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FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

Wednesday, 24 March 2021

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WEDNESDAY, 24 MARCH 2021



The Legislative Assembly met at 9.30 am.

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

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

PRIVILEGE

Alleged Deliberate Misleading of the House



Hon. CR DICK (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Investment) (9.31 am): I rise on a matter of privilege. Yesterday in a matter of public interest the member for Toowoomba South said that Queensland was the first state to cancel its budget. This statement is false on two counts. Firstly, Queensland was not the first jurisdiction to alter budget timing. The decision to change the timing of budgets was made simultaneously by the Commonwealth government and all states and territories at a meeting of national cabinet on 20 March. Secondly, and more importantly, Queensland's budget was never cancelled. The member for Toowoomba South would know the 2020 budget was not cancelled because he was present in the chamber when I delivered it on 1 December. In fact, the member for Toowoomba South made a budget speech on 3 December. That was 111 days ago and—

Mr SPEAKER: Treasurer!

Mr DICK: That was the most recent occasion that he asked me a question in this House.

Mr SPEAKER: Treasurer! Order!

Mr DICK: I will write to you further on that, Mr Speaker.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

School Group Tours



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I wish to advise that we will be visited in the gallery this morning by students and teachers from: Watson Road State School in the electorate of Algester; Aboriginal and Islander Independent Community School, the Murri School, in the electorate of Algester; Marist College Ashgrove in the electorate of Ferny Grove; McDowall State School in the electorate of Everton; and Somerville House in the electorate of South Brisbane.

PETITIONS

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

Toowoomba, Quarantine Facility

8,276 petitioners, requesting the House to not move the quarantine system to the privately owned Wellcamp Airport near Toowoomba [[370](#), [371](#)].

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

Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act

Mr Berkman, from 10,838 petitioners, requesting the House to call upon the Attorney General to reform the Birth, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act, remove the 'trans tax' and fix the Registry's processes [[372](#)].

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

Toondah Priority Development Area

From 4,290 petitioners, requesting the House to recognise the proposed residential development over part of the Moreton Bay Ramsar site at Toondah Harbour is inappropriate; protect Ramsar listed wetlands; and reduce the current boundaries of the Toondah Priority Development Area to exclude any intrusion into the Moreton Bay Ramsar site [\[373\]](#).

Priority Development Areas

From 755 petitioners, requesting the House to enact urgent legislation that allows people to appeal decisions related to developments in Priority Development Areas and to prohibit developers managing master plan preparation over areas they wish to develop [\[374\]](#).

Petitions received.

TABLED PAPER

TABLING OF DOCUMENT (SO 32)

REPORT BY THE CLERK

The following report was tabled by the Clerk—

[375](#) 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—

Child Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020

Amendments made to Bill

Short title and consequential references to short title—

Omit—

'Child Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020'

Insert—

'Child Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2021'

MINISTERIAL PAPER

Revocation of Protected Areas



Hon. MAJ SCANLON (Gaven—ALP) (Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Youth Affairs) (9.34 am): I lay upon the table of the House a proposal under section 32 of the Nature Conservation Act 1992 and a brief explanation of the proposal.

Tabled paper: Proposal under section 32 of the Nature Conservation Act 1992 and a brief explanation of the proposal, relating to Daintree National Park and Warrina Conservation Park [\[376\]](#).

NOTICE OF MOTION

Revocation of Protected Areas



Hon. MAJ SCANLON (Gaven—ALP) (Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Youth Affairs) (9.34 am): I give notice that, after the expiration of at least 28 days as provided in the Nature Conservation Act 1992, I shall move—

1. That this House requests the Governor in Council to revoke by regulation under section 32 of the Nature Conservation Act 1992 the dedication of part of one national park and one conservation park as set out in the Proposal tabled by me in the House today, viz

Description of areas to be revoked

Daintree National Park

An area of 0.2532 hectares described as part of lot 1 on AP19304 (to be described as lot 2 on SP304825), as illustrated on the attached sketch.


Warrina Conservation Park

An area of 0.9376 hectares described as part of lot 337 on plan NR7395 (to be described as lots 1 and 2 on SP318397), as illustrated on the attached sketch.

2. That Mr Speaker and the Clerk of the Parliament forward a copy of this resolution to the Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Youth Affairs for submission to the Governor in Council.


MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Coronavirus, Update

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.35 am): Queensland has recorded four new cases of COVID overnight. All are overseas acquired and detected in hotel quarantine. Two are from Papua New Guinea and one transited through Papua New Guinea. We now have 67 active cases, and we have had a total of 1,426 cases. There were 7,872 tests performed in the past 24 hours, which is good news because it means people are obviously doing the right thing in Queensland and we urge them to continue to do that. We have 45,068 health and hotel quarantine workers now vaccinated, with 4,083 being vaccinated yesterday.

In the past 24 hours, Germany have announced another lockdown. They have reported 7,485 cases in the past 24 hours, along with 250 deaths. This is a result of the UK strain. Chancellor Merkel has said they are essentially battling a new virus. The threat of the pandemic is still with us and we have to stay on guard.

