when they were a child or their guardian—may apply to access certain information from the registry of births, deaths and marriages under the bill. A child will not be able to gain access to a closed record.

Finally, recommendation No. 6 of the committee report recommends an amendment to clause 45 of the bill to ensure the destruction of any criminal history information received by the commissioner as soon as practicable after the information is no longer needed. This recommendation is common sense. I will be moving an amendment during consideration in detail to include this in the bill. While there are

provisions in the bill that protect confidential information held by the office of the commissioner, it is accepted that the bill should include a clause dealing with the destruction of criminal history information when no longer required.

I will be moving two further amendments during consideration in detail for the bill in response to submissions made to the committee. The committee report, informed by the submission from the Torres Shire Council, suggested that the term 'time immemorial' in the bill's preamble be replaced with a term that is more culturally appropriate. It is proposed to amend the preamble to remove these words, taking on board the view that the legal definition of this phrase does not adequately reflect the long period of time that Torres Strait Islander communities have practised traditional child rearing.

As referred to in the submission by Dr Heron Loban, Zoe Rathus AM and Dr Kate van Doore of Griffith University, clause 36 of the bill should require information about how long the child has lived with cultural parents rather than how long a child has lived at the address. The government agrees with this point and an amendment to clause 36 will also be moved during consideration in detail.

While an overwhelming majority of the submissions provided to the committee during its examination of the bill were supportive of the passage of the bill, I would like to refer to a number of issues that were raised. These are policy based issues that were considered during the development of the bill. One issue was whether there should be two commissioners or perhaps a deputy commissioner, including for the purposes of ensuring representation for eastern and western Torres Strait Islands. Multiple models were explored during the development of the bill, including how to appropriately incorporate the cultural diversity of the Torres Strait in the legal framework. Ultimately, a decision was made to proceed with one commissioner. Importantly, the model provides for a Torres Strait Islander to be appointed as commissioner. The commissioner will also need to be appropriately qualified.

As well as having appropriate cultural experience, the central role of the commissioner will be to act as an independent decision-maker, to treat all applicants fairly and to thoroughly consider the circumstances of every applicant who applies for legal recognition. The application for a cultural recognition order will also be accompanied by a statement by an informed person to confirm that the cultural practice as occurred has been verified by persons with knowledge and understanding of the cultural practice specific to the family's community—for example, senior family members.

A further matter raised in submissions is the issue of dispensation of consent, including whether this should be considered by the commissioner instead of the court. The bill initially provides for a consent based process where families voluntarily apply for legal recognition. In weighting up the options, it was considered most appropriate for an administrative decision-maker, the commissioner, to decide applications for a cultural recognition order. For matters where disputes may arise—for example, whether someone's consent should be dispensed with—this type of matter is considered more appropriate for a court. Courts deal with these matters regularly and have processes and legal expertise in place to address the complexities that may arise.

Another matter raised during the committee stage was why the bill requires the consent of an 'other carer' to an application. The legal framework set out in the bill acknowledges that not all families are the same. There may be important people in a child's life other than the child's birth parents or cultural parents who have legal responsibilities to make decisions involving the child. An example of an 'other carer' could be a person who has been granted legal parental responsibility for a child under the Family Law Act. The inclusion of the 'other carer' recognises that other legal rights and responsibilities may be relevant to the family's circumstances and that the commissioner needs to take these matters into account when considering the best interests of the child.

Another matter raised in submissions is whether a birth parent or cultural parent who is under 18 years of age should be able to make an application. The eligibility requirement under clause 32 of the bill requires an applicant to be 18 years of age or above if they wish to apply for a cultural recognition order. The intention is not for the bill to interfere with the cultural practice as the cultural practice can occur when a parent is under 18. Due to serious and permanent implications of legal recognition, it is considered important at this stage that only adults are able to apply. I acknowledge that this is an issue that can be further considered as part of the two-year review of the legislation, after we have allowed the legislation to operate and then consider whether it is delivering accessible services and outcomes to the families involved.

I would like to address the statement of reservation in the committee report by members of the opposition. Firstly, I thank honourable members for their support and for the committee recommendation that the bill be passed. The bill achieves an effective balance between providing for

an accessible process for applicants as well as providing safeguards for the parties involved. To summarise a point made by the Hon. Alastair Nicholson QC in response to the committee, a change of identity involving issuing a new birth certificate is not something to be carried out by a rubber stamp. This change permanently transfers parentage and has significant flow-on effects. These matters need to be dealt with in a comprehensive legal framework that is also accessible for applicants. We acknowledge that support for applicants in navigating the legal framework is also essential. This support, including initial advice about the process, optional legal support and access to interpreters, will be provided as part of implementing the new legislation.

Another matter raised is how the bill deals with the principle of the best interests of the child as referred to in a number of the submissions. This is an established principle that is consistent with community expectations and the prevailing law. We made a public commitment to include best interests as one of the key elements of the bill and have crafted the legislation on this basis.


In relation to the issue of criminal checks for cultural parents, I note these are provided for in the bill as an important safeguard where the application concerns a child. I acknowledge the significant privacy, confidentiality and cultural concerns raised in relation to criminal history checks. However, we have paid close attention to ensuring that the bill appropriately addresses these concerns by ensuring that there is procedural fairness for the cultural parent—for example, giving cultural parents the opportunity to respond to what is included in a criminal history report and being able to challenge the commissioner's decision.

In the concluding remarks of Paul Ban's submission on behalf of the Kupai Omasker Working Party, this bill provides Torres Strait Islanders with the legal security to their cultural family practice that they have been seeking for the past 35 years. It has been a long time coming and it will be groundbreaking legislation.

The bill marks a historic and significant milestone in bringing together island custom with Queensland law, delivering on our commitment to reframe the relationship with First Nation Queenslanders and move forward with mutual respect and recognition of a Torres Strait Islander cultural practice that deepens and enriches the lives of our Queensland communities.

In summary, I want to thank the Premier for her leadership and for her support. I want to thank the member for Cook, Cynthia Lui, the first Torres Strait Islander elected to this parliament and someone who has fought to make this happen for her community. I want to thank the member for South Brisbane. I want to thank the member for Waterford, the ministerial champion for Torres Strait Islanders. I want to thank the member for Bulimba.

I want to thank the departmental officials who did so much work behind the scenes: from DATSIP, Jason Kidd and Tony Cheng; from the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women, Megan Giles; and from DJAG, Leanne Robertson. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (4.10 pm): As the Liberal National Party's shadow minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partnerships, I rise to address the Meriba Omasker Kaziw Kazipa (Torres Strait Islander Traditional Child Rearing Practice) Bill 2020. At the outset, I wish to acknowledge the tireless advocacy of the Torres Strait Islander community, including those community leaders who are no longer with us today and who commenced this work decades ago.

I can confirm that the Liberal National Party will not be opposing this legislation. That being said, there are a number of important matters and sensitive issues that need to be brought to the attention of the House which may potentially have a detrimental effect on the intent of this legislation and its practical operation. I will be expanding further on these issues shortly.

On 16 July 2020, the member for Cook, Cynthia Lui MP, introduced the Meriba Omasker Kaziw Kazipa (Torres Strait Islander Traditional Child Rearing Practice) Bill into the Queensland parliament. As a parliamentarian, I wish to acknowledge the importance of this legislation to the member for Cook—Queensland's first Torres Strait Islander member of parliament—particularly when introducing this legislation to the Queensland parliament and the significance of today's legislative debate for Queensland's Torres Strait Islander communities and First Nation peoples.

Upon its introduction, this legislation was then referred to the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee for its detailed consideration and examination. The parliamentary committee tabled its report to the Queensland parliament on 28 August 2020, with five recommendations in addition to its first recommendation that the bill be passed.

Of these recommendations, recommendation 2 is that the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships prioritise the implementation of education programs that are culturally appropriate, independent and supportive and that independent counselling and support be made available to people who may experience trauma as a result of this process. Recommendation 3 is that the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships establish the offices for the Office of the Commissioner in both Cairns and Thursday Island in facilities separate to departmental offices.

Recommendations 4 and 5 suggest amending clause 124 of the bill to further amend section 44 of the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 2003 in order to explicitly instruct the registrar to remove the names of the birth parents from the new birth certificate, as well as ensure that the registrar may give requested information relating to a closed entry for a person who is the subject of the traditional recognition order and while still a child only with the consent of one or more of the cultural parents and/or guardian.

Finally, recommendation 6 of the report proposes amending section 45 of the bill to ensure the destruction of any criminal history information received by the commissioner under that section occurs as soon as practicable after the information is no longer needed for the purpose for which it was requested, similar to other relevant Queensland acts.

I would like to acknowledge and thank the parliamentary committee for its considered assessment of this legislation and its consultation which saw the parliamentary committee also visit and engage with Torres Strait Islander community representatives in Townsville, Cairns, Bamaga, Thursday Island and Saibai Island during what was a very tight schedule.

As well as acknowledging the work of the LNP's member for Nicklin, Marty Hunt MP, and other elected representatives of the committee, I would also like to make a special mention of and acknowledge the work and contribution of the deputy chair, the Liberal National Party's member for Caloundra, Mark McArdle MP. In this, the final sitting week of the 56th Parliament, I wish to thank the member for Caloundra not only for his invaluable contribution to the current Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee but also for his more than 16 years of service to this parliament including ministerial, shadow ministerial and committee roles, not to mention his service to his constituents of Caloundra. I wish Mark, his wife, Judy, and his entire family all the best for the future.

Throughout its consultation and in addition to its regional public and private briefings, the committee received 19 submissions from various individuals and organisations including the Queensland Family and Child Commission, the Queensland Indigenous Family Violence Legal Service, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service, the Queensland Human Rights Commission, Adoptee Rights Australia, the Queensland Law Society, the Torres Shire Council and the Torres Strait Island Regional Council, the Torres Strait Regional Authority, as well as from the former chief justice of the Family Court of Australia Alastair Nicholson AO RFD QC and Her Honour Judge Josephine Willis AM of the Federal Circuit Court of Australia.

In thanking all who contributed to the consultation and consideration of this legislation, I would like to also acknowledge that throughout this process, and given the culturally significant nature of what is being legislated for, for a number of submitters the process of sharing their own stories and lived experiences was deeply personal and at times confronting. On behalf of the Liberal National Party opposition, I wish to thank all of those who took the time to share their own stories.

As articulated by the member for Cook in her introductory speech, the overarching purpose of this legislation is to provide legal recognition of 'an ancient, sacred and enduring child-rearing practice' and one which is 'an integral part of Torres Strait Islander cultural fabric'. Further, it is a practice that 'sits on the foundations of Torres Strait Islander culture and cultural decision-making process in Torres Strait Islander community and family life'.

Notwithstanding the cultural and historical significance of this legislation, this legislation is also historic in that, in a first for any jurisdiction in Australia, it is seeking to formally legislate within our Westminster system for a traditional Torres Strait Islander custom and practice. Such is the significance of this legislative milestone that it is therefore crucial that the Palaszczuk state Labor government legislates with the utmost care and responsibility whilst maintaining fidelity to our democratic processes and institutions.

In examining the greater detail of this legislation, and as per the explanatory notes, the objectives of this bill are to: firstly, recognise island custom child-rearing practice; secondly, establish a process for applications to be made for the legal recognition of the practice; and, thirdly, provide for a decision-making process that will establish the legal effect of the practice.

Accordingly, this bill seeks to make a number of consequential amendments to existing legislation including amending the Adoption Act 2009 to set out additional principles for the administering of that act in relation to an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person; multiple amendments to the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 2003 including a new subsection to be inserted, subsection 13A, setting out a process for obtaining information held in a register and kept by the registrar; amendments to the Criminal Code including an amendment to the definition of 'parent' to include cultural parents under a cultural recognition order as being parents in relation to the criminal offence of child stealing; as well as a number of amendments to the following acts: 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, finally, the Right to Information Act 2009.

In attempting to legislate for a centuries old, traditional customary Torres Strait Islander practice—from 'lore' to 'law' as it has been termed—it is worth examining the background to this traditional child-rearing practice, known as 'ailan kastom', and the modern-day difficulties that have been encountered. To quote directly from report No. 40 of the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee—

The notion of the extended family is integral to Torres Strait Islander culture. A broad view is held about who is included in family and the role played by this extended family, particularly in relation to child rearing 'for transmitting traditional values and skills and other cultural practices, and for ensuring continuity of moral precepts and behaviour'.

This custom or practice involves the shared responsibility of raising children and supports the permanent transfer of parentage for a child from the biological parents to the cultural parents in accordance with island custom. It bears repeating, as per the committee's report, that this practice takes place under a consent based verbal agreement that usually occurs within an extended family and that, whilst the child remains with the extended family, the child takes the name of the new family.

Whilst the practice of traditional adoption has been taking place within Torres Strait island communities for generations, such a practice has not been recognised as a legal transfer of parentage under either Queensland or Australian case law or legislation. Accordingly, the absence of legal recognition of this practice has ultimately resulted in significant legal issues and complications across three key areas, including birth certificates. Adoptive parents and their traditionally adopted children are currently not able to obtain a birth certificate that reflects traditional adoption arrangements. This then has flow-on practical issues when a birth certificate needs to be produced for proof of identity and other legal documentary requirements. Issues have also arisen with succession law and disputes over estates, with complications stemming from whether a traditionally adopted child is legally the issue or child of a deceased person and where that person has not made a will. The third identified complication arises when birth parents challenge the custody of traditional parents. As the committee report expanded upon, there have been various court cases detailing the challenges encountered by either adoptive parents or their traditionally adopted children in having their status recognised.

In seeking to formally legislate this cultural practice and create a legally recognised transfer of parentage, this bill importantly proposes the establishment of a new commissioner and relevant offices. I note that the commissioner will be 'an appropriately qualified senior Torres Strait Islander person with a deep understanding and knowledge of traditional child rearing practice'. Accordingly, as per clauses 22 to 25 of the bill, the functions and powers of the new commissioner will be to: independently consider and decide applications made under the bill; manage the effective and efficient operation of the commissioner's office; promote community awareness and understanding; advise the Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages of each cultural recognition order; and advise and report to the minister on matters in relation to the administration of the legislation.

Whilst I note the strong support, as stated by many, for the commissioner to be a Torres Strait Islander, I do wish to note the concerns shared regarding not only the inadequacy of community education and understanding of the commissioner's role and function but also the geographic location of the office of the commissioner. Upon hearing the varied views of many, specifically with regard to the most suitable location of the office of the commissioner—with locations suggested from Cairns through to Brisbane—the committee ultimately stated in recommendation 3—

To uphold the independence of the Commissioner, the committee recommends that the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships establish the offices for the Office of the Commissioner, in both Cairns and Thursday Island, in facilities separate to departmental offices.

I note the minister's advice that the department will be taking this into further consideration.

In my remaining time I wish to briefly elaborate further on some of the issues and concerns that have been identified throughout this process. The first such issue pertains to community concerns regarding the complexity of the proposed process. As articulated in the statement of reservation by the members for Caloundra and Nicklin, despite the bill's best intentions—and indeed, the general intent of the bill being supported by Torres Strait Islander communities—by attempting to legislate for, and legally recognise the Torres Strait Islander traditional adoption practice within the Westminster framework, invariably concerns have been raised that the process has become overly complicated. Indeed, concerns were raised that the process has become complicated to the point where it may in fact deter Torres Strait Islanders from engaging with the legal process altogether. As Judge Josephine Willis AM shared with parliamentary committee member Marty Hunt MP—

The fear, I think, is that people will be put off by its complexity and say, 'Oh, we still can't do it.' Really, the complexities have been a big part. If I may say with respect, you are astute to see that the complexities could derail it.

To that end, I again note the parliamentary committee's second recommendation that the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships prioritise the implementation of education programs that are culturally appropriate, independent and supportive, in addition to the department also exploring opportunities for the provision of independent counselling and support to be made available to those who may experience trauma as a result of their integration with the legal recognition process. This is a sensible recommendation to be enacted. If the government truly wishes to deliver on its commitment to these communities and provide this new legal framework and recognition, then I would certainly encourage it to consider this.

In what is a somewhat related issue to this, I also wish to raise concerns regarding the time frames around the introduction, committee inquiry and reporting on this bill. Whilst acknowledging that legal recognition of island custom has been effectively worked on by, and advocated for, various eminent persons and committees for the better part of three decades, it is unfortunate that some felt this legislation has been effectively rushed. Such sentiments were expressed by community members throughout the committee hearings, many of whom were disappointed there was not sufficient time for the community to fully digest or even discuss the legislation. Unfortunately, we have seen legislation being rushed throughout this term of parliament, and it appears that this has occurred once again with respect to this legislation. It is particularly the case when it comes to this legislation, which is extremely important for Torres Strait Islander communities.

The Liberal National Party also wishes to place on record concerns regarding the 'best interests of the child' principle as outlined in part 1, clause 6 of the bill. Specifically, and as identified in the statement of reservation, in listing matters which must be considered the bill states in subsection (vi) that the commissioner or decision-maker is obliged to take into consideration 'any other matter that is directly related to the child's wellbeing and best interests'. The Liberal National Party believes that such a consideration could in fact go against the intent of the legislation by risking a significant number of other considerations currently under Queensland and federal law. Accordingly, despite espousing the attempted removal of many of the constraints previously in place to have cultural adoption legally recognised, this could have the opposite effect and impose further hurdles and potential and additional negative consequences.