South-East and Western Queensland, Weather Event

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.36 am): The sun is shining, and although our weather emergency has eased it is not over yet. A major flood warning still remains for the Logan River and a minor flood warning remains for the Albert River. There are 24 state and independent schools which remain closed, along with a number of roads. In the 24 hours to dawn this morning, the State Emergency Service had received 587 calls for help. Since 9 am yesterday, rainfall totals ranged from 151 millimetres at Springbrook to 63 millimetres at Biloela.

The rain was widespread and significant, resulting in three emergency alerts for residents in low-lying areas of Leyburn, Beaudesert and suburbs north of Pimpama. I am pleased to report that no evacuations were needed and there was no demand for services in any of our evacuation centres. I am further advised that no widespread significant rainfall is forecast today, although isolated storms and showers are still possible. I urge everyone to keep listening to the advice from the bureau and emergency services.

Of course, now the job of cleaning up and repairing damaged houses begins. They say every cloud has a silver lining and perhaps ours is this: for more than a year, Stanthorpe's main water supply—the Storm King Dam—has been empty. I know this because I have been out there and I have seen it myself, as have many other ministers. It is called the Storm King Dam because when a king storm comes, it fills. As a result of the past few days of rain, Storm King Dam is now full. I acknowledge comments from the Southern Downs mayor thanking the government for trucking in water supplies since September 2019. No-one will be happier than the people of Stanthorpe to once again have water in their dams.

Honourable members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: You should be happy. I do not know why you are not happy. It is great news.


Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Premier, it would be helpful if you could put your comments through the chair.

Mr Bleijie: That rain dance you did made it rain.

Ms PALASZCZUK: There is only one dancer in this parliament. I also want to thank our fires, especially the swiftwater rescue teams who have been called in so that medical care and supplies can reach stranded people. I want to thank our State Emergency Service volunteers. I want to thank the people of this tremendous state who continue to confront nature's extremes. The danger has not yet passed but the sun is beginning to shine.

Beef 2021; Opera Queensland

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.39 am): We are rightly proud of our exceptional exports: goods, services and even the famous Queenslanders who represent our state. I can personally testify from my trips to countries like Japan that one of our most famous and highly regarded Queenslanders is a Queensland steak from our perfect Queensland beef.

As much as we enjoy a locally produced steak at our pubs and restaurants, I can assure honourable members that diners overseas love our beef just as much. Iron Chef Sakai made that clear in 2019 when I was in Tokyo to launch our Queenslander beef brand. Korea, Taiwan, China, the Middle East and the US are also important markets for our beef.

This week we welcome to parliament important stakeholders from the beef industry ahead of the Beef Australia 2021 event in Rockhampton in May. Last night I attended a great preview, along with the Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and other ministers including, of course, the Deputy Premier and the Treasurer and a host of MPs from across this parliament. We were joined by Beef Australia chair Bryce Camm and CEO Ian Mill. Great food was served by chefs Shane and Dominique and there was also wonderful entertainment.

Beef Australia is a huge event held every three years to showcase our beef industry. I know there is no-one more proud of this event than the member for Rockhampton and the member for Keppel. We will be there in May to join in the celebration.

This is an industry which earns billions of export dollars and employs thousands of Queenslanders in Rockhampton, Townsville, Mackay, Biloela, Toowoomba, Warwick, Beenleigh, Ipswich and elsewhere. It is an industry that survives, thrives and grows despite drought, monsoon floods or COVID. This year the event is especially important as we continue to implement our plan for regional jobs and economic recovery. Working with Queensland Health, it will be COVID-safe with virtual and actual attendance for cattle competitions, symposiums, technology displays, celebrity chefs and entertainment.

I mentioned the music. That is because this year, in another tremendous innovation, Beef Australia is partnering with Opera Queensland, and what a wonderful partnership that is. Our state's signature opera company will start its 2021 regional tour—a tour of almost 30 centres—with a premiere at Beef Australia. As a centrepiece of Opera Queensland's 40th anniversary, country music and opera will come together for *Are You Lonesome Tonight*, and we heard a taste of it last night. Congratulations to Opera Queensland directors Patrick Nolan and Mark Taylor, and performers Irena, Marcus and Jonathan.

Beef 2021 is such an important way to promote a vital part of our economy that we are backing it with a million dollars of support. That support means: a 20 per cent bigger event area, allowing more visitors; new space to showcase emerging technology; more seminars and educational opportunities; and a new international engagement program.

Beef Australia 2021 along with the Opera Queensland premiere makes Rocky the place to be in the first week of May.

Integrity Commissioner, Review



Hon. A PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.42 am): The Integrity Act 2009 requires that a strategic review to assess whether the Integrity Commissioner's functions are performed economically, effectively and efficiently is undertaken at least every five years. I am pleased to advise the House that the Governor in Council has approved the appointment of Kevin Yearbury to conduct this review. Mr Yearbury is highly qualified to undertake this review. The Governor in Council has also approved the terms of reference for the review.

As required by the act, I consulted with the Integrity Commissioner and the parliamentary committee about the terms of reference and Mr Yearbury's appointment. The review is to be completed within six months. On completion of the review, Mr Yearbury will provide me with a report that I will table in parliament and that will be considered by the parliamentary committee. I look forward to receiving Mr Yearbury's report and considering the committee's report on the review.

Australian Bravery Decorations




Hon. A PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.43 am): On the night of 23 August 2016, 21-year-old backpacker Mia Ayliffe-Chung lost her life in tragic circumstances at Home Hill, outside of Townsville. It was a crime that shook North Queenslanders to their core. One of the men who stood in the way of Mia's attacker was 33-year-old Thomas Jackson. I am proud to confirm that last night Tom was posthumously honoured with the Star of Courage, the second highest bravery decoration.

Tom made the ultimate sacrifice in the hope that he could save another person's life. This is the definition of selflessness. It is why I nominated Tom for a bravery award five years ago. Mr Grant Scholz, a former manager at the hostel, has also been awarded a Commendation for Brave Conduct, having sustained injuries while intervening in the attack.

My thoughts today are with the families of Mia and Tom. I also acknowledge the other 25 Queensland based recipients including 10 police officers, ADF personnel and everyday Queenslanders who put the lives of others ahead of their own.

Space Industry


 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumbidgee—ALP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning) (9.44 am): The Queensland government's Space Industry Strategy aims to grow the industry to add between \$3.5 billion and \$6 billion to Queensland's economy and up to 6,000 jobs. The Palaszczuk government wants Queensland to be recognised as a leading centre in Australasia for launch activities, ground systems, earth observation, niche manufacturing, robotics and automation for space. With our advanced manufacturing supply chain and world-leading research programs, it makes sense for the state to also be the home of Australia's space manufacturing industry. The Palaszczuk government is working closely with the Australian Space Agency to grow our space industry. We know Queensland has the capabilities to really make a mark on this exciting industry.

Queensland is home to some of the best universities on the planet. For example, NASA has commissioned QUT to develop software for the Perseverance Rover to analyse geochemical data it captures while on its mission. QUT researchers and PhD students Vanessa Zepeda and Brendan Orenstein and undergraduate students will work with NASA to determine if Martian rocks are similar to rocks found in Australia. Together they are turning the red planet maroon.

Dr David Flannery from QUT is a member of the Perseverance science team and a co-investigator of a rock chemistry instrument aboard the rover, which is led by QUT alumna Dr Abigail Allwood at NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory. These are Queenslanders helping to answer the profound question as to whether life has ever existed elsewhere in our solar system.

For approximately one Mars year, or 687 earth days, the Perseverance Rover will feed back X-rayed images of rocks for the students to study. NASA specifically wants to compare Mars rocks to the almost three-billion-year-old rocks from the Pilbara region in Western Australia. This will also give scientists a better understanding of why Mars, which was once home to lakes and rivers, is now so different to earth. Queenslanders may not be walking on Mars yet, but we are leaving our footprints there in other ways.

Regional Queensland, Investment

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Investment) (9.46 am): The attraction and support of more major private investment into regional Queensland is a central focus for our government. That is because we know private investment provides employment for Queenslanders and will support long-term economic growth for the benefit of all communities across our great state. The Palaszczuk Labor government is working closely with industry to encourage this investment through incentives, project facilitation and initiatives like our Jobs and Regional Growth Fund.

Since we first introduced the Jobs and Regional Growth Fund in 2017, it has supported 41 projects that are creating more than 1,800 long-term operational jobs across industries like advanced manufacturing, defence, agriculture, mining and aviation. These projects have seen a whopping \$2 billion in capital investment committed to Queensland. This investment will flow through and benefit our regional communities for decades to come, supporting Queensland's plan for economic recovery now and long into the future. That is because our state's successful health response to the pandemic has meant we are looking towards a post-COVID world in better shape than most other jurisdictions around the globe.

This fact was pointed out to me more than once last week when I was in North Queensland for our government's first regional investor round table in Townsville along with the Minister for Resources and member for Townsville, Scott Stewart; the member for Thuringowa, Aaron Harper; the member for Mundingburra, Les Walker; and the assistant treasurer, Charis Mullen. The event was a fantastic opportunity for government to engage with regional industry leaders, and I thank those leaders who attended for sharing their expert insights and providing valuable feedback on future partnership plans.

Through Queensland Treasury's Investment Facilitation and Partnerships Group, our government will continue to work with business, industry and investors to bring more big projects to life in Queensland. Over the past three years major projects in regional Queensland have resulted in capital investment of almost \$1 billion, creating approximately 2,500 direct jobs for our state.


The work continues to keep building on these numbers, to generate more jobs in our cities, towns and regions and to make sure the world knows that Queensland is open for business.

Mr SPEAKER: Before calling the minister, I will let members to my left know that there is a power supply issue with one of the timer screens, which we hope will be rectified by lunchtime. However, it does not mean that you have any excuse for running long with any contribution. There are plenty of other clocks and timers in the chamber.