Briefly, can I also bring to the attention of the House inconsistencies around the provision of a criminal history check to be sought by the proposed commissioner. Despite the requirement for a criminal history check being at the discretion of the commissioner, applicants must still provide their consent to such a check regardless of whether it is utilised or not. As submitted to the committee, there are genuine concerns that there may be a reluctance by community members to consent to such a check or even engage with this process altogether due to a possibly misguided assumption that any historical offence may be an excluding offence. With insufficient clarification offered around the application of criminal history checks, the Liberal National Party believes that further investigation is warranted into explicitly identifying disqualifying offences so as to ensure the community—and, importantly, the commissioner—is clear on what must be taken into consideration.


Finally, I would like to note the estimated costs for the implementation of this whole framework. The explanatory notes state that the costs of implementing the new legislation will involve: providing for a full-time commissioner to make decisions under the legislation; establishing an office to support the work of the commissioner; establishing an office within the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships to provide support to applicants; resource costs for the Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages, including in relation to providing new birth certificates; legal support and interpreter costs for the birth parents and cultural parents to ensure all parties are informed about the long-term

implications of the process; promoting community awareness and education of the new model; and the impact on court resources in relation to any dispensation applications, discharge applications or judicial review applications.

Ultimately, such costs have not been quantified or provided at this stage by the Palaszczuk state Labor government. Queenslanders throughout this process have remained in the dark on the total cost of this framework. This is even before the costs of the committee's recommendations are also taken into consideration. Therefore, it would be only prudent and appropriate for the Palaszczuk state Labor government to provide to the House its estimated cost for the establishment and resourcing of this new framework.

In concluding my contribution today, I will say that, whilst the Liberal National Party will be supporting the passage of this legislation, there remain aspects and unaddressed concerns which could ultimately and adversely impact the intent of the legislation as well as the community's engagement with this proposed process. That is why the Liberal National Party believes a review of this legislation and the framework that has been put in place would be advisable after two years so as to address any issues that arise or are encountered.

I again thank all members of the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee for their examination of the legislation. I acknowledge the support provided by the committee secretariat as well as all organisations and stakeholders which submitted to the inquiry. I have also noted the amendments that have been circulated and authorised by the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, and I understand the rationale for why they have been circulated. In conclusion, I commend this bill to the House.

 **Ms LUI** (Cook—ALP) (4.30 pm): I rise today in support of the Meriba Omasker Kaziw Kazipa (Torres Strait Islander Traditional Child Rearing Practice) Bill 2020. On 16 July 2020, I had the great privilege of introducing the bill to parliament as a private member's bill. The bill was referred to the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee. I am humbled to stand here today as a First Nation woman, Torres Strait Islander and member of parliament representing the Palaszczuk Labor government. For the first time, we will see island custom or traditional lore be embedded in Queensland law.

I would like to acknowledge the Hon. Craig Crawford, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, the Hon. Di Farmer, Minister for Child Safety, Youth and Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence, and the committee chair, Mr Aaron Harper, committee members and the secretariat for their hard work and contribution to the bill. I also want to acknowledge the member for South Brisbane, Jackie Trad, and the Hon. Shannon Fentiman for their fierce advocacy and support for this important legislative reform.

This bill delivers on the Palaszczuk government's 2017 election commitment to introduce new laws that recognise Torres Strait Islander families' continued use of Torres Strait Islander traditional child-rearing practice. In doing so, I would like to acknowledge the Palaszczuk Labor government and our Premier, the Hon. Anastacia Palaszczuk, for their unwavering commitment to the First Nation peoples of Queensland. This has been a long journey. I acknowledge the Kupai Omasker Working Party for their strong lobbying for the legal recognition of this cultural practice, and of course in the most recent times the three eminent persons—Aunty Ivy Trevallion, Uncle Charles Passi and Hon. Alistair Nicholson—supported by the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women for consulting the Torres Strait Islander community and other stakeholders in November and December 2018.


The legal recognition of this ancient Torres Strait Islander practice is an important step forward in the Queensland government's journey to a reframed relationship with First Nation peoples. It acknowledges the strength of Torres Strait Islander culture and promotes the right of Torres Strait Islanders to enjoy, maintain, control, protect and develop their kinship ties under the Human Rights Act 2019 while still ensuring the protection of children and in their best interests.

In my maiden speech in 2018, I carried with me a Torres Strait Islands mat. The Torres Strait Islands mat is telling of the Torres Strait Islands child-rearing practice in that the overlapping of each strand of pandanus fibre, which is the child, represents the intricate kinship structure that holds Torres Strait families and communities together. When a child is given by their birth parents to the receiving parents, this results in the receiving parents assuming all parental responsibility for the child and the child having the same surname, cultural rights and entitlements, including the right of inheritance.

Torres Strait Islanders have a cultural obligation to protect the right and identity of the child, and under no circumstance is the identity of the child questioned. However, as we heard throughout various public hearings, the identity of the child comes under questioning when, for one reason or another, they present for a birth certificate and face the dilemma of proving their identity. For most, this happens in the very early years and causes a lot of hurt, pain and unnecessary stress for the receiving parents of children and often the children themselves.

The bill provides for a process for making an application for legal recognition. If granted, this will result in a permanent transfer of parentage from the biological parents to the receiving parents and establishes a framework that is consent based and voluntary. Not choosing to apply for legal recognition will not affect what has happened at the cultural level. Culturally, this traditional practice protects the best interests of the child first and foremost. Legal recognition means we give dignity to the receiving parents and the children raised in accordance with the practice. Their legal identity has not reflected their cultural identity and lived experience of family.

At the end of the day, this bill means so much to those who are in a situation where they cannot get a passport or obtain identity documents we take for granted every day, like a driver's licence. It is extremely difficult to get those documents. Opening a bank account and school enrolments are also challenging. This bill not only recognises a tradition from time immemorial—and I will say that in my speech—but also on a practical level will mean that people will be able to do things many of us take for granted. I wholeheartedly commend this bill to the House.

 **Mr McARDLE** (Caloundra—LNP) (4.35 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Meriba Omasker Kaziw Kazipa (Torres Strait Islander Traditional Child Rearing Practice) Bill 2020. I want to congratulate the member for Cook for bringing this bill to the House. I hope this is the first of many such bills that we can adopt in this state that acknowledges and respects traditional values and processes going forward. As the shadow minister made quite clear, we are not opposing the bill. In fact, it would be wrong for us to oppose this bill. It is a good bill and it is a bill I think we should be very proud of as a parliament. We should be able to say to the whole of Australia that we did this first. I look forward to more of this down the track as time goes by.

My comments, however, tie into the shadow minister's comments in relation to the process to be undertaken in this bill. I had in the back of my mind initially that this would be a simple process to acknowledge an already existing finality. The Torres Strait Islander community had come together and formulated what they believed was in the best interests of the child. That child would move to another mother and father and understand their parents to be maybe a sister or a brother. I believe that was the intent of the bill. However, when I read the bill, I became concerned that the bill actually imposes a whole second process on top of that which applicants and other people involved in the process will have to go through.

An applicant, in fact, will have to re-prove their case before the commissioner before a certificate can be issued. Under the bill, an application has to be filed under clause 34. With that, there must also be a signed statement from each birth parent, a statement from each cultural parent, a statement from a nominated person called an informed person attesting to the fact that the processes undertaken at the cultural level have been complied with, and also potentially a statement from what is called 'an other carer'. We have initially here a process underway which is well known to western legal procedures, in particular the Family Court.

Not only that, the statements must satisfy the terms that are set out in clauses 35, 36, 38 and 39 respectively when referring to the individual statements I have referred to. Each of those clauses requires the person making the statement to say why it is in the best interests of the child for the process to go ahead. My concern is not so much the outcome; my concern is that what we are doing is saying to an historical cultural process that you still have to prove to us that what you have done is correct, even though we accept what you have done is correct. That worries me. Under clause 41, the commissioner, who is the person to determine the application, may require additional information. Under clause 44, there are conditions and terms as to what is the consideration procedure. Under clause 45, a criminal history check must be obtained.

Again, I am concerned that we are imposing a western standard upon an historical cultural history and we are re-litigating what has taken place within the Torres Strait Islander community all over again, and I do not think that was the intent of Torres Strait Islanders. It is a complex procedure. It is legalistic in the extreme, but in my opinion it does get worse.

Clause 56 outlines what considerations must be satisfied to make a decision. Critically, it comes down to the words that the decision is based upon the 'wellbeing and the best interests of the child'. That term has bedevilled courts for a lengthy period of time. It has been greatly debated and raked

over. I am concerned that the existence of this particular set of words in this bill may well cause problems down the track given it sits within a western legal process. It is an issue that has already been decided by the birth parents, the cultural parents and the community as a whole. We are forcing them to re-litigate the whole procedure.

These words occur in the Family Law Act, the Child Protection Act and the Adoption Act. The commissioner must also make a declaration that he will make an order or not make an order. That again seems to me to be contrary to the cultural determination of the people of Torres Strait who have already made this call and they found it was in the best interests of the children to do so.

I know the Family Law Act grew from 57 pages in 1975 to 809 pages in 2009. That is not going to happen here, but back in 1975 the Family Law Act was stated to be a simple procedure with simple provisions to provide an outcome. What I do not want to see is a western legal system imposed upon a beautiful cultural heritage and then be provisioned or regulated to the point that it becomes unintelligible. Is there a simpler way?

Today I got hold of a statute entitled the Aboriginal Custom Adoption Recognition Act. It is part of the statutes of Nunavut. It is a territory of Northern Canada and is the home of the Inuit peoples. I will table a copy of that for the House.

Tabled paper: Document, undated, titled 'Consolidation of Aboriginal Custom Adoption Recognition Act' [\[1567\]](#).

The act states—


And desiring, without changing aboriginal customary law respecting adoptions, to set out a simple procedure by which a custom adoption may be respected and recognized and a certificate recognizing the adoption will be issued having the effect of an order of a court of competent jurisdiction in Nunavut so that birth registrations can be appropriately altered in Nunavut and other jurisdictions in Canada;

It is almost a mirror of what we are trying to do here. In that case a person applying for a certificate must provide information to the commissioner, including a statement by the adoptive parents and any other person who, is under Aboriginal customary law, interested in the adoption, that the child was adopted in accordance with Aboriginal customary law. On receipt of the information provided under section 2(2) and a certified copy of the registration of the birth, the custom adoption commissioner shall determine whether the information is complete and in order. If they are satisfied, then they issue a certificate. It is based upon the actual procedure of the cultural history and heritage of the applicant. They accept that what has taken place in the cultural home by those people involved is satisfactory.

The compare and contrast I make is this—and I understand the minister's commentary in relation to process: if we are going to say to Torres Strait Islanders, 'We accept that what you have done has been happening since time immemorial and we accept that that decision includes the best interests of the child as part of the determination,' why are we imposing a western system of law which relitigates that and, in fact, gives the commissioner the right to refuse that application?

The Canadian Territorial Lands Act does away with that doubling up of process and allows the procedure put in place by the cultural and birth parents to be supreme. I only make the point because, as I said before, I do not want this to fall over because of the procedures that often follow from western law taking control and then imposing more and more regulation. I think the minister is right: a two-year review is absolutely pivotal. I make the comment not to be critical, but to raise my concerns about what could be—


(Time expired)

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (4.45 pm): It is with great pride that I rise to make a contribution on the Torres Strait Islander traditional child-rearing practice bill 2020. When this bill was introduced by the member for Cook on 16 June this year, it was the culmination of 30 years of work by Torres Strait Islander elders who have fought for the legal recognition of the traditional child-rearing practices of the Torres Strait. Torres Strait Islanders have supported their children and each other through large, loving, extended families for generations. Until now, there has never been a structure for legal recognition of these relationships. This has caused undue hardship and trauma for some Torres Strait Islander families. Young people are unable to get a driver's licence because they do not have the necessary birth certificate. Some Torres Strait Islanders have never voted for the same reason. Importantly, their birth certificates can now match their cultural identity.

As the member for Cook said when she introduced the bill, she spoke her 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'. I wholeheartedly endorse those

sentiments. Every time I have the privilege of going to the Torres Strait, or meeting with Torres Strait Islanders anywhere around Queensland, I am struck by the quiet, gentle wisdom of their culture. The strength of the women has struck me from the outset. Their patience is something we can all learn from. Even though they have suffered frustration and near defeat in their quest for legal recognition, they have never despaired or given up hope. I was moved by the member for Cook's extremely gracious statement on the introduction of this bill. She said, 'We begged and borrowed for this thing to happen and today all the sweat, tears and frustrations that we went through are like water under the bridge—the current has taken them away.'

The sleepless nights of parents with adopted children are over. No longer will they toss and turn, worrying about having to produce identification documents to enrol their children in school or in TAFE. They will have senior certificates in a name that reflects their cultural identity. I am proud to be in this House today on this historic occasion. I acknowledge those in the gallery who quietly and determinedly set forth on the long journey to achieve legal recognition. I mourn for those who are not here to join us in today's historic moment. As the first Torres Strait Islander elected to the Queensland parliament, the member for Cook has led this very important and proud day for the people of the Torres Strait. I commend her, I commend her work and I commend the work of the ministers and the government. I commend the bill to this House.

 **Mr HUNT** (Nicklin—LNP) (4.48 pm): Firstly, I would like to thank the committee secretariat and my fellow committee members for conducting this important body of work with such short notice and tight time frames—time frames that I fear may have resulted in a rushed bill that is not quite up to the task it is designed to perform.

Ms Enoch: Thirty years in the making.

Mr HUNT: I will get to the quotes from the community. After 30 years, the people of the Torres Strait deserve better than a rushed bill with 90 minutes of parliamentary debate. It is obvious that the Premier suddenly had to get this election commitment through at the eleventh hour, at this last sitting of parliament. It is disappointing that more time was not allocated to the development of the bill and community consultation. As I said, the Torres Strait Islander community deserves better. Ms Dalassa Yorkston, CEO of the Torres Strait Shire Council, giving evidence in a private capacity, made comments at the Thursday Island public hearing in relation to the rushing of this bill. She said—

Probably the first thing to note is the time. It has been a very short period of time since the bill was presented. Around this room, I do not believe all of the families here would have had the opportunity to read the 62-page bill. I think it is really important that, in introducing such things into parliament, we make sure that there is an appropriate time to do that.

This issue is very important to the people of the Torres Strait islands. It was an absolute pleasure and an honour to visit the islands recently and I want to thank the Torres Strait Islander communities for their hospitality and engagement with the parliamentary process. It is indeed a beautiful part of Queensland where traditional culture is cherished, nurtured and continued. This parliament is right to be supportive of that. The LNP supports the bill before the House as a measure to recognise and support these communities to continue what has been a part of their cultural practices going far back into their history.

The traditional practice of children being raised by parents other than the biological parents in these communities has been going on for generations and will continue to be practised regardless of this legislation. This legislation is designed to embed in our Westminster system laws to recognise the practice and to ensure that our system of law does not impact this cultural practice negatively, as it seems to have in the past.

We heard evidence that, frequently, children were having their adoption revealed to them by birth certificate information required to enrol in school or sport or for other reasons and that this has caused significant trauma to many in the community. We heard very sad stories of this occurring from many individuals who recounted their very personal experiences to the committee, both publicly and privately. I want to thank those individuals who bravely came forward to share this with us. The community is seeking to regain control of the process by ensuring that documents related to the parents of the child reflect the arrangements made in the community and to regain the opportunity to disclose the details of the process to the child at a time and in a manner that is culturally appropriate to them.

Through the committee process we heard that the intent of the bill was generally supported by the Torres Strait Islander community, with some exceptions. There was evidence given of concerns with the process being overly complex and a desire to have it simplified to encourage community members to engage with it. There was a general expression by the community that there were fears

that the bill may not be suitable to achieve the objectives that it sought to but that they had waited so long that any bill will do for now and could be fixed later. Aunty Ivy Trevallion commented after questions on the complexity of the process—

After 30 years of trying to work out how we are going to do it and to marry the practice with ... the western law, we would have to design our cultural practice so that it fits in with the administrative practice of today, the legal practice of today. We cannot write down what we do because it is so complicated ... We need something very simple in place that our families can use. Remember, we are illiterate. We do not understand the law very well and we speak a number of languages. It is better to have something very simple that we can use for our families and that they can use for their children.

The bill does require quite a complex process in terms of documentation and statements. The community will need education and support to access the process. It will be interesting to see if the community does engage in the process widely as it is intended.

In our statement of reservation related to the complexity of the process, I quoted the evidence of Federal Court Circuit Judge Josephine Willis AM, who also expressed some concern about the complexity of the process as a possible deterrent to people accessing it but noted the two-year review as a possible opportunity to make improvements. At the Cairns public hearing she stated—


The fear, I think, is that people will be put off by its complexity and say, 'Oh, we still can't do it.' Really, the complexities have been a big part. If I may say with respect, you are astute to see that the complexities could derail it.

Mr Genus Passi, a community member, commented at the public hearing in Townsville—

For us, traditional adoption is quite simple. We do not want to complicate that by adding and adding ... with English being the second or third language, we do not want to overcomplicate things. We know traditional adoption as this process and I think we need to stick to that process ... I think the more simple we keep it, the better we understand it as a process.

As I stated in our statement of reservation, there are also inconsistencies around the provision for a criminal history check to be sought by the commissioner. The commissioner has discretion whether or not to seek a criminal history check; however, applicants are required under the process to consent to it. The committee heard evidence of the relatively high rates of offending in Torres Strait Islander communities for what may be considered minor and/or historic offences, and there may be a reluctance by community members to consent to a history check or a reluctance to even participate in the process due to a possibly misguided assumption that if they have any offences in their history they will be excluded from the process. This particular clause related to criminal history checks I contend warrants further investigation into perhaps specifying disqualification offences to ensure the commissioner is clear about what must be taken into consideration. The ambiguity and uncertainty around this process may be a barrier to people.