Mr Bleijie: I can't see that far, though.

Mr SPEAKER: Should've gone to Specsavers!

Weather Event, School Closures; School Infrastructure

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (9.49 am): By way of an update, there are 18 state schools currently closed. The good news is that closures are due to access and not due to school damage.

If there are any pieces of school infrastructure that unite all in this chamber, they are school halls and multipurpose facilities. One of the regular topics raised with me by all members in this House is school halls, be they new or upgraded. Since we came to government we have delivered around 60 new and improved halls—but wait, there's more. During the election we committed around \$260 million for new and upgraded halls in 37 schools, with 18 being built in regional Queensland. That is more than 100 halls for sports and performing arts. In many cases, they are the only indoor spaces in small rural and remote communities.


Most importantly, our latest commitment will support 775 jobs as part of our economic recovery plan, particularly in regional Queensland. That is jobs for young construction workers like Cameron Daglish, whom I met earlier this month working on his first school site. He is a young, first-year apprentice with Redbank Plains Plumbing. He told me that he is really enjoying the variety of skills he is learning.

We will be creating jobs and building halls at St George State High School in Warrego, Ayr State High School in Burdekin, Oakey State High School in Condamine and Gladstone Central State School in Gladstone. On the Gold Coast, three schools will receive new halls: Miami State High School in Mermaid Beach, Nerang State High School in Gaven and Palm Beach Currumbin State High School in Burleigh. On the Sunshine Coast, five new halls will be built: at Chancellor State College in Buderim, Burnside State High School in Nicklin, Buderim Mountain State School in Buderim, Caloundra State School in Caloundra and Noosa District State High School's Pomona campus in Noosa.

Ms Palaszczuk: Great work, Minister.

Ms GRACE: I take that interjection from the Premier. These halls are a major contributor to schools and local communities. I know how much the \$5.3 million to enclose the existing covered area will mean to the Kilcoy State High School community, and I look forward to working with the Kilcoy P&C, which wrote to me supporting this project. Scoping and design work will soon be completed for all 37 halls, and the first contracts will be awarded in the second half of this year. The Palaszczuk government is getting on with the job of driving economic recovery, particularly in our regions, with a pipeline of jobs and infrastructure. I look forward to opening these new school facilities with all members in this House.

Health System, Infrastructure


 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (9.52 am): As we continue to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Queensland government is also continuing to invest in health infrastructure and services to support our health system long into the future. This financial year we are injecting more than \$1.6 billion into capital investment to boost health infrastructure. Queensland Health is currently delivering more than 120 construction projects across the state, with the 2020-21 built infrastructure program supporting more than 1,500 full-time-equivalent jobs. These projects are meeting future service demand, implementing interim demand measures and renewing ageing infrastructure.

First and foremost, I am happy to report that construction has started on the new ward at Ipswich Hospital. This \$25 million project will create 26 additional beds and an improved outpatient area at Ipswich Hospital as well as the refurbishment of the tower block levels 6 and 7. This important project will enable Ipswich Hospital to expand and cater for future demand for the rapidly growing West Moreton region and improve access to top-quality health care closer to home. I am also pleased to inform the House that work is progressing on the redevelopment of the public hospitals at Logan and Caboolture and that works on Nambour Hospital are expected to be completed by the end of this calendar year.

Before the last election the Premier reiterated her commitment to govern in the interests of all Queenslanders, irrespective of where they live. There is no clearer manifestation of that promise than in the investment we are continuing to make in the delivery of health services in rural and remote communities. The list of those many projects is too long to report in its entirety in this statement but they include: the Gladstone Hospital Specialist Outpatient Unit, the Thursday Island Hospital and Primary Healthcare Centre, the Mer Island Primary Healthcare Centre, the Cairns Mental Health Unit, the Emerald Hospital Emergency Department upgrade, stage 2 of the new Kingaroy Hospital, the Rockhampton Hospital Hybrid Theatre, a fit-out of the south block of the Townsville hospital to create an additional 33 beds, and the Gold Coast Mental Health Unit. Of course, we will deliver on a promise to build seven new satellite hospitals during this term.

One final project I would like to make particular mention of is the progression of the work happening at Longreach Hospital. The \$4.75 million electrical and mechanical upgrade has now commenced and is a part of the ongoing improvements to the hospital that have been happening over the past four years. This brings the total hospital investment to \$20.1 million and has delivered a new maternity unit, a new day surgery unit, new medical imaging—including the region's first CT scanner—an upgraded emergency department, new air conditioning and extensive upgrades to the medical gases systems. This incredible investment will benefit Central West residents for years to come. These projects will make a real difference in the lives of Queenslanders across the state. I look forward to updating the House throughout 2021.

Water

 **Hon. GJ BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water) (9.55 am): The last few days of heavy rain and localised flooding have been difficult for many Queenslanders. However, this deluge has had a significant upside for many communities in regional Queensland, not the least of which—as we heard from the Premier this morning—is Stanthorpe, which has relied on water carting from this government for well over year. As the Premier also said this morning, Stanthorpe's Storm King Dam has now reached 100 per cent capacity.

Earlier this morning I spoke with the mayor of Southern Downs, Vic Pennisi. He is a very excited mayor at the moment. He told me that the dam started spilling at about 11.40 last night. I am sure he was not standing on the dam wall by himself; I am sure there were plenty of other people with him! This morning he thanked the Queensland government for working shoulder to shoulder with the community in that area over the past 12 months through a very tough period. I encourage anyone who is willing to get out there and look at this wonderful part of Queensland over the next few weeks.

While people in Stanthorpe now have water to drink, I am sure that many residents will be celebrating with other beverages going forward and over the weekend. As craft brewing minister in Queensland, I recommend Stanthorpe's own Brass Monkey brewery.

Two other dams in the region have also received significant inflows. Connolly Dam has reached full capacity and Leslie Dam near Warwick is now sitting at over 25 per cent—it was getting closer to 30 per cent this morning—which my department advises me adds approximately a year's supply of water to Warwick. That is great news for that community as well.

While the immediate water security concerns for the Southern Downs have abated, residents can be confident that the Palaszczuk government will continue to work with the Southern Downs Regional Council to ensure their long-term water needs are addressed. We have also seen major inflows into the South-East Queensland water grid over the past few days. I am advised that the grid is now sitting at 58.6 per cent capacity, an increase of 4.6 per cent over the past seven days.

North Pine Dam alone has seen a 12.7 per cent increase in storage over the last week. As at 8 am, 12 South-East Queensland dams were spilling. While the average catchment rainfall has exceeded 200 millimetres, heavy falls have been very localised. Rainfall has been much lower in the

catchment of our largest dam, Wivenhoe, with an increase of just 0.8 per cent in the past seven days. While the heaviest rain has cleared, inflows will continue to our dams for the next few days. Our government will continue to monitor storage levels to ensure residents of South-East Queensland can have confidence in their water security.

In further news, I am also pleased to advise that Paradise Dam has received inflows and is now sitting at 32 per cent capacity. While these increased levels in our dams are positive, I still encourage everyone in Queensland to be waterwise and to minimise their consumption where they can.

Hydrogen Industry



Hon. MC de BRENNI (Springwood—ALP) (Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement) (9.58 am): In a major endorsement of international investor confidence, I can inform the House that another global resources and industrial giant has signed up to Queensland hydrogen. That means jobs for regional Queenslanders. Last week, Sumitomo Corporation of Japan formalised its collaboration with a number of local partners to develop a hydrogen ecosystem in Gladstone. The end game is millions of tonnes of renewable hydrogen exported to the world, branded 'Made in Queensland', by regional Queenslanders.

The memorandum of understanding charts our course to get there. From now until 2024, the signatories will work towards creating a strong regional demand for hydrogen production. The community of Gladstone, led by the Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing, will work to develop this domestic demand as a fuel source in buses, trucks and even wastewater plants.

From the halfway point in this decade, the focus will shift then towards large-scale industrial hydrogen use in Central Queensland. In fact, Central Queensland University, a signatory to the MOU, will play a key role in delivering the skills and qualifications that Queensland workers will require as part of Queensland's next energy boom. I look forward to working with the Minister for Education to deliver our government's \$2 million upgrade of facilities at Gladstone State High School to prepare local students for careers in the Queensland hydrogen supply chain. The minister informs me that design works are due to start soon.

Finally, we will, by decade's end, have built a fully operational transport and export hub exporting renewable hydrogen to our global trading partners. There is no place better than Queensland's publicly owned ports to export our hydrogen. The Minister for Transport informs me that our publicly owned ports shipped 305 million tonnes of commodities last financial year alone. In fact, Gladstone overtook Qatar last year as the largest exporter of LNG in the world.

Once again, Queensland's publicly owned infrastructure will be at the forefront of facilitating the future prosperity of this state, this time by enabling our future hydrogen supply chain. This is yet another endorsement by a global hydrogen heavyweight in Sumitomo that Queensland is up to the task. Our thanks go to Sumitomo Managing Director, Yoshikazu Ishikawa, for joining us in Central Queensland last week to back Queensland's clean energy future.

It is a fact that on this side of the House all members embrace the significant opportunities presented by cleaner, cheaper energy. I call on those opposite to join us in supporting the development of a modern, world-leading energy sector because renewable and low-emissions fuel will play a critical role in growing Queensland's manufacturing sector and sustaining our resources industry and the hundreds of thousands of Queensland jobs that they support.

South-East and Western Queensland, Weather Event



Hon. MT RYAN (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (10.01 am): The effects of the recent extreme weather will be felt for some time to come. While the flooding threat is not yet over, for many the clean-up is now beginning. Along with the federal minister for emergency management, I today announced that disaster assistance is now available to the Gold Coast, Logan and Scenic Rim council areas. This follows the sustained heavy rainfall and flooding across southern parts of the state. Assistance is being provided through the jointly funded Commonwealth-state Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements. This funding will assist councils with the costs of road and infrastructure repairs and clean-up and recovery efforts in the affected communities.