I really do hope that this bill and this process work for the people of the Torres Strait. They have been waiting a long time for legal recognition of their traditional adoption and child-rearing practices. I fear that it was rushed, I fear that it has not undergone proper consideration and consultation and I fear that as a result the community is settling for second best, but, as Aunty Ivy alluded to, it is a start for them. Hopefully the flaws can be ironed out over the short term and the community regains control of its cultural practices.

 **Ms TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (4.57 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Meriba Omasker Kaziw Kazipa (Torres Strait Islander Traditional Child Rearing Practice) Bill 2020. I will keep my remarks short as all of the relevant detail has already been addressed by my comrades and colleagues on this side of the House. I note that this bill has been more than 35 years in the making. If ever there was an example of why the principles of inclusion and diversity are so important in this place in terms of making laws for all Queenslanders then it is this bill delivered by the member for Cook, the first Torres Strait Islander elected to any parliament in Australia.

I am so incredibly proud to be part of the Australian Labor Party that has always championed the rights of First Nation peoples. Today in this House we are giving, for the first time in Australian parliaments anywhere, the right for Torres Strait Islanders to see their lore reflected in Queensland law. We can have arguments about the details and the finer points of this legislation, but today we have done what the community in the Torres Strait has been begging successive governments to do for more than three decades. I commend every single person in the public gallery and the Torres Strait Islander community for all of their incredible work, persistence and absolute tenacity to see this done.

I also want to thank the member for Waterford and Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development for her incredible leadership as a ministerial champion on helping to manoeuvre this through government. It has not been easy. I have to absolutely say that in my time and in my small contribution to this enormous historic occasion it was not always easy to reconcile the interface between traditional custom and lore with our western law, but we got there and

we got there because we never stopped persisting and trying. Today is a testament to everybody's hard work but, more than that, not just our hard work but our absolute desire to come together as one people with love and respect. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (5.00 pm): I rise to make a contribution in support of the Meriba Omasker Kaziw Kazipa (Torres Strait Islander Traditional Child Rearing Practice) Bill. I want to begin by acknowledging what a privilege it was to be guided through the inquiry process by the Torres Strait Island communities which welcomed the committee in Townsville, Cairns, Bamaga, Thursday Island and on Saibai. I also want to acknowledge and thank Cynthia Lui, the member for Cook, for introducing the bill and accompanying us in Bamaga and on Thursday Island and Saibai. That trip was my first time in the Torres Strait Islands and the northern peninsula, and it is truly stunning country.

At the beginning of each sitting day here the Speaker acknowledges how fortunate we are to live on the land of two of the world's oldest living cultures, and it is true. To visit and be welcomed into these communities makes it all the more clear that these vibrant cultures and communities with their unique and ancient law and custom are alive and long overdue for proper recognition of sovereignty no matter how much damage western invasion and colonisation has done. In debating a bill such as this, it is all the more important to be mindful of this colonial backdrop and to recognise the ongoing injustice faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Until First Nation sovereignty is recognised, whether in the Torres Strait or here in Meanjin, we live and work each day on stolen country. We continue to go about our lives, benefiting from the historical and ongoing dispossession and oppression of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

I want to sincerely thank everyone who appeared before the committee and so openly shared their own experiences of island custom and cultural child-rearing practices and the immense heartache and trauma caused when western law cuts across this custom, and that is essentially what this bill seeks to address—the incompatibility of western law with Torres Strait Islander custom around parentage and child rearing. Much of the discussion and reporting on this bill refers to traditional Torres Strait Islander adoption practices, which is not surprising simply because adoption is the best analogy available to most of us from western cultural backgrounds, but island custom is so much more than that. There is more intricacy and depth to this custom than any of us could possibly hope to address in a 10-minute contribution to this debate—the member for Cook would be excepted from that, I am sure—and certainly more than we would hope to properly address in legislation.

That brings me to perhaps the most fundamental point about this bill. Its intent is not to codify island custom child-rearing practice. The role of the committee was not to appraise and pass judgement on the appropriateness of any aspect of this customary practice and nor is that our role here today in considering this bill. I hope that is the spirit in which each and every member will approach the debate. The purpose of the bill is instead to give legal recognition to island custom child-rearing practice and to establish a process for applications to be made for the recognition of the practice. It aims in this one respect to enshrine the fundamental human right to cultural self-determination for Torres Strait Islander people and to address the countless ways in which western law has cut across this practice to the detriment of Torres Strait Islander people, communities and the ongoing cultural practice as a whole.

The quintessential example, as we have heard from other members already, is when a child learns the details of their parentage inadvertently by seeing a birth certificate or other official documentation. To learn information like this without any of the culturally appropriate family support and context is a jarring and a harmful experience, and the committee heard this all too many times while we were away, but the alternative faced by all too many children is that they simply are not able to access their birth certificate or get a driver's licence and, as a result, they are deprived of opportunities to travel for education or sport or work opportunities later in life. There is an undeniable and perhaps an inevitable tension in trying to position such longstanding cultural practice in western law, but it is essential to create a framework like this if we hope to overcome the countless intrusions of Queensland's legal and administrative framework into Torres Strait Islander cultural practices.

It is clear from the variety of comments and criticisms from stakeholders that this bill is not perfect and, to be completely honest, given the juxtaposition of western tradition and island custom, I am not convinced that any piece of legislation could perfectly do what this bill hopes to, but the bill flows, as we have heard, from decades of work and engagement with Torres Strait Island elders and communities to address these issues and it is vitally important that this reform happens. There are a number of important critiques of the bill, many of which are outlined in the committee's report—and I will address some of those shortly—but perhaps the most stinging criticism and one that could have been most easily addressed is not in the report and it is not directed at the bill itself.

I make no criticism of the member for Cook in raising this issue. It is to her credit that we are finally addressing these issues in legislation and I have no doubt that her perseverance is the main reason that this bill will pass before the 56th Parliament is dissolved, but it is inexcusable for the government to have left this issue until so late in the term. This was a 2017 election commitment, but the bill was introduced on literally the last possible day for it to pass in this term of government without an urgency motion. Some might say that it is no big deal, it will get done and the government will follow through with that commitment, but it was made crystal clear to the committee that pushing such significant legislation through at five minutes to midnight was deeply disrespectful to the communities it seeks to benefit.

Some people told us point-blank that it was disrespectful to them and their community for the committee to come and go so quickly and to give them so little opportunity to understand what is proposed in the bill, let alone offer useful feedback. Others were more circumspect in their comments but delivered the same criticism, expressing what a shame it was that we did not have the opportunity to visit each of the islands or even the main island groups to give them an opportunity to provide feedback.

On Saibai we know that there were people who wanted to give private evidence to the committee, but they were denied the opportunity to do so because we had to leave. The community there had prepared a ceremonial farewell and thanks for the committee, but we were left with so little time to undertake this inquiry that we could not even stay and afford them that respect and I felt ashamed of that. Even putting aside the cultural insensitivity of rushing this process, it is just a shame that we as a committee did not get all of the input we could have from the communities affected by the bill. It was clear from very early in the committee's travel that there had been barely enough time to inform the various Torres Strait Islander communities that we were coming and also that so many people who wanted to give input had not been given any useful explanation of what the bill proposes.


One of the concerns most routinely expressed about the bill itself, as we have heard again, was that it creates an unnecessarily complex process and that this will deter people from engaging with the new commissioner. It is true that the bill proposes an opt-in scheme, but it would obviously be self-defeating to introduce a scheme that the affected communities are disinclined to engage with because of its complexity. The requirement that receiving parents are to consent to a criminal history check as part of the application is one specific element that raised considerable concern. I do share these concerns and I note that the amendment proposed by the minister does little to address them by requiring only that the commissioner promptly destroy these criminal history checks.

Submitters also raised concerns about the amount of detail required to be provided by both the birth and cultural parents in the application, including the nature and details of the island custom practice that has taken place. The submission by Dr Loban and her colleagues from Griffith University note that this element of the process quite directly conflicts with island custom and suggests that the applicants should instead simply provide a statement that attests that the practice has occurred with their consent. Additionally, there are elements of the bill that are quite clearly not consistent with island custom such as the limitation that only adults can participate in the scheme. What is more, this limitation sets out a higher bar than what is considered appropriate under the Adoption Act and goes beyond the age of lawful consent in other legislative contexts.

That is not an exhaustive list of the important and well-considered concerns raised, but the counterpoint presented by a number of stakeholders and submitters, some with decades of experience in this space and with lived experience of island custom, is that the detail and complexity of this scheme is appropriate and strikes the right balance, and this position reflects the views expressed by the department that it is necessary to find that balance between not overly intervening in the practice and ensuring there are appropriate safeguards. Despite these competing positions on the specifics of the bill, there is no dispute that reform in this space is long overdue. I think all stakeholders, like me, would have appreciated longer to consider and work through the various issues raised by everyone involved, but the time left to progress this bill unfortunately does not afford that luxury.

Given the haste with which the bill will be passed, it is of fundamental importance that the review of this bill required in two years is based on meaningful and ongoing engagement with the Torres Strait Islander communities about all facets of the scheme. It must start immediately with consultation about the appointment of the commissioner. It is Torres Strait Islander communities that must be satisfied with the appointment of the commissioner, not just the minister. It is also essential that the government commit to proper resourcing for the department and the commissioner to ensure that they can help

Torres Strait Islander folks through the process established by this bill and to ensure that it is as accessible as possible. I do maintain that this is incredibly important and well overdue reform and while I wish we had more time to properly consult with affected communities I will be so very proud to support its passage today.

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development) (5.10 pm): I rise today to speak in support of this historic bill. I would like to begin by acknowledging the traditional owners of the land on which we meet today, the Turrbal and Jagera people, and pay my respects to elders past, present and emerging. I also want to acknowledge elders of the Torres Strait Islands: those here in the chamber today, my friends; those who are not with us today; and the elders who came before.

The words ‘meriba omasker kaziw kazipa’ from the languages of the eastern and western islands translates to ‘for our children’s children’ and today is about recognising the many generations of Torres Strait Islander children who have been raised under this traditional cultural practice. Torres Strait Islander traditional child rearing practice, or ailan kastom, allows children to be lovingly raised by close trusted family, friends or community members for a multitude of reasons, including strengthening family ties. The bill’s preamble recognises this custom as unique, ancient, integral and enduring. The lack of legal recognition, however, has caused legal barriers for Torres Strait children and families, barriers to everyday things that we take for granted, like having a passport or a driver’s licence, school enrolments, access to support services through Centrelink and even inheritance and succession.

Legal recognition of this traditional child-rearing practice will allow Torres Strait Islander people to access fundamental rights. This is a cultural practice that has kept children safe and loved for thousands of generations. It is traditional lore and it is our job as the lawmakers of all Queenslanders to make it law today. I am so proud that this bill is the first of its kind in Australia, and only one of few international examples that legally recognises a traditional custom such as this. In regard to the claims from those opposite that this has been a rushed process, I think that the elders sitting in the gallery today do not think it has been rushed. They have been advocating for this for over three decades and it is about time that we delivered this reform.

It has been a tremendous honour and privilege to serve as the ministerial champion for the Torres Strait since 2016. From my initial visit in 2016 for Mabo Day the issue of legal recognition of child rearing practices has been raised with me in so many meetings by so many passionate elders, community leaders, councillors, mayors, mums and dads, aunties and uncles. It has been a privilege, along with our incredible member for Cook, Cynthia Lui, who moved this historic bill in this House, to be an advocate for the Torres Strait community within the cabinet and within the government.

I remember one particular meeting at the DATSIP office on Thursday Island where a passionate group of Torres Strait women said to me, ‘Minister, we are Queenslanders and we are part of this country. Why do our laws not recognise us?’ These women were right, of course, and the recognition of this important cultural practice has been a long time coming. The fight for recognition has been going for three decades. I want to acknowledge the tremendous work of our eminent persons who assisted with the consultation on this bill: Aunty Ivy Trevallion, Alastair Nicholson and Charles Passi. Thank you for your leadership and your wisdom. Taking an enduring cultural practice and trying to make it fit into the Queensland legal system is not an easy task and we could not have done it without you.

I also want to thank the members of the Kupai Omasker Working Party, first formed back in 1990. I have been asked today to especially acknowledge and thank the late chair of the working party Uncle Steve Mam for his strength, wisdom and the long journey he embarked on, along with other working party members, to face so many challenges over the past 30 years. In the gallery today from the working party we have Tomasina Ahwang, Francis Tapim, Uncle Belza Lowah and, of course, Aunty McRose Elu, a member of the working party, my Torres Strait mother, my good friend. Aunty Ivy and Aunty Rose in particular have become my very dear friends. They have welcomed me into their homes, their hearts and shared with me so much of their knowledge and so many of their stories. I feel so blessed to know you and to have worked with you on this historic bill. I would also like to acknowledge the champions within this chamber who made this possible.

Of course it would not have happened without the member for Cook, Cynthia Lui—we are all so proud to have worked with you; the member for South Brisbane, Jackie Trad; Minister Craig Crawford; Minister Di Farmer; the Attorney-General; and, of course, our Premier who has visited the Torres Strait many times and listened and, most importantly, heard from community members about why this bill was so important. I want to acknowledge and thank the former government champion for the Torres

Strait, Michael Hogan and his team—especially Fergus Hogarth, Tanja Morch and Megan Giles—who is in the gallery today; as well as all of my staff who have worked with me as ministerial champion: Cynthia Kennedy, Shane Bevis, Laura Fraser Hardy and Monica Irvine. We have done it, finally. We have done it together. Eso, au esoau. Thank you.


Mr HARPER: Madam Deputy Speaker?

Mr BENNETT: Madam Deputy Speaker?

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms McMillan): The member for Thuringowa had the call.

Mr BENNETT: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. We were up at the same time and there is a speaking list.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, member, there is a speaking list, but the member for Thuringowa had the call.

 **Mr HARPER (Thuringowa—ALP) (5.16 pm):** I rise today to support the Meriba Omasker Kaziw Kazipa (Torres Strait Islander Traditional Child Rearing Practice) Bill, meaning ‘for our children’s children’. Today we are on the right side of history for a number of reasons which I will outline in my contribution. As chair of the health committee I can say that our committee was deeply humbled and honoured to have carriage of this important bill that, in effect and once passed, will finally give Torres Strait Islander adopted children true legal recognition, something we heard Torres Strait Islander people have been fighting for for over three decades, for what is considered a sacred and cultural practice that has existed for thousands of years.

This bill is truly historic as it is the first of its kind in Australia to ever recognise Torres Strait Islander traditional child rearing practices, or ailan kastom, and to incorporate Indigenous language in an integration of lore and law. I believe this bill also signals a significant and important step in our ongoing efforts of reconciliation between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander First Nations peoples and the broader Australian population. Only our collective efforts of truly recognising Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander traditional language and cultural practices will move us forward together as one. This bill certainly achieves all of that.

I acknowledge the Torres Strait Islander communities of Townsville, Cairns, Bamaga, Thursday Island and Saibai Island for welcoming the committee to their communities. For many submitters, recounting their deeply personal experience of private and confidential family arrangements was a traumatic process. They spoke of the difficulties faced when applying for things we take for granted, like applying for a driver’s licence, a passport or enrolling in TAFE. We heard of the significant trauma of Torres Strait Islander people who, when applying for those basic fundamental things, also found out on their birth certificates were the names of biological parents when all they had ever known was their family and parents who raised, supported and loved them. On behalf of the committee I wish to thank each of those individuals who generously provided their own stories to the committee.

I am extremely thankful for the assistance provided by the Eminent Persons and members of the Kupai Omasker Working Party who consulted extensively with communities prior to the introduction of this legislation and for sharing their extensive knowledge of ailan kastom with the committee. We were assisted greatly by Aunty Ivy Trevallion who is here today with many other supporters. We thank you, Aunty Ivy, not only for appearing at the public briefing in Brisbane but also for being in attendance at the Thursday Island hearing. We thank and acknowledge Aunty Ivy and others for their ongoing advocacy and guidance provided to the committee.

I also thank the Hon. Alastair Nicholson AO RFD QC, Mr Charles Passi and Mr Paul Ban for their invaluable contributions to the committee’s inquiry. I personally thank Ms Cynthia Lui, the member for Cook, for her participation in the inquiry and her attendance at regional hearings at Bamaga, Thursday Island and Saibai Island. Our committee learnt so much from those hearings. We are far better informed and deeply appreciative of the many shared personal and sacred stories told to us by Torres Strait Islanders, who also shared their rich culture and traditions with committee members.

Our committee made six recommendations and No. 1 was to pass the bill. I note that we heard feedback on where best to locate the commissioner’s office. I thank Torres Strait Island elders, particularly Uncle Francis Tapim from Townsville, for their representations in relation to having more than one commissioner, to represent the many groups of the central, eastern and western islands and to locate an office in Townsville. While we might have a friendly rivalry with Cairns, we decided that Cairns was the best spot to locate the commissioner’s office and to also have an office on Thursday

Island. I think the issue of having all the island groups represented was best summarised in our final public hearing on Saibai Island when Councillor Getano Lui said most eloquently that there is one Torres Strait and one Torres Strait island culture. We must respect those words.

I note that the LNP members of the committee made a statement of reservation and I want to address their concerns that this has been rushed. Perhaps those members ought to review the transcript of the Cairns hearing and remember what those who spoke said. I believe it was Pastor David Gela who best addressed this issue when he said that it was not rushed as this has been worked on for over 30 years through extensive consultation with the Kupai Omasker Working Party. I also thank all members of the committee, our parliamentary secretariat staff, and Lynda Pretty and Hansard reporter Bonnie Phillips who travelled with us.

I want to remind people of what Judge Willis said in Cairns. He said not to make it complex, that this practice already happens and that we are simply putting a legal framework around it. I thank Minister Crawford. I thank the many ministers who are here for their contributions. I acknowledge all of the hard work that has been done and I also acknowledge the leadership of the Premier. We thank them for that. The words 'meriba omasker kaziw kazipa' are from the languages of the eastern and western islands of the Torres Strait and can be translated as 'for our children's children'.

(Time expired)

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms McMillan): Under the provisions of the business program agreed to by the House and the time allocated for this stage of the bill having expired, the question is that the bill be now read a second time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Consideration in Detail

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms McMillan): 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.

Mr CRAWFORD (5.23 pm): I table the explanatory notes to my amendments and a statement of compatibility with human rights.

Tabled paper: Meriba Omasker Kaziw Kazipa (Torres Strait Islander Traditional Child Rearing Practice) Bill 2020, explanatory notes to Hon. Craig Crawford's amendments [\[1568\]](#).

Tabled paper: Meriba Omasker Kaziw Kazipa (Torres Strait Islander Traditional Child Rearing Practice) Bill 2020, statement of compatibility with human rights contained in Hon. Craig Crawford's amendments [\[1569\]](#).

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: In accordance with sessional order 2B, the House must now consider all remaining clauses, schedules and any postponed preamble and any amendments circulated by the minister in charge of this bill. I note that there is a preamble to the bill and, in accordance with standing order 143, consideration of the preamble is postponed until after the clauses and the schedule have been considered.

Question put—That the minister's amendments Nos 2 and 3, as circulated, be agreed to.

Amendments agreed to.

Amendments as circulated—

2 **Clause 36 (Cultural parent's statement)**

Page 26, lines 1 to 2, 'child's current address and the period the child has lived at that address'—

omit, insert—

period the child has lived with the cultural parent

3 **Clause 45 (Criminal history report)**

Page 31, after line 13—

insert—

- (5) The commissioner must ensure the report is destroyed as soon as practicable after it is no longer needed for the purpose for which it was requested.

Clauses 1 to 158 and schedule, as amended, agreed to.

Question put—That the minister's amendment No. 1, as circulated, be agreed to.

Amendment agreed to.

Amendment as circulated—

1 Preamble

Page 10, lines 8 to 9, 'been practised in the Torres Strait since time immemorial'—
omit, insert—

always been practised in the Torres Strait

Preamble, as amended, agreed to.

Third Reading

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.


Long Title

Question put—That the long title of the bill be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Local Government, Code of Conduct


 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Local Government, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (5.25 pm): In accordance with section 150E(2)(a) of the Local Government Act, I electronically table the Code of Conduct for Councillors in Queensland made by me on 4 August 2020 and approved by the Local Government Legislation (Integrity) Amendment Regulation 2020 that was notified on 21 August and also tabled in the Assembly today.

Tabled paper: Department of Local Government, Racing and Multicultural Affairs—Code of Conduct for Councillors in Queensland, Approved on 4 August 2020 [Refer to subordinate legislation No. 156] [\[1570\]](#).

CRIMINAL CODE AND OTHER LEGISLATION (WAGE THEFT) AMENDMENT BILL

Resumed from 15 July (see p. 1630).

Second Reading

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Industrial Relations) (5.26 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

Last week I met with a group of hospitality workers who have personal experience of wage theft. Like all workers, the bare minimum those workers are asking for is a fair day's pay for a fair day's work to get what is legally owed to them, but, unfortunately for them, that has not been the reality. One of the workers, Pema, told me that virtually every young person he knows has been either directly affected by wage theft or knows someone who has been. Another worker, Ben, who worked in the hospitality sector for 15 years, said that he has experienced wage theft throughout that entire period, whether that was being underpaid, not being paid for overtime, having unauthorised deductions taken from his pay and so on. Ben said that enough is enough and he is exactly right.

When wage theft is affecting one in four Queensland workers and taking more than \$2 billion out of Queensland workers' pockets each year in unpaid wages and superannuation, it is time to say that enough is enough. Far too often and for far too long the stories of wage theft and underpayment have continued unabated: \$20 million at Coles, \$9 million at Target, \$4 million at Bunnings, up to \$300 million at Woolworths, \$32 million at the Super Retail Group, over \$100 million at 7-Eleven, \$7.8 million courtesy of George Calombaris, and those are just the high-profile cases.

The Palaszczuk government was not going to stand by as Queensland workers continued to be ripped off and the federal government has sat on its hands and done nothing about rampant wage theft. That is why we set up the wage theft inquiry—an inquiry that those opposite voted against. It is why the Palaszczuk government has acted on the recommendations from that inquiry by introducing these new laws to criminalise wage theft and provide a simple, quick and low-cost wage recovery process so that affected workers can get back what is legally owed to them.

I also thank all of the organisations that made written submissions to the committee and those who appeared to give evidence to the inquiry. I acknowledge particularly the valuable contributions of the individual Queensland workers who participated in the inquiry and told their stories of wage theft—workers like Tara Small, who shared her experience as an 18-year-old in the hospitality industry in which she had to work for free for 12 to 14 hours a day at events.

Debate, on motion of Ms Grace, adjourned.

PROTECTING QUEENSLANDERS FROM VIOLENT AND CHILD SEX OFFENDERS AMENDMENT BILL

Resumed from 19 September 2018 (see p. 2599).

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms McMillan): Before calling the member for Ninderry, I note that I have received correspondence from the member for Toowoomba South advising of his absence from this week's sitting and giving his consent for the member for Ninderry to take carriage of this bill.

Second Reading



Mr PURDIE (Ninderry—LNP) (5.31 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

The Protecting Queenslanders from Violent and Child Sex Offenders Amendment Bill 2018 is an important bill for Queensland. Let us not forget why the opposition was obliged to introduce it. In August 2018, the Attorney-General's application to extend Robert John Fardon's supervision order was dismissed. In September, we learned of the possibility of Robert John Fardon walking our streets unsupervised. That same month, in a blind panic as they anticipated that the Attorney-General's appeal would fail, they rushed through last-minute amendments to the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill that was before the House—all this for a man who raped a 12-year-old at gunpoint, attempted to rape a girl under 10 and violently raped and assaulted a woman only 20 days after his release from custody. He regularly breaches supervision orders and has been described as an anti-authoritarian psychopath who appears to have no remorse. Robert John Fardon and men like him should remain strictly supervised for life. Queenslanders should not trust paedophiles to self-report to police.

It was obvious that the Palaszczuk Labor government had no plan B when it came to Robert John Fardon, for serious sexual offenders, so they pretended. They legislated a self-reporting system for some of the worst criminals in Queensland history. The purpose of this bill is to amend the Dangerous Prisoners (Sexual Offenders) Act 2003, known as the DP(SO) Act. The bill amends provisions around the framework that governs supervision orders and adds an additional framework which applies to repeat sex offenders who are no longer subject to a court ordered supervision order.

The purpose of the bill is to introduce a framework so that court ordered supervision orders are indeterminate rather than a fixed term; supervision orders are reviewed by the Governor in Council rather than the Supreme Court; and repeat violent and child sex offenders will be monitored even when they are no longer deemed a serious danger to the community. The safety and protection of the community is paramount when making any decision under the DP(SO) Act. This means that all supervision orders are indeterminate and will operate until the Governor in Council is satisfied that the prisoner is no longer a serious danger to the community. The court must not state an end date for a supervision order. The Governor in Council must review the released prisoner's supervision order. In cases where supervision is ordered after the commencement of the bill, the Governor in Council must review the order within five years of the order being made by the court. For prisoners subject to a supervision order made before the commencement of the bill, the review must be undertaken during the last six months of the supervision order. There will be subsequent annual reviews while the order continues to have effect. In deciding whether a released prisoner is a serious danger to the community, the Governor in Council must have regard to the matters the court considered when making the supervision order.

A new provision is inserted into the DP(SO) Act to ensure that all offenders convicted of two or more serious sexual offences are subject to an indeterminate supervision order by operation of the law and without a specific order. A repeat offender is defined in the bill and means an offender who is convicted of two or more serious sexual offences committed by the offender when the offender was an adult. The repeat offender is subject to the indeterminate supervision order until the Attorney-General is satisfied that the supervision order is no longer in the public interest. The objects of the DP(SO) Act are amended to ensure that, in making a decision under the act, a person or body must give paramount consideration to the safety and protection of the community. The DP(SO) Act is further amended to ensure that the first and foremost priority is the protection of the community. These provisions reflect the principles introduced in Victoria's recently introduced legislation, the Serious Offenders Act 2018.

I would like to stress that the supervision orders are still court ordered. The key difference is that they will no longer be fixed for a period of time. In saying that, any court ordered supervision order which is made after the commencement of the act will be reviewed within five years, and any person who is currently subject to a supervision order will have their order reviewed within six months of the end of their order. In other words, an order with a fixed term which was issued by the Supreme Court prior to the legislation commencing will be recognised so there will be no infringement of the court's decision. As members would be aware, the indeterminate supervision order for repeat offenders was introduced as a means of ensuring that at least some safeguards are in place for Queenslanders when a released prisoner no longer qualifies for a court ordered supervision order.

I would like to address the constitutionality of this bill. Prior to drafting the bill, we analysed the judgement of the High Court case of *Pollentine v Bleijie* [2014] HCA 30. That case involved the High Court's analysis of whether section 18 of the Criminal Law Amendment Act 1945 was invalid on the grounds that it was contrary to chapter III of the Constitution by way of infringing the principles identified in *Kable v Director of Public Prosecutions*. In short, section 18 of the Criminal Law Amendment Act enables a court to detain an offender in an institution for an indefinite term in which the power to order the release of the prisoner is then transferred to the executive. The High Court in *Pollentine* held that section 18 was not invalid and therefore the provisions held to be constitutional. The bill reflects the provisions in section 18 of the Criminal Law Amendment Act and incorporates fundamental aspects that the High Court deemed constitutional. Statutory criteria, judicial review and sufficient safeguards were all aspects that went towards upholding the validity of section 18.

Similar to section 18 of the Criminal Law Amendment Act, the Governor in Council must have regard to the same statutory criteria the court had regard to when deciding whether or not the prisoner is a serious danger to the community. Importantly, it requires two psychiatrists to conduct a review and report on the level of risk that the prisoner will commit another serious sexual offence. The High Court reasoned—

The release is not at the unconfined discretion of the Executive, but dependent upon demonstration by medical opinion of the abatement of the risk of reoffending.


Their Honours reinforced the significance of the executive making a decision upon reference to a stated statutory criteria. This bill has been drafted in such a way that the Governor in Council cannot act with unrestricted discretion when deciding whether to continue or end a released prisoner's supervision order.

Similar to section 18 of the Criminal Law Amendment Act, any decision is judicially reviewable. There is nothing in the Judicial Review Act 1992 or DP(SO) Act excluding judicial review of a decision of the Governor in Council. In the absence of such an exclusion, as the Governor in Council's decision is a decision of an administrative nature it will be captured by the Judicial Review Act.

The High Court justices in *Pollentine* highlighted that the decision to terminate or not to terminate detention was to be made according to the criterion which admits of judicial review, in which the court viewed favourably. The High Court observed that the decisions about absolute or conditional release of a person detained under section 18 are made by the executive and not by a court. Their Honours went on to say that 'it by no means follows, however, that the provisions of section 18 are incompatible with or repugnant to the institutional integrity of the state courts'.

Unlike the provisions contained in the Criminal Law Amendment (Public Interest Declarations) Amendment Act 2013 that were held unconstitutional by the Supreme Court in *Attorney-General (Queensland) v Lawrence*, this bill does not contain a provision that expressly restricts judicial review of a decision of the minister and Governor in Council to decisions as affected by jurisdictional error and does not include provisions that are divorced from any statutory criteria such as those that are required to be applied by the Supreme Court in determining whether a DP(SO)A order should be made.

Ultimately, when we take away the legal issues, what any Queensland government must do is protect its people. This is something that the Palaszczuk Labor government has failed to do for the last five years. That is why the opposition believe that this bill must be passed. It will serve to protect Queensland's most vulnerable citizens, it will send the message that the community will never tolerate offending of this nature. It will guarantee that monsters like Robert John Fardon will never ever be able to hurt another woman or child again. I urge the House to support the bill.

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (5.40 pm): I rise to oppose the bill before the House. On 19 September 2018, the member for Toowoomba South introduced the Protecting Queenslanders from Violent and Child Sex Offenders Amendment Bill 2018. On 19 March 2019, the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee tabled report No. 32 recommending that the private member's bill not be passed. I thank the members of the committee for their consideration of the bill and for their report. I advise the House that the government adopts the recommendation of the majority view of the committee and will oppose the private member's bill.

Before I address the effect of the amendments proposed in this private member's bill, I would like to remind the House of some history of previous legislative activity undertaken by the LNP in this area that is fundamental to the bill before the House. In 2013, the Newman government passed the Criminal Law Amendment (Public Interest Declarations) Amendment Bill 2013. At the time, the LNP trumpeted those amendments as 'another layer of protection' for the community. This proved to be a false promise from the LNP because the Queensland Court of Appeal unanimously declared the LNP's effort to be unconstitutional. That was a rather embarrassing legacy for the member for Kawana. Not a single offender was subject to that legislation. Not for one single moment was the Queensland community any safer as a result of these invalid LNP efforts.

Before I address the practical difficulties presented by the proposals in the bill, I would like to make the current operation of the Dangerous Prisoners (Sexual Offenders) Act, known as DP(SO)A, and the Child Protection (Offender Reporting and Offender Prohibition Order) Act 2004 clear to this House. It is offensive and misleading for those opposite every time they speak on this bill and refer to what is known as the CP(OROP) Act, the Child Protection (Offender Reporting and Offend Prohibition Order) Act 2004—our act—as a self-reporting scheme like it is a voluntary scheme. That is like saying complying with road rules is voluntary—if someone wants to speed, that is okay; if someone wants to drink and drive, that is okay. There is nothing voluntary about this legislation and its obligations. It is mandatory under the act that people report and it is an offence if they do not report. That comes with serious consequences which we in government strengthened.

Mr Ryan: When they were in government they reduced the reporting period.

Mrs D'ATH: I will take the interjection from the police minister. When the LNP were in government they reduced the reporting period for those under the CPOROP legislation.

Queensland's current legislative scheme is robust and comprehensive, and we as lawmakers, and the community, can feel confident in the protection it provides. Before the introduction of the DP(SO)A, Queensland's legislation did not provide any mechanism for supervising offenders whose crimes and offending profile did not warrant indefinite detention under the Criminal Law Amendment Act 1945, but who were otherwise considered to pose an unacceptable risk of reoffending upon release.

The DP(SO)A has withstood challenges to its constitutional validity in the Queensland Court of Appeal and the High Court of Australia. The DP(SO)A stands as the foundation upon which other Australian jurisdictions have modelled their own legislation because of its constitutional fortitude.

Under the DP(SO)A, the Supreme Court may make a continuing detention order or supervision order for an offender convicted of a serious sexual offence if the offender is a serious danger to the community. The court is assisted by expert psychiatric evidence when determining these issues. If a court makes a continuing detention order, the offender is detained in custody pending a review or alternatively if a supervision order is made, an offender is released subject to numerous and extensive strict conditions governing every aspect of the offender's day-to-day life. When an order is coming to an end, a further application can be made for another supervision order. Again, this determination is made with the assistance of expert psychiatric evidence.

If an offender were to contravene the requirements of a supervision order, they could be returned to prison, charged with an offence under the DP(SO)A and face a continuing detention order under the DP(SO)A. An offender's supervision order may be extended if that extension is warranted by evidence relating to the offender's risk of committing a further serious sexual offence. It is the Palaszczuk government that has a record of acting appropriately to further ensure community protection.

Under amendments we passed in September 2018 to the CPOROPO legislation, a prisoner who was sentenced for a reportable offence as defined in the CP(OROPO) Act and who was subject to the DP(SO)A becomes a post-DP(SO)A reportable offender and remains a post-DP(SO)A reportable offender for the rest of their life. They are required—it is not voluntary; it is not self-reporting—at law to report their name, age, date of birth, the type of car they drive, their address, contact details, reportable contact with children including the details of those children, their employment and their employer's name and address of their place of employment, the details of any club or association they belong to, and any devices they own and the passwords to those devices. Those things are all required at law. If they seek to travel outside Queensland they must inform Corrective Services. A failure to report these matters to the Commissioner of Police is an offence punishable by up to five years imprisonment.

Everyone in this House and everyone in society wants to keep our children safe and keep them away from predators in our community. Every single one of us wants that. When those opposite want to try to play the tough on law and order card and play the fear card and introduce laws into the parliament that are not constitutionally robust and could be found to be constitutionally invalid, they cannot pick out the amendments that make it so and the rest continue.

This bill seeks to fundamentally change the structure of the DPSO legislation that has been tried and tested in the High Court. It fundamentally changes it.

An honourable member: Hear, hear!

Mrs D'ATH: I hear the interjection, 'Hear, hear!'. If it is overthrown constitutionally the DPSO legislation will not exist and those on continuing detention orders and supervision orders in our community will no longer be bound by those orders.

An opposition member: Rubbish.

Mrs D'ATH: I take that interjection. I say to whoever on the other side said that, 'Talk to a lawyer, please.' I do not recommend the shadow Attorney-General when I say talk to lawyer.

Opposition members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Pugh): Order! Member for Nicklin, you are on the speaking list. You will get your turn. Member for Southern Downs, I note you are interjecting when you are already on the warnings list. If you want to make it to your turn to speak, I suggest you cease interjecting.

Mr LISTER: I rise to a point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker. I understood that I was on the warnings list this morning.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have you down for both morning and afternoon, member for Southern Downs.

Mr LISTER: My understanding is that I am not currently on the warning list.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: I can only go by the list in front of me, member for Southern Downs. Feel free to take it up with Speaker's office. I have actually got you down for both. I can only go by the list in front of me.