Days of continuous heavy rain have resulted in widespread damage to roads, several landslides and extensive debris across road networks. Flooded roads and causeways have also led to isolation and other disruption to communities. We will continue to act swiftly to provide financial support to councils for counterdisaster operations and the restoration of essential public assets to help these

communities recover as quickly as possible. Today's announcements will allow local councils to carry out clean-up operations and restore their damaged essential public assets knowing that the eligible costs will be covered under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements.

This has been a significant weather event. In the seven days until yesterday, over 600 millimetres of rain fell at Mount Tamborine, 560 millimetres at Upper Springbrook and 385 millimetres at North Stradbroke Island. Preliminary data also shows that a number of locations broke daily March rainfall records. In fact, on 22 March at Mulga Downs 100 millimetres fell, which is the highest in 116 years of records. Likewise, out near Warwick at Leslie Dam 95 millimetres fell—the highest on record in 106 years.

As they always do, our emergency services, our firefighters, our SES staff and volunteers and the thousands of others across government agencies and the community have been there standing shoulder to shoulder with their fellow Queenslanders ready to help. On behalf of all of us, I thank them.

Beef 2021

 **Hon. ML FURNER** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities) (10.04 am): In just six weeks the eyes of the world's cattle community will be firmly focused on the great Queensland city of Rockhampton. As the Premier said earlier in her ministerial statement, the city will host Beef 2021, and I cannot think of a better place to celebrate all things beef.

Ms Palaszczuk: You're going to be there all week, aren't you?

Mr FURNER: Absolutely. Rockhampton is Australia's beef capital. Beef is the heart of our great state and is our largest agricultural commodity. Beef processing directly provides 10,000 Queensland jobs and supports a further 8,000 jobs, and beef exports are worth \$6.22 billion to our economy. It is little wonder that agriculture, and in particular the beef industry, is such a key part of our regional plan for economic recovery.


More than 100,000 people attended Beef 2018 in Rockhampton, delivering substantial economic benefits to the region. The Palaszczuk government has committed \$1 million of support to this year's edition. I was there in 2018 when the Premier's commitment went from half a million dollars to a million dollars, so it is great to see the support of the Palaszczuk government for Beef 2021.

We are focused on economic recovery from COVID in regional Queensland, and events like this in Australia's beef capital will help. The Department of Agriculture and Fisheries is leading state government engagement with organiser Beef Australia Ltd and regional staff are pitching in to make sure that the event is another success. This year there will be an increased focus on agtech and DAF will host an agtech and innovation hub at the Ken Coombe yards which will showcase existing and world-first emerging technologies that impact the beef industry supply chain from conception through to consumption. More than 5,000 head of cattle will be on display, so to make sure there are no disease issues there will be a range of preventive actions for event organisers and exhibitors to undertake and the health of livestock will be monitored throughout the event.

Last night I hosted a gathering of key organisers of Beef 2021, supporters and sponsors as well as Opera Queensland and others who are all part of the event for this year. The Premier was there and is 100 per cent behind this event. The Palaszczuk government is already committed and so many senior ministers and MPs right across the divide were present, showing their support for this event and this industry. Of course, our hardworking members for Rockhampton and Keppel were there as well. It was terrific to receive the support of Beef Australia on the night. I am quite used to being known as 'Furner the farmer's friend' as I travel around the state, but last night it was quite a humbling experience when chair Bryce Camm suggested that I be known as the 'minister for beef' during Beef 2021 in May.

Beef 2021 is an important event and rightly puts the focus on regional Queensland and the economic powerhouse it will continue to be for our state and our nation. Given its many businesses and its many thousands of jobs, it is a critical pillar in Queensland's plan for our regional economic recovery. Queensland produces the best beef in the world and Beef 2021 is a wonderful opportunity to show the rest of Australia and the world that we produce from paddock to plate.

Disability Advocacy Services, Funding

 **Hon. CD CRAWFORD** (Barron River—ALP) (Minister for Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (10.08 am): I rise to update the House on how the Palaszczuk government is committed to supporting all Queenslanders through disability

advocacy support. In 2017 the Palaszczuk government committed to extending disability advocacy funding through to 30 June 2021 which was a two-year commitment valued at \$8.1 million. In 2019-20 this funding was bolstered by a one-off additional allocation to support regional advocacy services to address additional demand arising during the NDIS transition and subsequently during COVID-19.

With Queensland's economic recovery underway, this investment results in jobs and economic stability for people with a disability and those working in the sector. Between 1 July 2019 and 31 December 2020, advocacy funding provided by the Palaszczuk government funded advocacy organisations to deliver more than 34,000 hours of support to more than 3,400 people with disability. Queensland is leading the way when it comes to job creation and we are able to deliver Queensland's plan for economic recovery because the Palaszczuk government is united while those opposite are divided.