Mrs D'ATH: I will take the interjection. I have spoken to victims. I know exactly what the consequences are in this community of offending against children. It is what I have to read every single day in this job so I do not need to be lectured to by those on the other side about the consequences. I also understand the risks and that is why I am passionate about this. That is why I oppose this bill.

If DPSO legislation that has stood the test of time, become the framework for every other jurisdiction in country and is the framework on which the terrorism laws in this country are based—adopted by the Commonwealth and every jurisdiction in Australia—so if it is undermined and dismantled because of what is in this bill, because of the risk that those on the other side put this legislation under, we put everything at risk. Most importantly, we put the children of Queensland at risk because we tear up the DPSO legislation that is fundamental to protecting our community. That is what the legislation does.

When the shadow Attorney-General was asked at the parliamentary committee hearing, 'Did you get legal advice? Who did you seek advice from?' he could not answer that question. He would not answer that question. He kept saying, 'I've consulted lawyers.' When asked, 'Who?' he said, 'I couldn't tell you.' When asked, 'Do you have written advice?' he said, 'No, I couldn't really tell you that.' When asked, 'Are they constitutional lawyers?' he said, 'Oh, I really don't know what their titles are.' He did say, 'But he's a lawyer.' He also said, 'He practised commercial law previously.'

I take no issue with that, but this is constitutional law and criminal law. You have to get this right because, if you get this wrong, people's lives are at risk—children's lives are at risk. It scares me that, if those on the other side were to get into government after 31 October, they would bring these laws in, because you would fundamentally put the people of Queensland, the children of Queensland, at risk with these constitutionally flawed laws.

I beg those opposite: this crusade of law and order and tough on crime and fear is irresponsible. It is reckless. The community deserves more. We will be opposing this bill. I encourage the crossbench to also oppose this bill because this is not about protecting children; this is about political stunts by the LNP.

 **Mr LISTER** (Southern Downs—LNP) (5.50 pm): Madam Deputy Speaker Pugh, may I first apologise. You are correct: I am on the warning list.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Pugh): I am always correct, member for Southern Downs.

Mr LISTER: You are even more correct than normal. I will behave myself.

I rise to make a contribution on the Protecting Queenslanders from Violent and Child Sex Offenders Amendment Bill 2018. I think it behoves all of us to remember exactly why we are here debating this bill in the first place—that is, particularly one individual, the despicable and infamous Robert John Fardon. It is noteworthy that the Labor government had years to contemplate the possibility that Robert John Fardon would be walking the streets at some stage. It took the knowledge that he was going to be out in the community to cause the government to appeal his release. It was at that point that the LNP was not prepared to simply entrust the safety of Queenslanders, of Queensland children, to the law. We needed legislative change to make the law ironclad to ensure that the likes of Robert John Fardon were not free to wander the streets.

I note that the Attorney-General in her speech was at pains to talk about how there was nothing voluntary about self-reporting—that it was not an honesty system. On that reasoning we need not have prisons. We simply need to convict felons and tell them that they need to behave themselves and entrust that they will do so, that they will not commit crimes, that they will not torment their victims, that they will not be a menace to society. We need an element of compulsion here. We have to make sure that the likes of Robert John Fardon are not entrusted with the decision as to whether or not they will comply and turn up at the police station. Sure that might be a crime, but that alone has been proven time and time again to be no deterrent whatsoever to Robert John Fardon or his like.

I think it behoves us to remember that Robert John Fardon's infamous history involves always reoffending when the opportunity to do so occurred. He raped a 12-year-old girl at gun point. He violently raped and assaulted a woman only 20 days after being released. He regularly breached his supervision orders. He is well understood to be a despicable person and someone with no remorse or scruples whatsoever. That is why this bill is necessary. That is why we are here debating this point.

I would say to all of the lawyers, as the Attorney-General invoked, that they do not know everything. It is the job of us as representatives of the people to inject legitimate political considerations—that is, polis, political, what the people want. What the people want is to see the likes of Robert John Fardon restrained. They want to know that their children and loved ones are safe from the likes of Robert John Fardon, who has a consistent history of always reoffending when given the opportunity. That is why we are debating this bill.

I think that the pious and legally technically correct contribution by the Attorney-General just then was entirely out of step with the expectations of real Queenslanders—the people whom I see day to day in my own electorate who tell me that the law is not strong enough in all sorts of fields. I have spoken at length about the impacts of farm invasions in my electorate. When it comes to protecting the lives of children and our loved ones from the likes of Robert John Fardon, their opinions are exactly the same.

This bill has three objectives. The first is to introduce a framework so that court ordered supervision orders are indeterminate rather than fixed term, that supervision orders are reviewed by the Governor in Council rather than the Supreme Court and that repeat serious sex offenders will be monitored even when they are no longer deemed a serious danger to the community. Secondly, it will allow the imposition of an 'indeterminate supervision order' that will apply to all repeat serious offenders as soon as the prisoner is released from custody or when the prisoner's existing supervision order expires. Such supervision orders would include that they cannot live within close proximity of where children commonly frequent such as parks and schools, that they must regularly report to Queensland

Corrective Services and—I must emphasise this—that they are GPS monitored for life, because that is what the people of Queensland expect. I would challenge those members to my left to walk the streets in ordinary everyday communities and talk to people who have kids and ask, ‘Do you think that is appropriate?’ I tell members that the answer would be overwhelmingly yes. It might not be the same at ‘Wigs Bistro’, but I am talking about what happens in the real world.

Thirdly, the objects of the Dangerous Prisoners (Sexual Offenders) Act are amended to include that the safety and protection of the community is paramount. This will reflect the principles of the Labor administration in Victoria. I think it is important to note that objecting to moves to enshrine in law that community safety is paramount and that is above all other considerations in dealing with these matters is entirely inconsistent in my opinion with the wishes of everyday Queenslanders. There may be all sorts of technical arguments against that, but I am speaking for those who every day talk to me about the absence of law and order in our streets and wanting our laws to be tougher and to reflect the need to be protect potential victims and to give solace to victims who have experienced the unspeakable crimes committed by the likes of Robert John Fardon.

I would like to read into *Hansard* the statement of reservation that my honourable friend the member for Lockyer and I wrote at the time when he and I were both on the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee. I think that it clearly sums up our position—

The LNP members of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee strongly believe that this bill should be passed.

We respect and thank the Bar Association of Queensland and the Queensland Law Society for their submissions concerning the interests of offenders. However we believe that the public interest is best served by unambiguously emphasising that public safety is the most important consideration in sentencing. This bill meets this need.

The reason why this legislation needs to pass is because the Palaszczuk Labor Government failed to have an adequate plan B to deal with serious repeat and violent offenders like Robert John Fardon. The Attorney-General was caught out and cobbled together a plan that never even went through the proper Committee scrutiny. While Labor’s laws might be an improvement on what was previously legislated, they still fall far short of what is needed to protect the community.

The Bill is well drafted and takes into account the updated High Court precedents in relation to indefinite detention, following the Pollentine decision in 2014.

We know that Fardon is out in the community without a GPS tracker thanks to Labor’s weak laws and failing to keep him under strict supervision.

The fact that Fardon was housed in the same street as a local primary school and across the road from a child care centre is an absolute disgrace. It shows the inadequacy of the current laws.

We shouldn’t rely on an honesty system where these offenders have to self-report. More needs to be done to protect the community, which is why we strongly support the passing of this Bill.

The LNP will always put the rights of the community, particularly children, ahead of the welfare of dangerous and repeat violent sexual offenders.

We believe these offenders should be GPS tracked for life and where necessary under strict supervision.

Labor should stop playing politics and put the safety of vulnerable children first.


Mr McDonald: Hear, hear!

Mr LISTER: I take that ‘Hear, hear!’ from my honourable friend the member for Lockyer, who joined me on the committee in considering this bill. I would say again to the Attorney-General that to say that reporting requirements are not optional does not work in the world of Robert John Fardon. Someone of that nature does not abide by the law whenever they have—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Pugh): Member for Southern Downs, your comments will come through the chair.

Mr LISTER: Thank you for your guidance, Madam Deputy Speaker. I would say through the chair to the Attorney-General that a person such as Robert John Fardon has no respect for the law. Indeed, he has no respect for anyone. The requirement that he should attend a police station or any other reporting requirement and that he could be entrusted to fulfil that obligation simply of his own volition is appalling. We know that kind of thing is not a protection for everyday people in the community.

I would also say that, as is proposed under this bill, it is necessary that it should be the Governor in Council who considers supervision orders rather than the Supreme Court. I believe that would ensure that legitimate community concerns concerning these terrible offenders are taken into account when decisions are made. My constituents regularly tell me they feel that judicial decisions do not meet their expectations. This is a way in which we can ensure their expectations are met and that they are accountable to the people. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr RUSSO** (Toohey—ALP) (6.00 pm): I rise to speak against this private member's bill. There is absolutely no need for this legislation, and I will be urging members of this House to vote against this totally unnecessary piece of legislation. The member for Southern Downs indicated the Attorney-General was 'caught out'. I would like to put on record it is an incorrect statement that the Attorney-General was 'caught out' in relation to the DP(SO) Act when dealing with the matter of Robert John Fardon.

In seeking to have this bill passed the LNP argues that there is a need for it, claiming the Palaszczuk Labor government failed to have an adequate plan B to deal with serious repeat and violent offenders like Robert John Fardon. They claim that the protection of the community requires this bill to be passed. As they so often have done, they seek to inflame the community by calling to emotion and prejudice, and they do so on misleading and inaccurate information. They accuse the ALP of playing politics and not putting the safety of vulnerable children first, but the reality is that their own appeals to mob mentality are the worst kind of political games playing. Their type of propaganda needs to be called out for what it is: misleading and misconceived.

Anyone who has gone to the effort of actually reading the publicly accessible judgements of the Supreme Court and the Court of Appeal with respect to Mr Fardon will have already identified that the LNP's criticisms of the existing legislation are entirely misplaced and their call for public mob mentality entirely irresponsible. This type of alarmist approach to legislation and the false reasoning behind it does nothing to make our children safe, but it appeals directly to mob behaviour.

It is important at this point to look at the decision of the Attorney-General for the State of Queensland v. Fardon in a decision handed down by Judge Bowskill on 9 January 2019. The decision deals directly with the current Dangerous Prisoners (Sexual Offenders) Act 2003, sections 13, 19B, 19C and 19D. The judge dismissed the application for a further supervision order and ordered that there be no publication of the decision for a period of seven days. I will now briefly deal with the judge's decision, and I will quote and read from that decision. Judge Bowskill stated that the respondent, Fardon—

... has been subject to, and complied with, a supervision order for the past five years, and been subject to various orders for detention and supervision under the *Dangerous Prisoners (Sexual Offenders) Act 2003* for the past 15 years ... the respondent is now 70 years of age, and has not been convicted of any criminal offences for the past 30 years ... demonstrated abstinence from alcohol and drugs for many years ... and his positive and sustained engagement with his treating psychologist ...

The judgement further stated—

... the application for a further supervision order is pressed on the primary basis that the respondent presents an unacceptable risk of committing a serious sexual offence, due to the potentially stressful and destabilising effect on him of trying to find independent accommodation absent a supervision order, and dealing with media scrutiny and attendant community vigilantism as a result of his notoriety—where the evidence of three psychiatrists is that even in the face of such stressful circumstances, the risk of the respondent sexually reoffending is low ...

The committee recommended that the bill not be passed. On 16 October 2018 the committee invited stakeholders and subscribers to make written submissions on the bill. Three submissions were received. The committee received a public briefing from Mr David Janetzki MP, member for Toowoomba South, on 29 October 2018. The committee also received written advice from Mr Janetzki in response to matters raised in submissions on 27 November 2018 and 20 February 2019. The committee held a public hearing on 3 December 2018 to receive evidence from, and ask questions of, a representative from Queensland Advocacy Inc. The Queensland Law Society and the Bar Association of Queensland also provided submissions and evidence.

Currently, section 3 of the act provides that one of the objects of the act is 'to provide for the continued detention in custody or supervised release of a particular class of prisoner to ensure adequate protection of the community.' In relation to the proposed amendment to section 3 of the act, the Bar Association of Queensland considered the existing wording of the legislation to be appropriate. They went on to say—

It is not apparent to what degree (if any) the change to the object of the Act to ensure "*the safety and protection of the community*" would alter the operation of the DPSO Act. Given the substantial body of jurisprudence established under the existing object of the DPSO Act, it is inadvisable, in the Association's view, to alter the object of the Act without substantial reason for doing so.

With respect to the proposed insertion of new section 3A into the act, the Bar Association expressed the view—

... the determination of community expectations and finding an appropriate balance between the competing considerations of the liberty of the person and community protection in any particular case can be given effect to by the judiciary, without the need to designate that the safety and protection of the community must be considered paramount over other competing considerations.

Similarly, the Queensland Law Society submitted that—


... the job of balancing competing interests of community safety and the liberty of an individual appropriately lies with the court. In our view, we do not think that it is necessary to mandate that paramount consideration be given to the safety and protection of the community.

In relation to the current law, a supervision order means a supervision order made under section 13(5)(b) or a further supervision order, being an order made under section 19D. The proposed amendments provide that in deciding whether there is an unacceptable risk the court must not have regard to the means of managing the risk or the likely impact of a division 3 order on the prisoner. The Bar Association stated—

The express removal of any consideration of the “*means of managing the risk*” or the “*likely impact of a division 3 order on the prisoner*” is antithetical to the proper administration of justice. The practical ability to engage a prisoner in the community or administer an order are appropriate considerations and consideration of them is necessary in order to make an assessment of whether the community can be protected from risk.

The Queensland Law Society shared similar views, submitting that the matters proposed to be removed from consideration by a court are important considerations that should inform the making of division 3 orders. It is essential to consider these matters to ensure the objects of the DP(SO) Act are achieved. To remove these considerations is at odds with the proper administration of justice. The drafting in proposed (4B) of ‘is less than more than likely than not’ is not sufficiently clear or precise for legislation of this nature.

The current law provides that, if the court makes a supervision order, the order must state the period for which it is to have effect. It specifies certain matters a court must not have regard to when fixing the period. It also provides that the period cannot end before five years after the making of the order or the end of the prisoner’s term of imprisonment, whichever is the later. The Bar Association considered the fixing of the period of a supervision order to be an important safeguard. There are provisions currently in place that allow for the extension of orders in appropriate cases. I oppose the passing of the bill.

 **Mrs GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (6.10 pm): I rise today to speak on the Protecting Queenslanders from Violent and Child Sex Offenders Amendment Bill introduced by the shadow Attorney-General. The objective of this bill is to strengthen the post-sentence supervision scheme relating to violent and child sex offenders to ensure that paramount consideration is given to the safety and protection of the community. This bill would rectify the Palaszczuk Labor government’s weak laws when it comes to violent and child sex offenders.

The bill will introduce a framework so that court ordered supervision orders would be indeterminate rather than for a fixed term. In addition, the supervision orders would be reviewed by the Governor in Council rather than the Supreme Court. The framework would also ensure that repeat serious offenders are monitored post sentence and that any person making a decision under the Dangerous Prisoners (Sexual Offenders) Act, known as the DP(SO) Act, must give paramount consideration to the safety and protection of the community.

The bill’s indeterminate supervision order will be imposed on and apply to all repeat serious sexual offenders as soon as the prisoner is released from custody or when the prisoner’s supervision order expires. The supervision orders would include provisions such as these: orders that the offender cannot live within close proximity of where children commonly frequent, like schools; orders that the offender must regularly report to Queensland Corrective Services; and that offenders would be GPS monitored for life. The indeterminate supervision order would not be court sanctioned and would become relevant when all other supervision orders have been exhausted.

These amendments are necessary because repeat sexual offenders pose a degree of risk until the day they die. One only needs to look at a repeat offender’s history to understand this. There should never be a day when a repeat offender is considered risk free. This is why greater safeguards need to be in place to ensure the paramount safety and protection of the community. To this end, the bill also amends the objects of the DP(SO) Act so that it is enshrined in law that the safety and protection of the community must be paramount. This reflects the principles of similar legislation introduced in Victoria by their Labor government.

There are currently nearly 3,700 reportable child sex offenders in Queensland. This number has skyrocketed by 21 per cent since 2015, but the Palaszczuk Labor government has not introduced any additional measures to crack down on child sex offenders. Under Labor, 562 reportable sex offenders were fined or imprisoned for breaching their reporting obligations in 2019, but as of May 2020 not a single one of the reportable sex offenders subject to an offender prohibition order had been required to

wear a GPS tracking device. In fact, since Labor changed the laws to supposedly strengthen the supervision requirements, not one reportable sex offender on a prohibition order has been ordered to wear a GPS tracker—not ever. In January 2019, Labor’s Attorney-General released a media statement which stated—

Queenslanders can rest assured that our State has the toughest post-conviction monitoring system in the country because of the Child Protection (Offender Reporting and Offender Prohibition Order) Act 2004 and the Dangerous Prisoners (Sexual Offenders) Act 2003.

I think the Attorney-General should retract that statement because when you go behind the legislative title, when you peel back the layers, it is patently clear that Labor’s post-conviction monitoring laws are mere lip-service to being tough on crime. That is why the LNP introduced this bill in late 2018. In response to this bill, Labor passed amendments to the child protection (offender reporting) act to try to compete against the LNP’s tough crackdown on sex offenders, but the reality is that Labor’s laws are weak and the case examples show that their soft-on-crime approach just is not working.


For example, the Palaszczuk Labor government’s laws are that weak that sex offenders must engage in ‘concerning conduct’, such as commit another sexual offence or invite a child into their home, before the police can apply to the court, which may—not must, but may—order the offender to be GPS tracked. This is in stark contrast to the LNP who would in government ensure all repeat offenders would be GPS tracked for life—no ifs, no buts. Let me say that again because I think it bears repeating: under the LNP, repeat dangerous sex offenders would be GPS tracked for life. Under Labor, they might be GPS tracked only for a short while and only if they commit concerning conduct.

To put that in perspective, this means that under an LNP government child victims of violent sex crimes, child victims whose lives have been destroyed by the offender’s conduct, would have at least some peace of mind knowing their offender is being monitored. Sharon Tomlinson, who was raped as a child at gunpoint by Robert Fardon, was outraged to learn Labor’s weak laws would not even compel him to be GPS tracked. Sharon believes the LNP’s bill should be passed. This is the least this parliament can do to help victims of these types of crimes. It is obvious to me that the Palaszczuk Labor government care more about the rights of sex offenders like Robert Fardon than community safety and victims of crime because of their soft-on-crime approach. We in the LNP believe these measures are necessary in order to crack down on the thousands of sex offenders who roam Queensland’s streets.

The LNP has a strong track record in government of dealing with violent and child sex offenders. This is important and relevantly informs this bill in this matter. In government, we introduced the two strikes policy—a mandatory sentence of life imprisonment for repeat child sex offenders with a minimum non-parole period of 20 years. We also increased penalties for child exploitation offences and other child sex offences and introduced a new offence of grooming into the Criminal Code. I myself as a former federal prosecutor prosecuted paedophiles for the offence of grooming. I know that harsher penalties protect the community, particularly when it comes to child exploitation offences.

The LNP has also committed to introducing a public sex offender registry to allow any member of the public to check for violent sex offenders who reside in their neighbourhood. Under the plan, parents can also check the background of anyone who has regular unsupervised access to their children. The LNP will always support more laws and stronger penalties aimed at child sex offenders to send a message that these types of crimes against children will not be tolerated by our community.

These proposed amendments are tough laws but they are what is needed to keep the community safe from repeat violent sex offenders. The LNP will always put community safety first and we make no apologies for it. We need to do what we can to protect vulnerable Queenslanders from the worst kind of offenders, and this bill will go a long way towards keeping our community safe from this type of offender. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Child Safety, Youth and Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (6.19 pm): I rise to speak on the Protecting Queenslanders from Violent and Child Sex Offenders Amendment Bill. Along with the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee’s recommendation, I will be speaking against this bill.

The bill proposes to amend the Dangerous Prisoners (Sexual Offenders) Act 2003, and its objectives are: to introduce a framework so that court ordered division 3 supervision orders are indeterminate rather than fixed term; enable the Governor in Council to review a supervision order and, on the review, decide the supervision order no longer applies if the Governor in Council is satisfied the released prisoner is no longer a serious danger to the community; establish indeterminate supervision orders to enable supervision requirements to apply to a released repeat sex offender by operation of law; and to ensure that paramount importance is given to the safety and protection of the community.

I have been sitting here listening to members from the other side talk about the safety of the community. The member for Southern Downs talked about walking down the street and people talking to him about the safety of the community. I thought that the member for Currumbin might have been about to cry when she was talking previously about the safety of the community. There is nobody in this House who does not want to ensure the safety of the community. That is what this government is all about. We want to do things that actually work. What I am sick of hearing about in this House is the members opposite using catch phrases, using the lowest common denominator and promising things that actually do not work but are suggested only because they sound good.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Pugh): One moment, member for Bulimba. Members, I can barely hear the member on her feet. I am sure that Hansard cannot either. We will come to order and then the member can continue her contribution.

Ms FARMER: We know, for instance, that the Bar Association of Queensland—and they gave quite a considerable response to this bill—said—

It is not apparent to what degree (if any) the change to the object of the Act to ensure “the safety and protection of the community” would alter the operation of the DPSO Act. Given the substantial body of jurisprudence established under the existing object of the DPSO Act, it is inadvisable, in the Association’s view, to alter the object of the Act without a substantial reason for doing so.

The problem with the people opposite is that they talk big about all of these things but most of the things they propose actually do not work.

Opposition members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Mudgeeraba and member for Burnett, you are both on the speaking list, so you will get your opportunity to contribute. I am listening to the member for Bulimba. Let us hear her.

Ms FARMER: I have seen it in my portfolio areas, in Youth Justice and in Domestic Violence. In Youth Justice they talked about boot camps, breach of bail and ‘three strikes and you’re out’, but none of them work. Not only do they not work; they actually increase the number of times people reoffend. Tell me about community safety.

Earlier the Attorney-General talked about the Criminal Law Amendment (Public Interest Declarations) Amendment Bill that those opposite introduced in 2013. Those amendments were purportedly going to be another layer of protection for the community. Do honourable members remember what happened? That was just another furphy because the Queensland Court of Appeal unanimously declared the LNP’s effort to be unconstitutional, and I will talk a little bit more about this. If they are really interested in looking after the community—

Mr Bennett interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Burnett, I have just named you. The member has not referred to you once. There was no specific provocation in your direction. I am asking you to refrain from interjecting. Your interjections are not being taken.

Ms FARMER: If they are really interested in the safety of the community, they should talk about things that work. What is really offensive about the way they talk about this and all of the other bills when they use these catchphrases is that they are not just talking about the community; we are actually talking about kids. I do not know if any one of those opposite has read the briefs that I read every night, or has met and had those conversations with people who have been sexually abused and who live every single day of their life in fear, never, ever being able to work through the trauma of what happened to them. If they are going to bring a bill into this House they should show respect to those people and show them that they are undertaking to do the best possible thing for those people.

I heard the member for Southern Downs calling the Attorney-General pious. I will tell him what the Attorney-General does. She brings in legislation that cannot be challenged. That is what the Palaszczuk Labor government’s law is about. The existing regime in the DP(SO) Act is legally robust. It has been tested and it protects the community. That is what the community expects of us. They elect us so that we can actually protect them. In fact, again the Bar Association of Queensland stated—

... the existing framework for the preventative detention and supervision of those who have been convicted of serious sexual offences has been shown to be appropriate and adequate for the task of protecting the community and properly bestows the responsibility for assessment of risk on the judges tasked with considering evidence that is presented and tested in court, rather than upon the Executive.

Our laws have been challenged and they have stood up to that challenge. This bill exposes the current—

Mr Bennett interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Burnett. I am warning you.

Mr BENNETT: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I thought I was putting my interjections through the chair, which we are encouraged to do.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, absolutely not, member. You are warned. If I have to mention you again, you will be ejected from the chamber, so please consider that.

Ms FARMER: There are a number of things that I want to talk about. I want to go next to the GPS tracking device which the members opposite, particularly the member for Currumbin, have held up and said, 'Not one, not ever, not'—dramatic pause—'people need peace of mind'. There has been plenty of research and evaluations that have shown that if victims rely totally, 100 per cent, on the offenders actually wearing a GPS monitoring device, that peace of mind is false and they are put significantly at risk. We went through this exercise when we were looking at the question of GPS monitoring devices. We actually tabled those reports. When we looked at those, it was very clear that monitoring devices can only be considered when there is a range of other initiatives in place to ensure that offenders can be monitored.


Opposition members interjected.

Ms FARMER: They hold it up—they are carrying on over there. They hold it up saying, 'You didn't do a GPS monitoring device.' They just love that because it sounds good, but we do not do things in here just because they sound good. We do things because they are going to protect the community. They should not be holding up that GPS monitoring device. They can go and do all they want with it, but it does not work and we cannot be doing things that put the community at risk.

The passage of this bill would put the current community protection regime at risk of successful legal challenge. If this bill were passed, there is significant risk that the proposals it contains will not provide any tangible community benefit. The four key acts that allow the liberty of those who finish serving a sentence to be curtailed—and we have a package of those: the Criminal Law Amendment Act 1945, the Penalties and Sentences Act 1992, the Dangerous Prisoners (Sexual Offenders) Act, the Child Protection (Offender Reporting and Offender Prohibition Order) Act—strike a balance between the reduction of a person's liberty and ensuring the protection of the community, which is absolutely paramount. In fact, the Child Protection (Offender Reporting and Offender Prohibition Order) Act is designed exactly for the purpose of allowing authorities an appropriate level of awareness of an offender's movements and alterations to appearance. The act allows the Police Commissioner to make an application to a court for a prohibition order in respect of a relevant sexual offender.

An opposition member interjected.

Ms FARMER: I will not cop those people on the opposite side saying that we are soft on crime because we have the laws that actually work. That is what the community wants; they want the laws that work. When I speak to a person who has been sexually assaulted, when I speak to a person whose life has been ruined, when I speak to the mother or the father of a sexual assault victim, when I speak to a child or a person who was sexually assaulted as a child, I want to be able to say to them, hand on heart, that this government has put in place the laws that are going to protect them. I have that responsibility. We all have that responsibility. That is what we should be doing. It is a disgrace that they put up something like this and throw all of these pious comments out. They should be ashamed. If they ever come to government I worry for the future of Queensland.

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (6.29 pm): I rise to add my contribution to the Protecting Queenslanders from Violent and Child Sex Offenders Amendment Bill 2018. This is a bill introduced by the LNP because we understand how much of a threat child sex offenders pose to local families and their communities across this state. We on this side of the House understand that this is an issue that needs to be addressed immediately and directly to protect innocent Queenslanders from sexual crimes. We want Queensland to be the safest place to live, work and raise a family—and that does not just happen by accident. It takes a party that is prepared to make the hard decisions to introduce tough policies and to take real steps to stamp out sexual violence in our state.

There is nothing more disturbing than child sex offences. Every child in Queensland has the right to feel safe. It was the LNP government that introduced some of the toughest sex offender legislation in the country. In government, the LNP introduced legislative amendments to keep the worst sex offenders behind bars indefinitely. Under the LNP government, planned new laws were set for sex offenders to face mandatory jail time if they tried to remove or tamper with their tracking bracelet. Under the LNP, the maximum penalty was set to be increased from 14 years to 20 years imprisonment for sex offenders. Under the LNP, offenders would have had to serve 80 per cent of their sentence before being eligible for parole.

The LNP has always committed to introducing a public sex offender register to allow any member of the public to check for violent sex offenders who reside in their neighbourhood. Under the plan, parents can also check the background of anyone who has regular unsupervised access to their children. These new laws were about strengthening the justice system. These new laws were about rebalancing the scales of justice, but now under Labor we can see the scales shifting back. The number of sex offenders has skyrocketed 21 per cent since 2015, but there have been no new stringent measures put in place by Labor. In fact, there are an alarming 3,690 reportable child sex offenders in Queensland. Today, from opposition, it is the LNP which is leading the way towards stamping out these acts of depravity and throwing the book at child sex offenders. This is a bill that will strengthen existing laws around violent and child sex offenders.

The LNP believes that these measures are necessary in order to crack down on the thousands of sex offenders who roam Queensland's streets unmonitored. Sadly, it remains unclear how the government's proposed amendment will make any real difference to keeping our kids safe. The first priority of any government should be to keep its people safe, but we are not seeing that under the Palaszczuk Labor government and Labor's proposed amendments.

Like all Queenslanders, I was disgusted when in late 2018 under this government we saw a notoriously dangerous sex offender, Robert John Fardon, left free to roam unsupervised and terrorise the community. There was no plan B from Labor until the LNP raised the issue in the parliament and in the media. This was despite his well-documented violent history of rapes and serious sexual assaults. He is one of the most dangerous offenders this state has seen. As a mother, I was horrified to find out that these types of dangerous criminals are so carelessly allowed back into our communities, living next door to everyday Queenslanders raising their children.

I was horrified when photographs emerged of Robert John Fardon frequently using the state's train system. This system needs fixing. Someone like Robert John Fardon, one of Australia's most notorious sex offenders, should never be able to walk our streets unsupervised. Labor's post-conviction monitoring laws are an embarrassment. It is an honesty system that puts all the onus on criminals—the worst of the worst criminals—to do the right thing. That is why the LNP took the lead on sex offenders where this government had let down the community and proposed stronger legislation to protect our children.

The LNP's amendments significantly strengthen the existing Dangerous Prisoners (Sexual Offenders) Act 2003 by ensuring each offender's case is properly reviewed. A key component of the LNP's proposed amendments is to grant the Governor in Council the power to determine when a supervision order ceases. This is designed to ensure dangerous criminals such as Robert John Fardon do not end up back in the community simply because the government loses the bid to extend the supervision order. We simply cannot trust a government to protect our kids from violent sex offenders if it does not have the power to do so. This bill draws on the High Court decision in 2014 which established that parliament can legislate for indefinite detention in certain circumstances. Obviously this would only apply to a handful of Queensland's worst offenders, those who pose an unacceptable risk to the community.


We do not want to see dangerous criminals walking the street, as we have under the Palaszczuk Labor government. It is not good enough to rely on an appeal process when we are talking about sex offenders in places where our children and families are. The Labor government has dropped the ball yet again and the LNP again is forced to clean up more rushed amendments. After 3½ years of inaction from those opposite, it took the LNP's proposed amendments to force the Labor government to wake up and take action. As usual, its amendments were rushed and do not get the job done. Labor's laws do not automatically impose supervision on child sex offenders upon their release from custody or when their supervision orders expire. This is a major flaw and does not address the real issue. The supervision only comes back into effect when a released sex offender engages in concerning conduct. Why should our local communities be forced to wait for a sex offender to rape or assault another innocent person before they are put back on a supervision list? Waiting for another crime to occur is a dangerous game to play. The LNP believes in a preventive framework for criminals, not a reactive one.

Under the LNP, repeat dangerous sex offenders would be GPS tracked for life. Under Labor, they may be GPS tracked but only for a short while and if they committed concerning conduct. Under an LNP government, child victims of violent sex crimes such as Sharon Tomlinson would have at least had some peace of mind knowing their offender was being monitored. This is the least this parliament can do to help victims of crime. Labor's reactive supervision order makes no sense and the LNP cannot back Labor's rushed amendments to this bill.

It is also concerning to see the new monitoring arrangements proposed by those opposite. Labor's proposed monitoring only applies to a child sex offender coming off a DP(SO)A order, which is basically legislating an honour system. It is laughable that the Labor government simply expects repeat sex offenders to check in with police and voluntarily provide information. In fact, in 2019 some 562 reportable sex offenders were fined or imprisoned for breaching their reporting obligations. The LNP supports mandatory GPS tracking of offenders from the day they are released until the day they die. Paedophiles cannot be trusted to self-report to police, and it should not be up to the police to use their resources to lodge a prohibition order application when a sex offender reoffends. Even if this application is successful, under Labor's amendments the prohibition order only lasts five years before the paedophile is again a risk to Queenslanders.

As the shadow Attorney-General said during the introduction of this bill, repeat sexual offenders pose a degree of risk until the day they die. A repeat offender's history says it all. There should never be a day when a repeat offender is considered risk-free. This is why the LNP proposes greater safeguards to protect against repeat offenders and to make sure those criminals with a history of sex offences are properly supervised to stop them from causing harm to our loved ones. The LNP wants each case to be properly reviewed by professionals before any supervision is lifted—not just when the timer runs out, as we have seen under the Labor government's amendments. Not all criminals are the same and they should not all fall under the same time lines. It is not good enough to assume that a criminal is a new person when they are released.

The LNP believes in protecting Queensland communities from these people, and this can only be achieved with tougher laws and better supervision orders. Sex offenders should not be anywhere near areas where children may be present or anywhere near our loved ones. We need a proper procedure in place to prevent criminals walking unsupervised in our communities. We need supervision and harsher penalties. We need the power to detain those who present an unacceptable risk to our friends and family. Rushed amendments do not cut it. The LNP will always support more laws and stronger penalties aimed at child sex offenders to send a message that these types of crimes against children are not tolerated by the community.

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services) (6.38 pm): The LNP cannot keep making the same mistakes and expect a different outcome. In this respect, those opposite are serial offenders. With this bill they are at it again, recklessly and dangerously risking the nation's laws that protect the community from dangerous sex offenders. They are like a broken record: they keep recycling failed policies that everyone except them knows will not work.

Worse than not being workable, the LNP's proposed laws risk seeing dangerous prisoners across the nation being set free. However, let us look at what those opposite do and not what they say. Disgracefully, the former Newman LNP government became the only government in Queensland history to weaken—weaken—supervision periods for child sex offenders when it was in government. It reduced the reporting period for these child sex offenders listed on the child protection offender register from 15 years to five years and from eight years to five years. This 2014 weakening of the law under the LNP meant that 1,723—that is, 1,723—child sex offenders who were being monitored were then not monitored. Let us have a look at what then police minister Jack Dempsey—he is a mate of mine—said in response to question on notice No. 800 on 28 October 2014. He said—

As at 31 August 2014—

so that is still under the Newman government, under the LNP government; let us look at what those opposite do, not what they say—

prior to the enactment of the Child Protection (Offender Reporting) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2014—

still under the LNP—

4,793 offenders were recorded on Queensland's Register. As at 31 October 2014, 3,070 offenders were recorded on the Queensland's Register.

When those opposite were in government—let us look at what they do, not what they say—there was a reduction of 1,723 child sex offenders who were being monitored who then were not monitored as a result of their changes. Let us see who reported that. The ABC reported that.

Mr Bennett interjected.

Mr RYAN: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member for Burnett has been warned under the standing orders and he is interjecting.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Whiting): Order! The member is right. Member for Burnett, you have been warned and a couple of times in the last few minutes you have come close to being ejected for one hour. I warn you on that. You have already been warned, so temper your interjections.

Mr RYAN: Let us have a look at what the ABC—

Mr Mickelberg interjected.