Today I am pleased to advise that the Queensland government is supportive of extending the base funding for disability advocacy services by a further two years to support this vital sector. We work every day to ensure that all Queenslanders with disability, no matter where they live, have access to the support they deserve. One of our key priorities is building inclusive communities for all ages, abilities and backgrounds. The demand for advocacy services has persisted despite Queensland's transition to the NDIS. The NDIS has been a major driver of advocacy demand. We all know advocacy is a vital support for people, including people with disability.

Just last month I met with representatives from the Combined Advocacy Groups of Queensland to discuss disability advocacy needs in Queensland. I will continue to meet with disability advocacy groups. A new National Disability Strategy is due to be released later this year and I am eager to see that as it will inform our own revised State Disability Plan. The underpinning systemic issues, including disability advocacy, are yet to be addressed federally and will likely take a significant period of time to fully resolve.

Commonwealth action on the findings and recommendations of the various reviews of the NDIS is in the early stages. We will be extending our support through our existing arrangements while we work with the federal government, which is leading a demand and gap analysis of independent disability advocacy and decision-making supports. Findings of this work will strongly inform discussions on future arrangements for funding. My department will now work to ensure that funding is allocated to support the areas of greatest demand across the state. I look forward to working with Queenslanders with Disability Network and the Queensland Disability Advocacy Alliance to continue to support the special needs of vulnerable groups of Queenslanders with a disability.

World Science Festival



Hon. LM ENOCH (Algeria—ALP) (Minister for Communities and Housing, Minister for Digital Economy and Minister for the Arts) (10.11 am): World Science Festival Brisbane is launching today and will run until Sunday. Following the Brisbane program, the festival is hitting the road and presenting events across regional Queensland as part of our World Science Festival Queensland program. It is exciting to see the festival back this year after its absence due to COVID-19 last year. Due to the hard work of all Queenslanders we are once again able to see this kind of event take place.

Ours is the only World Science Festival held outside of New York, and it is proudly supported by the Palaszczuk government with a \$3 million investment each year. Since the festival first launched in 2016, it has attracted more than 700,000 visitors, injecting more than \$32 million into our state's economy and spotlighting our state as both a tourist destination and a thriving knowledge economy.

World Science Festival Brisbane 2021, presented by Queensland Museum, offers an exciting mix of science in an innovative new format with an inspiring program of ideas, performances and discussions. This year, World Science Festival is also offering an online program alongside its live events, with new livestreaming options that make the festival more accessible to more Queenslanders, including the new City of Science which will deliver science surprises in 86 events across 10 Brisbane precincts over the next five days. The festival will once again connect beyond Brisbane to Chinchilla, Gladstone, Toowoomba, Townsville and Ipswich.

Since the World Science Festival Queensland program began in these regional locations, 126 events and performances have been delivered, which have been attended by almost 43,000 people. This includes more than 16,000 attendees in Gladstone and more than 12,500 in Chinchilla since the beginning of the program. Importantly, World Science Festival Brisbane and World Science Festival Queensland programming has supported more than 236,000 visitor nights since 2016, which is great news for local tourism.

The return of the festival in 2021 will continue to generate great enthusiasm and tourism opportunities for businesses in regional Queensland. Immersing Queenslanders in a world of science, technology, engineering and mathematics is a wonderful way to get Queensland communities engaged and excited about STEM, as well as generate vital economic activity. The arts and cultural sector are key to delivering our plan for economic recovery, each year injecting \$8.5 billion into the state's economy and supporting more than 92,000 jobs for Queenslanders right across the state. I encourage everyone to get out to see the World Science Festival over the next five days here in Brisbane and across Queensland and be immersed in the wonders of science.

MOTION

Suspension of Standing and Sessional Orders



Hon. YM D'ATH (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (10.13 am) by leave, without notice: I move—

That—

- (a) notwithstanding anything contained in standing and sessional orders, the Premier and Minister for Trade be permitted to move the motion standing in the Premier and Minister for Trade's name at 2 pm today;
- (b) standing order 231 be suspended for the debate; and
- (c) the following time limits apply—
three minutes for all members; and
total time before question put—two hours.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

NOTICE OF MOTION

Electricity Supply



Mr KATTER (Traeger—KAP) (10.14 am): I give notice that I will move—

That this House—

- 1. acknowledges that the Queensland government should maintain control of, and responsibility for, investment decisions regarding major electricity infrastructure, including in renewable generation, through regulation, ownership and operational roles;
- 2. acknowledges that leaving such investment decisions solely up to private developers and individual companies means Queenslanders miss out on important economic development opportunities and well-paying stable jobs;
- 3. is committed to securing the future of the North West Minerals Province by integration into the National Electricity Market and national power grid through construction of CopperString 2.0 with operation and ownership roles by government entities; and
- 4. will support an energy reserve policy that ensures Queensland households and businesses can benefit from the state's abundant energy resources, including coal, gas, renewables and future hydrogen production.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

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

Hospitals, Access



Mr CRISAFULLI (10.15 am): My question is to the Premier. I refer to the Premier's comments about a review into ambulance ramping. Who is doing it, what is the scope and when will it be released?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I said in answer to a question the other day that I will talk to the health minister about that. I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question. In relation to that, the health minister yesterday spoke in this House about how she was convening a meeting—and I can confirm that is tomorrow—with not only the HHSs but also representatives of the union and consumer groups to look at those issues.