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

Mr RYAN: They do not like being called out on their record. Who is weak on child sex offenders?

Mr Mickelberg interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr Mickelberg interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Buderim can leave the chamber for one hour.

Whereupon the honourable member for Buderim withdrew from the chamber at 6.42 pm.

Mr RYAN: Who is weak on child sex offenders? Who is soft on child sex offenders? Those opposite were the only government in Queensland history that reduced reporting periods for child sex offenders. Some 1,700 child sex offenders went from being monitored to not being monitored. What did the ABC say? Under the headline '1,700 released child sex offenders no longer being monitored by Queensland police', Josh Bavas on 10 December 2014—that is still under their government; they were still in power—said—

About 1,700 child sex offenders who have completed their prison sentences are no longer being monitored by the Queensland Police Service, following changes to offender reporting requirements.

The article went on to say that under the changes under their government that took effect in September 2014—under them, their law changes, they changed the law—

... the bulk of Queensland sex offenders are required to report to police for a reduced period of five years.

But get this, and this is the most heinous and disgraceful thing about what they did because they talk about those child sex offenders—those disgusting people—who commit offences on multiple occasions. What did they do to them? How did they treat them? The article continues—

Those found guilty of two offences, including child rape, will be monitored for ... five years, instead of 15.

They took 10 years—10 years—off the monitoring period for those disgusting child rapists. What a disgraceful thing for that government to do! They are the ones who are weak on child sex offenders. They are the ones who are soft on child sex offenders. Look at what they do, not what they say. When they are in government, what do they do? They let those child sex offenders roam without monitoring from the Queensland Police Service. Those disgusting people who commit two offences, including child rape, had a reduced period from 15 years to five years. Those opposite are disgraceful and they cannot come in here claiming the moral high ground when that is what they do in government. That is what they do. That is their legacy. No wonder the people of Queensland rarely trust them to sit on the treasury benches because when they do they do things like that. They turn a blind eye to child sex offenders. It is disgusting conduct and it is their legacy. It is their laws. Who was there? The member for Burdekin was there, Mudgeeraba was there, Burnett was there. You voted for it. You reduced the reporting period.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Through the chair please, Minister.

Mr RYAN: They reduced the reporting period of those offenders. That is their legacy. Look at what they do, not what they say.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Currumbin and the Attorney-General will put their comments through the chair.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Members—both members—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members! I have called for order! The Attorney-General and the member for Currumbin are both warned under the standing orders.

Mr RYAN: Let us look at our record. We introduced the DPSO legislation—the strongest legislation in the nation. We introduced the CPOR legislation—the strongest legislation in the nation. Last year we strengthened the CPOR legislation to make it more robust, to have greater monitoring and greater supervision and to give the police more powers to impose greater conditions. Do members know how the nation responds to every improvement that we make in respect of child sex offenders and monitoring and supervision of those offenders? They copy what we do. When we brought in the DPSO legislation, other jurisdictions around the nation copied what we did. When we brought in the CPOR they did the same thing; they copied what we did.

It is this government which at every opportunity has gone to strengthen that legislation. Let us compare that to those opposite. When they were in government, they weakened the legislation. They were the only government in Queensland history to weaken supervision of child sex offenders. We do not just strengthen the law; we also give the police more resources to do their job. Last year we gave them a \$27 million boost to increase monitoring and supervision of those offenders who are listed on the child protection offender register.

Mr LISTER: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance. I do not think this has anything to do with the bill before the House.


Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Southern Downs. Your point of order is not taken. There has been a broad bush painted in this debate, but that is still under the explanatory notes. I note that the minister had not even finished that sentence, so I invite the minister to continue but please stick to the long title of the bill.

Mr RYAN: In protecting the community from child sex offenders, this government not only has strong laws but also backs our police with additional resources. With regard to those additional resources, I will list what those additional resources have done in just 12 months. As a result of those extra resources—this is a direct consequence of the government giving the police an extra \$27 million—what have we done? We have caught 115 child sex offenders, we have charged them with over 350 offences but most importantly—and this is a direct consequence of this funding—16 children have been rescued from harm. Sixteen children have been saved from child sex offenders as a result of our funding and this government's strong laws.

This government has also taken the additional step of embedding additional permanent resources at the Queensland Police Service. We all know Task Force Argos. It is fantastic. It is internationally renowned for what it does, but there is another component of that team at the Queensland Police Service which is also internationally renowned, and that is Taskforce Orion. We made it permanent. We gave it more resources. Do members know what Taskforce Orion does? It finds kids who are in child exploitation material around the world and it saves them. It identifies where those kids are and it works with international policing agencies to get those kids away from harm.

That is the contribution of the Queensland Police Service to child safety internationally, and this government is very proud to support them. This government has a proud record when it comes to strengthening laws. In fact, we have the strongest laws in the nation when it comes to child sex offenders—so strong that other jurisdictions around the nation copy what we do. One simply cannot trust those opposite. I will come back to the point I made at the beginning: one always has to look at what they do, not what they say. When those opposite had the chance to do something they opened the door to child sex offenders. They weakened the law. They reduced supervision and almost 2,000—

(Time expired)

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (Broadwater—LNP) (6.49 pm): I rise to support the Protecting Queenslanders from Violent and Child Sex Offenders Amendment Bill. At the core of what every government does and, indeed, at the core of what every parliamentarian does, should be the protection of the community and providing a level of safety. Whether it is from a virus that we had not heard of until recent months, whether it is because of economic challenges, social hardship or, indeed, protecting people from the lowest of low, everything we do in this place should be with that laser like focus. If we look at the intent of the shadow minister's bill, which is being carried by my good friend the member for Ninderry, these are the values at the core of this bill. To have it mocked and derided by those opposite quite frankly is offensive to those people who have had to endure people like this and who have to work in that field—and I will make more of a contribution on that in a moment.


I will start with the Attorney's contribution. The Attorney's contribution centred around problems with legislation nearly a decade ago. We are not debating that; we are debating a bill that this side of the House believes has merit to improve the situation today. For the Attorney to somehow hold up the current laws as being nation leading and they cannot be better is a great disservice to every person

who suffers at the hands of one of these monsters. I am not suggesting that the legislation we have in this state does not have merit. We are not suggesting it be thrown it out and we start again, we are suggesting improvements. To have it mocked and derided is shallow.

Then there was the contribution from the member for Toohey, who somehow sought to use the word 'prejudice'. If trying to improve laws to protect kids is somehow prejudicing people, I say the only prejudice is to keep kids safe. In the contribution of the member for Bulimba, as minister she quite rightly spoke about having to deal with real life stories. As minister that would be a harrowing experience, but she does not have a mortgage on that. We on this side of the House have prosecutors, police officers and people who have walked in the shoes of people in this scenario. Somehow the minister thought she had a mortgage on that. Then we had the contribution of the member for Morayfield, who said, on half a dozen occasions, 'Look at what they do, not what they say.' That is right. Look at what they do, not what they say. For example, when you stand beside someone and use them as a political pawn and say something that does not apply to them, look at what you do, not what you say. What a disgraceful act for the minister to come in here and wave his arms around like that. Quite frankly, it is disgusting.

This bill has merit for a number of reasons. The court ordered supervisory orders are indeterminate, not a fixed term, and that has merit. This proposal is most effective. The government should be looking to embrace it in relation to the supervision order on all repeat serious offenders on their release. Who can argue that one of these monsters should be able to live near a school or a park? Who could credibly argue that? Who could credibly argue that someone having to report to Corrective Services is wrong? Who on earth could argue that having a GPS tracker on someone who has offended and caused so much harm could somehow be a violation and we should not attempt to do it to protect our most vulnerable?

I say to those opposite: forget about the rise in the numbers and forget about the challenges we face; look at it through the eyes of those whose reports you read. Do it for those families. Not one person is currently on a reportable GPS. How can we say the legislation is best of breed when that is the case? I conclude my contribution by coming back to where I started: it is the role of every parliamentarian, in every parliament, in every nation to do all they can to protect those without a voice. This bill does it and would I urge all in this House to exercise goodwill and support it.

 **Ms McMILLAN** (Mansfield—ALP) (6.55 pm): I rise to speak against the Protecting Queenslanders from Violent and Child Sex Offenders Amendment Bill. Queensland's current legislative scheme concerning preventive detention and post-sentence supervision is robust and comprehensive, and we as lawmakers and the community can feel absolutely confident in the protection that it provides. The Dangerous Prisoners (Sexual Offenders) Act 2003 introduced by Labor was the first of its kind in Australia. The DP(SO) Act has successfully withstood challenges to its constitutional validity in the Queensland Court of Appeal and in the High Court of Australia. This is what we owe the victims of child sexual abuse. Other jurisdictions have used it as a model upon which to base their own legislation.

The opposition has form for bringing unconstitutional bills before this House and this is yet another example. This bill is eerily similar to the LNP's 2013 Criminal Law Amendment (Public Interest Declarations) Amendment Bill, which was ruled invalid by the Court of Appeal. The bill significantly reduces the power of the Supreme Court to make decisions and seeks to transfer those powers to the Governor in Council and to the Attorney-General of the day. The LNP does not understand the separation of powers, and this bill proves that. The constitutional validity of this bill is a very important issue. This bill would serve to substantially change the DP(SO) Act 2003 and potentially put the entire act into jeopardy if it were to be declared constitutionally invalid.

As lawmakers we do not get second chances in this area of law, particularly the importance of this area of law in keeping our children safe. In order to protect the community, the law in this area must be constitutionally robust and it must be valid. This is an area of the law where you need to know that the legislation will actually work to protect our community and to protect those most vulnerable.

Under the DP(SO) Act the Supreme Court may make a continuing detention order or supervision order for an offender convicted of a serious sexual offence when the offender enters the final six months of their sentence of imprisonment. Those orders may be made only where an offender is a serious danger to our community—that is, the prisoner is an unacceptable risk of committing a further serious sexual offence. If the Supreme Court considers that an offender is a serious danger to the community, in the absence of an order under the DP(SO) Act, the court may impose a continuing detention order or a supervision order. If in the Supreme Court's view the risk a person poses to the community cannot


be reasonably and practicably managed by a supervision order, the court will make a continuing detention order. The effect of this order is that the offender remains in custody until such time that that person's risk can be reasonably and practicably managed by supervision.

If an offender is a serious danger to the community but the risk can be reasonably and practically managed, the Supreme Court may impose a supervision order. When imposed, a supervision order will contain requirements that are mandatory under the DP(SO) Act. The requirements will be those that the Supreme Court considers appropriate. Breaches are treated seriously by the court.

Debate, on motion of Ms McMillan, adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

Toowoomba North Electorate

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (7.00 pm): On 31 October we will have an election in Queensland. The people of Toowoomba North deserve a local member who will be a strong voice and who will advocate for them. The election will be about who has an economic plan to get us out of recession. In my electorate, we have 9.9 per cent unemployment in Newtown, 10.5 per cent unemployment in North Toowoomba and 8.9 per cent unemployment in Wilsonton and Rockville. There are things that need to be done. We need a government with a vision to get Queensland out of the economic mess that Labor has put us in.

We need to invest in productive infrastructure as we did with the second range crossing, which was fully funded by LNP state and federal governments. We have an inland rail that needs to be built. We have local roads that need to be built. Boundary and Old Goombungee roads need to be connected so that the people of Highfields have an alternate way of getting into town. O'Brien and Kratzke roads need upgrading.


In my electorate we also need equity of opportunity, which means that some of my schools need upgrading. Land needs to be purchased at Newtown and buildings built to cope with the growing number of people. Wilsonton State High School does not have manual arts or hospitality facilities to teach to year 12. That needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency. The school need an arts and performance centre and a traffic management plan so that people can get to and from school safely. The school's car park was designed for 350 people but there are nearly 900 people at the school. The problems are not just at Wilsonton. Rockville and Newtown primary school facilities need upgrading and better maintenance. Newtown definitely needs an expansion of its facilities.

The LNP has committed to a water security assessment plan. We need a 30-year plan and not just for Toowoomba's domestic water supply. Industry needs to not just survive but thrive. To do that we need water security. On 21 December 2014 the Railway Parklands Priority Development Area was handed over to the local government, but it has languished with no or very limited investment from this government. If that priority development area is going to breathe life into the Toowoomba CBD, it needs an upgrade.

There is another critical piece of infrastructure that Toowoomba needs. Our health and hospital service does a fantastic job, but our nurses and doctors work so hard in a facility that is really not up to scratch. We need a hospital built on the Baillie Henderson site. The plans are in and the business case has been done. We need an LNP government so that those things can be delivered and we need a local member with a strong local voice.

(Time expired)

Redlands Electorate

 **Ms RICHARDS** (Redlands—ALP) (7.03 pm): It is a great privilege to stand in this place to represent my Redlands community. In my first speech in this parliament I promised the people of the Redlands that I would be the strong voice that our community deserves. I said that I would listen, engage, work hard and fight for the needs of my community. They put their faith, hope and trust in me and our Palaszczuk team to deliver for Redlanders, and that is just what we have been doing. I wanted Redlanders to know that I would always represent them in the best interests of our entire community and that those interests would be at the centre of my thoughts and at the heart of all of my activities and representation. It has been an absolute privilege to work with my community and to advocate for, support and lead my community. In my first speech I also said that I believe a measure of one's success is the legacy ultimately left behind. Whether I have only this short term of two years and 10 months or I am honoured to be here longer, I will continue to work to deliver a legacy that my entire Redlands community can be proud of.

So far, together we have achieved fantastic outcomes. We are a strong community and we work together. I want to touch on some of the fantastic outcomes we have achieved. At Redland Hospital the Palaszczuk government is making a record investment in our once-small country hospital with a new \$50 million carpark and a new \$62 million intensive care unit and 32-bed ward. That is not a promise; we are delivering that. This year we opened an upgraded emergency department and new birthing suites that are world class. That is in stark contrast to the LNP. They sacked doctors, they sacked nurses, they closed Wynnum hospital and they ignored Redland Hospital.


It has been one of my greatest joys to be a part of my school communities, from our amazing P&Cs to our incredible schoolteachers, students and staff. We have continued to deliver for our schools with over \$50 million for new classrooms, learning precincts, library upgrades, hall expansions, new halls and, importantly, air conditioning and solar for every Redlands school.

In roads and infrastructure again we have made record investment. For my Southern Moreton Bay Islands community \$34 million is being delivered for new ferry terminals and there is \$60 million to commence the stage 1 duplication of Cleveland Redland Bay Road. That road was ignored by the LNP government, which was on the record stating that they were not going to look at it until 2025.

Throughout the COVID crisis the Palaszczuk government has been there for all Queenslanders. We know that we cannot have a strong economy and rebound unless we get the health response right. On Sunday I saw firsthand how swiftly our government responds when a case tested positive on Russell Island. Metro South health staff were amazing. Within hours they had mobilised and established a pop-up fever clinic. I thank the entire Metro South health team. They are the front line. I also thank our SES and Redlands Coast Champions for providing them with incredible support. A huge thank you also goes to my island community. They were calm and responsive to being tested. The good news is that no further cases have tested positive.

To finish my last adjournment speech in the 56th Parliament, I would like to again express my deepest gratitude and thanks to the people of the Redlands for allowing me the opportunity to represent them. I love and care for my community and I will always put Redlands first.

Coronavirus, Response

 **Ms LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (7.06 pm): The coronavirus pandemic continues to threaten communities and economies around the world. We know the threat of COVID-19 remains as deadly and as debilitating as ever to lives, jobs and businesses. Victoria and NSW remain a threat, the USA still has 2.5 million active cases, which is nearly three times as many active cases as anywhere else in the world, and there are record numbers of new cases daily in France and Spain, with nearly 9,000 and 10,000 cases respectively recorded in a 24-hour period on Friday. Right now I would not want to be anywhere else in the world.


Queensland was the first state in the country to declare a state of emergency in January. Only because of the strong leadership of our Premier, the calm and considered approach of our health minister, the expert advice of Chief Health Officer Dr Jeannette Young and the cooperation of all Queenslanders can Queensland put the pedal to the metal and get our economy back on track. It has not been easy though. Our Queensland Labor Premier, Annastacia Palaszczuk, stood up to the attacks by the LNP, the NSW premier, Pauline Hanson and Clive Palmer, and even the Prime Minister weighed in. The Premier has always unashamedly made Queensland's health and safety her No. 1 priority. On behalf of the people of Keppel I sincerely thank the Premier for her strength and her determination to keep us safe.

Global economies are doing it tough and Queensland is not immune, but as a result of the hard work of Queenslanders we are the best performing state in response to the global pandemic in Australia. Our forecast economic rebound is almost twice as strong as the Australian average. Only the Palaszczuk government has a plan to get Queensland's economy back on track after this pandemic. At the heart of Labor's economic plan is supporting small businesses, buying locally, growing our manufacturing sector and building critical infrastructure.

Queenslanders know that the Leader of the Opposition, Deb Frecklington, and the LNP cannot be trusted to manage this health crisis and they cannot be trusted to get the Queensland economy back on track. It was the LNP leader who called for the borders to be opened no less than 64 times. Those opposite do not have a plan, unless it is the secret plan that they are keeping very hush hush because the only way they can pay their election commitment bill is by cutting services, sacking Queensland workers and selling assets. They have done it before and they will do it again.

In 2012 the leader of the LNP sat at the Cabinet Budget Review Committee table as Campbell Newman's apprentice assistant treasurer and ordered the sacking of 14,000 workers after telling Queenslanders that they had nothing to fear. Let us make no mistake: those opposite will do the same again. It was only yesterday that the Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition said that stabilising debt and cutting waste is what they plan to do. The LNP needs to come clean and tell Queenslanders how they plan to fund their election commitments, because the only possible way they can do so is by cutting, sacking and selling.

Queensland Border Closure

 **Mrs GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (7.09 pm): I rise this evening to highlight the hypocrisy of the Palaszczuk Labor government on our borders and ultimately to plead with the Premier to stop treating the borders as a political tool for her re-election and start showing some compassion and some common sense on our borders. It sickens me that a mother who needed emergency surgery could not rush across the border to a hospital 40 minutes away and instead had to wait several hours to fly to Sydney, tragically losing one of her unborn twins in the process, but the Palaszczuk Labor government is happy to have hundreds of AFL officials and their families stroll into Queensland and have free movement around a luxury resort, sunning themselves by the pool and drinking in the bar. Dannii Minogue can skip hotel quarantine and isolate in a Gold Coast mansion, but ordinary Queenslanders are not allowed to quarantine at home.

The kicker: a month ago I advocated on behalf of a Currumbin constituent for two members of her family to be granted an exemption to attend her late mother's funeral. The Palaszczuk Labor government granted the exemption a painful 10 days after the funeral. My constituent writes, 'This was heartbreaking and cruel by the Palaszczuk government.' There is complete chaos in the Palaszczuk Labor government's exemption process if exemptions are being granted after the date they are required. Because of it, my constituent's brother and nephew did not get to say goodbye. The pain and suffering for this family continues. My constituent's husband is a FIFO worker who is not permitted to return home due to Labor's restrictions. She writes—

I am suffering from feelings of isolation, loneliness, anxiety, depression, heart palpitations, sleeplessness and suicidal thoughts.

Sadly, this is not a unique story in my community. I have heard hundreds of these stories. Last week I spoke with a tradie who told me that the Palaszczuk Labor government has denied him and his construction colleagues their jobs.

Honourable members interjected.


Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Whiting): Order! Member for Gladstone and member for Burleigh—

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members, I was talking. I have called you to order. Next time it will be a warning and I will be pretty close to chucking someone else out before we end.

Mrs GERBER: Tragically, this construction worker, who no longer has a job, told me that one of his colleagues recently committed suicide as a result. Today is World Suicide Prevention Day. Now, more than ever, my community needs the Palaszczuk Labor government to start showing some compassion and some common sense on our borders so that people living on the border can have the dignity of keeping their jobs and paying their bills and ultimately safeguarding the physical and mental wellbeing of my community. I raise these examples today because jobs are important to me, because my community's wellbeing is a priority for me and should be a priority for the Palaszczuk Labor government.

Kurwongbah Electorate

 **Mr KING** (Kurwongbah—ALP) (7.13 pm): Throughout the last couple of weeks an information flyer has been landing in the mailboxes of residents across the Kurwongbah electorate. This flyer details achievements I have been able to deliver since my election as the state member for Kurwongbah in 2017—achievements such as delivering a new Dakabin station, worth \$41 million; delivering a \$150 million Bruce Highway interchange upgrade at Burpengary that will mirror the Boundary Road upgrade we delivered in Narangba last term; delivering a long-awaited solution to the Petrie roundabout traffic bottleneck, with a \$30 million intersection; delivering air conditioning and solar for all state schools; delivering a \$10 million park-and-ride at Lawnton station; and tens of millions of dollars in school improvements including at Burpengary, Jinibara, Kurwongbah and Narangba state schools,

which each got between \$250,000 and \$500,000 in extra maintenance funding; \$3 million for Narangba Valley State School; new musical instruments at Narangba Valley State High School; \$62,000 to extend the science centre at Genesis Christian College; \$50,000 worth of improvements at Redwood College—

Mr Hart interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Whiting): The member for Burleigh is warned under the standing orders.

Mr KING:—a tuckshop upgrade and our first government funded local completion of air conditioning at Petrie State School; a new \$5 million hall for Lawnton State School; and a \$10 million STEM hub at Burpengary State Secondary College.

These big achievements would not be possible without community partnerships and support or without functional working relationships with other levels of government. It is these relationships that have helped us to secure significant investment in local sporting and community infrastructure such as four new change rooms at Mathieson Park, home of the mighty Pine Rivers Bears; \$300,000 for the Narangba Rangers Rugby League; \$2 million for new tennis courts at Harris Avenue, Narangba; as well as Active Clubs and Gambling Community Benefit Fund grants for Burpengary Jets and Burpengary Brumbies, Narangba Crows, Narangba Demons, Narangba Eagles, Moreton Bay Lions, Narangba Bowls Club and Pine Rivers Pony Club.

Mr Hart interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Burleigh, you can leave for an hour under the standing orders.


Whereupon the honourable member for Burleigh withdrew from the chamber at 7.15 pm.

Mr KING: The member for Burleigh is jealous when he sees a good local member who delivers for his community!

Through government grants of over \$3 million in total since 2017, we have also achieved: more funding for Meals on Wheels, both Burpengary and Pine Rivers; better disability access at Old Petrie Town; new facilities for Pine Rivers Men's Shed; funding for local Girl Guides and Scout projects, and much more. Finally, I advocated for and won an \$18 million upgrade to Sideling Creek Dam, Lake Kurwongbah, shoring up its future as a recreational lake. Now I am fighting to extend the Narangba park-and-ride and fast-track the Burpengary train station upgrade. In fact, I handed a petition to the minister yesterday.

Our government delivers for our community and keeps Queenslanders safe with our coronavirus plan. Our opponents, the LNP and One Nation, keep calling for the borders to be opened and risk undoing all the good work Queenslanders have done. I know which plan we need to stick to, and it is not the dangerous, risky path brought about by One Nation and the LNP.

Redlands Coast, LNP Commitments

 **Dr ROBINSON** (Oodgeroo—LNP) (7.16 pm): It is an honour to work on behalf of the families of the Cleveland district in the Oodgeroo electorate. In terms of education, Cleveland high school continues to thrive. This independent public school has a fine indoor auditorium and recently we commissioned our promised secondary learning centre. The growth of the school must be catered for in the future and will need new space, possibly a second campus in conjunction with the old DPI Ormiston site. An LNP government will invest \$1 million to upgrade the indoor auditorium at Wellington Point High School.

In terms of health, over the last six years the state government has largely ignored Redland Hospital. When COVID-19 hit and the Premier predicted massive loss of life, Redlands Coast residents were in fear. For years I have been calling for an ICU and extra beds. Labor ignored those pleas. We were not COVID ready—not an ICU, not an ICU bed, not even a single ventilator. No serious coronavirus cases were treated at Redland Hospital because under this government the hospital was not equipped. It took an LNP government, the Morrison government, and Andrew Laming to kick-start an ICU with the 2019 federal election commitment of \$30 million towards building critical care capacity. The news is even better for Redlands Coast residents. A Frecklington LNP government will join with the federal LNP, and together the LNP will build a \$62 million ICU and new ward of beds. Labor had their chance and did nothing to make the Redlands safer. Only the LNP will get the job done.


To further protect Redlands seniors through this COVID period, an LNP government will invest \$100,000 in the Donald Simpson Community Centre to improve online capacity, to reach out to seniors who are socially isolated and to connect better with Indigenous elders.

In terms of transport and roads, an LNP government will invest a big and bold \$100 million to upgrade Cleveland Redland Bay Road from Thornlands to Redland Bay and get the Eastern Busway back on track.

In terms of fishing and boating marine infrastructure, we welcomed the recent improvements to the northern boat ramp at the Wellington Point Reserve. I will continue to fight for a full upgrade of the marine infrastructure there and an artificial reef.

In terms of North Stradbroke Island, Labor's latest hoax is the fake fast ferry—40 minutes from the city to Straddie. The problem is that marine experts say it cannot be done unless you are going to illegally and dangerously speed through the Brisbane River. It will not be the last wacky or wonky promise from Labor for Straddie. Locals want to know where the ETS missing millions went. Labor must act. If not, an LNP government will take seriously the reports of Quandamooka elders and investigate where the funds went and the conduct of senior QYAC officials. An LNP government will focus on supporting the small business community to create jobs and bring Straddie out of its recession. Once the election is called, I will have much more to say about my local plans under an LNP government.

Queensland Economy

 **Mr KATTER** (Traeger—KAP) (7.19 pm): Do my ears deceive me? I recently read of the Gold Coast mayors—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Whiting): Order! Member for Redlands and member for Oodgeroo, no cross-chamber banter, please. You are very close to a warning, member for Redlands.

Mr KATTER: I recently read about the mayors of the south-east corner's \$29 billion proposal for fast rail between the Sunshine Coast, the Gold Coast, Brisbane and Toowoomba. As I understand it, our Prime Minister, Scott Morrison, committed \$8 million to a business case for this same proposal in the lead-up to the last election. We saw the same talk before we embarked on the \$12 billion white elephant that is going to be built in Brisbane. Perhaps white elephant is too harsh a word. When we look at the priorities in this state, surely it is not about getting people in the cities from A to B faster.


For the next few years at least, the economy is going to be driven by agriculture and mining. Here is a newsflash: those industries do not exist in the cities. They are out where there are not many votes, unfortunately. They are not going to win members many votes in here if they like flashing things around, but those industries need to be invested in. That is the problem we have. We do not have many MPs representing those areas where we need the infrastructure to make us the money to build things once we have made the money. We should not built those things when we do not have the money.

It is outrageous that we are talking about a \$12 billion rail project in the city. Everyone is going to get excited about the \$28 billion or \$29 billion rail project the mayors are talking about and the Prime Minister is plugging, but we do not have dialysis in North Queensland. We do not have dialysis in Charters Towers and Ingham. They do not have chemo treatment and CT scanners. It literally means people can die. People are making the choice not to go to Townsville two or three times a week to get treatment, but rather stay in Charters Towers to die because we cannot provide the service. The priority seems to be that people down here get to work five or 10 minutes faster.

How about this one? A 25 per cent decrease in water pricing—a \$200 million saving—would result in an economic benefit, according to studies released recently, equivalent to 11 AFL grand finals. What are we going to do? Are we going to have an AFL grand final or do we want to release water out there? There are not many votes in it, but it will help the economy of Queensland recover.

Agriculture and mining will be the salvation in terms of the prosperity of people in this state. It is not going to happen without a concerted effort from this parliament. It is not going to happen if members keep trying to win votes here in the city. The people in the city are relying on this as much as anyone. A healthy economy means as much to them. There is dissent in the regions and there will be a reckoning at the election if we do not address this.

Walter Taylor Bridge

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (7.22 pm): Earlier this week I dropped down to inspect the one-lane traffic bottleneck across the old Walter Taylor Bridge in Chelmer. The traffic there has well and truly returned in full force despite traffic numbers there not yet being back to the pre-COVID volumes.

Residents of my electorate raise with me time and time again the need for action here. The Walter Taylor Bridge was built in 1936 for 85,000 pounds at a time when Joseph Lyons was the prime minister and William Forgan Smith was the premier of Queensland—84 years ago. We still have only one lane of traffic across the Brisbane River between inner-city Brisbane and the Centenary Bridge.


It is well overdue for the Brisbane City Council to commence design work on a second bridge linking Indooroopilly with Chelmer along the allocated corridor that exists, either by a business case or by a commissioned design consultancy. The bridge frankly does not cut it in this day and age—in 2020. Chelmer, Graceville and Sherwood—suburbs that were drawn into my electorate three years ago—have sadly seen no progress to date on this made by the Brisbane City Council. It really is a case of taking those suburbs for granted. Their simple desire is to get across the river to access services, schools, universities and things that everybody else takes for granted.

We know that there is already a corridor allocated on the downstream side and that every month we will see a worsening of traffic. Even if a commitment were made today, it would be years of work before we saw a second bridge built. There would need to design work, a business case, detailed design and community consultation, all before a tender could be let. There is no reason the Brisbane City Council could not start initial technical and planning work to design crossing options as part of a COVID response to create work and then engage in meaningful consultation with the local community. I have written to the Lord Mayor requesting that the council consider this project once again and come out and see the gridlock during morning peak hour. It is not just during peak hour that there is gridlock, it is also on weekends, particularly Saturdays—sport days.

In the last four or five months, I think it is fair to say that the Lord Mayor and the Brisbane City Council and the state government have been working well together on the CBD cycle grid and as part of the Active Transport Advisory Committee that has been formed to work on active transport and advancing the Metro project. It is in that spirit of cooperation that I have written to the Lord Mayor to make that request for that reconsideration and to come out and have a look at the situation.

The Palaszczuk government is doing the heavy lifting in the south-west with the six-laning of the Ipswich Motorway and the Sumners Road interchange on the Centenary Highway. The business case is complete on the Centenary Bridge. We are investing record amounts into infrastructure and a billion dollars worth of stimulus. This project in Brisbane's south-west needs to be done. I think the council needs to step up to the plate.

Coomera Electorate

 **Mr CRANDON** (Coomera—LNP) (7.25 pm): It is my absolute honour and privilege to represent the northern Gold Coast and the Coomera electorate. As a community we have achieved much over the last 11-plus years, including the planning and funding for exit 54. We have won the fight for a police station at Pimpama. There is still much to be done, though.

If we are fortunate enough to be chosen by the people of Queensland to form government on 31 October, the LNP will immediately commence construction of stage 1 of the second M1, taking 60,000 vehicles off the M1, with \$550 million committed to start that project. We have committed \$25 million to add an additional exit 45 south, south of the Pimpama River, and an additional entry onto the M1 northbound at the Mirambeena Drive overpass. We would commence the planning process for a state-of-the-art northern Gold Coast hospital and health precinct, with \$4 million committed for that planning. We would build a police citizens youth club in the Pimpama area—the fastest growing region in Queensland—with \$6.5 million committed.


We would fight to fast-track the Coomera Railway Station park-and-ride to almost double existing capacity, with \$15 million committed by the federal government in May last year and the business case sitting on the minister's desk. We would fight to fast-track the upgrades at exits 41 and 49—already fully funded and still we have no final business case available for the commencement of that construction. We would fight to fast-track the Pimpama Railway Station which is not due for delivery by Labor until 2024. That is far too late. We need it delivered next year.

We would fight for an additional 35 police officers just to catch up with the population growth. We would fight to secure \$87 million to upgrade exit 38. The business case was completed in 2018, yet nothing is available and nothing has been brought forward by this government to develop exit 38. We would fight for more bus services between Ormeau and Coomera railway stations and more bus services between Beenleigh and Ormeau railway stations. There has been absolutely nothing from this government in that regard over the last five years. We would fight for a bus service to Jacobs Well and

the Canelands community, constantly being knocked back and constantly being ignored by those opposite. This community deserves its own dedicated public transport system and bus service and the development of a long-term strategy for the future of the Canelands to round things out.

I have worked tirelessly for the people of the Coomera electorate and the northern Gold Coast for the last 11½ years. If I am successful at the next election, I give them my commitment that I will continue to fight for what is right on the northern Gold Coast.

Jordan Electorate, Achievements

 **Mrs MULLEN** (Jordan—ALP) (7.28 pm): Recently I received some letters from the year 5 students of St Augustine's College who are learning about government. There was one question that a number of students asked that I found most interesting. They asked, 'How long does it take to change things?' That is not the easiest question to answer, I know, but as I reflect on my first term in this parliament I feel fortunate for the changes that I have been able to achieve with the support of our community in Jordan.

When I was elected there were a number of longstanding issues that needed to be addressed and, with our Labor government, I am ticking them off one by one. In the next few weeks, we begin construction on one of the biggest park-and-ride facilities Queensland has ever seen—\$44.5 million delivering 1,100 carparks in the station precinct. The Centenary Highway-Logan Motorway interchange has been a congestion hotspot for many years. I have secured the \$15 million we need to upgrade this interchange, with construction to begin in the next year.

We are delivering the first bus service ever for Greenbank and Flagstone after many years of requests and helping to secure \$20 million for a business case to progress the Beaudesert to Salisbury passenger rail line, which will be an absolute game changer for the Greater Flagstone region. We are significantly improving bus services in Gailes, Camira and Greater Springfield, and finally building that bus interchange at Springfield station, whilst also delivering a brand new bus service for Spring Mountain.

We are listening to families and delivering air conditioning to all our state schools and building new classrooms and facilities for our growing schools, from Camira to Flagstone. Every school has seen improvements this term. We are supporting our non-government schools with significant state government funding for their infrastructure as well. We opened a brand new school in the growing Spring Mountain area and we are building a new primary school in Greenbank—the first school to be built in this area in 127 years. We are investigating new high school sites for both Greater Springfield and Greenbank—something I have pushed hard with the education department and with the support of our community.

We achieved more funding for the Mount Lindesay Highway and we are finalising the \$1.2 billion subregional infrastructure agreement that will ensure Greater Flagstone gets the upgraded roads that are long overdue.

That is just a snapshot of change that has been achieved in the Jordan electorate in less than three years, but there is more I want to do, particularly in bringing more public health services and community social services into the Jordan electorate. This is really important to me, particularly our community services. As our community grows it is very important to me.

Those opposite will make commitments that will be unfunded—in fact, \$23 billion worth—and that will never see the light of day. I always said to my community, 'I will only ever promise you what I know I can deliver.' To those students who ask, 'How long does it take to change things?' I say, 'With hard work and honesty, not as long as you think.'

The House adjourned at 7.31 pm.

ATTENDANCE

Andrew, Bailey, Bates, Batt, Bennett, Berkman, Bleijie, Bolton, Boothman, Boyce, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Costigan, Crandon, Crawford, Crisafulli, D'Ath, Dametto, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Frecklington, Furner, Gerber, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Hart, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, Jones, Katter, Kelly, King, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Lauga, Leahy, Linard, Lister, Lui, Lynham, Madden, Mander, McArdle, McCallum, McDonald, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, 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, Sorensen, Stevens, Stewart, Trad, Watts, Weir, Whiting, Wilson