Whilst I am on my feet, and since the issue did touch on health, I am very proud of the investment that my government has put into our health system: an over \$20 billion budget. Also whilst I am on my feet I think it is timely to say thank you on behalf of this House to all of our health workers who have

done an extraordinary job during COVID. Every single person across our health system and across our hotel quarantine system has really stood up when Queenslanders needed them to perform above what anyone would expect them to.

As I said today in my ministerial statement, we now have over 60 active cases of COVID in our hospitals. Over 50 per cent of them are from Papua New Guinea. I know it is really important to the people of this state and to Torres Strait Islanders to make sure that we protect Queenslanders and keep everyone safe.

Opposition members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: The member did talk about health. I answered the question in relation to what the minister said in this House yesterday. She is absolutely determined to conduct that meeting tomorrow.

Mr Crisafulli: When?

Ms PALASZCZUK: Tomorrow, Leader of the Opposition. Let me repeat it again—tomorrow—in case the Leader of the Opposition did not hear it for the third time.

As we have said, it is a very brave LNP member to stand in this House to talk about health in this state. If it were not for our government rebuilding the health system where would we have been? If those opposite had been in office they would have opened the borders and COVID would have come in. The people of Queensland made their decision at the October election.

(Time expired)

Hospitals, Access

Mr CRISAFULLI: My question is to the Minister for Health. On Monday the Premier flagged a review into the ambulance ramping crisis that is gripping Queensland hospitals. Yesterday the health minister said ramping could be solved by an extra 130 beds or a 0.07 per cent increase to Queensland Health funding.

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Members to my right, I have been clear about hearing the question. The minister will be able to make a response once the House has heard the question asked.

Mr CRISAFULLI: How can Queenslanders have confidence in the health system when the story changes day by day?

Mrs D'ATH: I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question. They can have more confidence in a government that is consistent in its responses as opposed to those who like to verbal and make stuff up. The Leader of the Opposition may want to go back to *Hansard*, and I certainly will, and look at what I said yesterday. I did not say it would simply be solved by 130 beds. That is verballing me and misleading this House, but that is what the opposition likes to do. The reality is that I indicated there is a range of measures being taken, including \$15 million to create an extra 130-bed capacity. Other measures outlined yesterday include putting additional paramedics on next month, bringing more services online and the waitlist work that we are doing. We have invested \$250 million since last year and we have increased the waiting list by 60 per cent, which is creating capacity.

As far as the review goes, the Leader of the Opposition is verballing the Premier. The media asked the Premier whether she would conduct a review and the Premier advised that she would talk to the health minister in relation to that issue. That is what she said. I can guarantee that had the Premier or I stood here yesterday and said that we were going to conduct a review over the next few months, those on the other side would have been whingeing and complaining: 'What? Another review? How much will that cost? How long will that take?' The reality is that the LNP will complain about anything and everything because they want to play politics with anything and everything, particularly the health system.

I can advise that, as the Premier has said, I am meeting with the Patient Access Advisory Committee tomorrow.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Burleigh and member for Maryborough, you are both warned under the standing orders. Quarrelling across the chamber is unacceptable.

Mrs D'ATH: I am meeting with the Patient Access Advisory Committee, which is the appropriate group with which to meet. Its membership includes chief executives from across the state, the Commissioner of the Queensland Ambulance Service, the Director-General of Queensland Health and

the Deputy Director-General of Clinical Excellence. Consumer group representatives and the union representative will also be there. They will be the best people to work with me on what else we can do to take pressure off our emergency departments, bed capacity and of course ramping.

Those on the side like to fudge. We know how much they spent on advertising the waiting list for the waiting list. They put aside \$77 million for consultants and advertising to talk about what they would do if they were re-elected, which we know did not happen. We are getting on with addressing the issue. We are meeting with those key people tomorrow and I look forward to listening to their contributions on what else we can be doing.

Tourism Industry, Events

Ms LUI: My question is of the Premier and Minister for Trade. With the end of JobKeeper looming, will the Premier update the House on the government's strategy to rebuild Queensland's tourism industry by kickstarting the state's events industry?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Cook for the question. Looming at the end of the month across Queensland and Australia is a very serious issue, which is the end of JobKeeper. It is a really serious issue for our tourism operators and the many people who work in the tourism and events industries across Queensland and across our nation. It was my absolute pleasure to join the member for Cook in Port Douglas where we spoke with tourism operators. I am very pleased to advise the House that a number of events are coming to the Far North: the Feast of the Senses from 15 to 17 April; the Cairns Summer Sounds featuring Tones and I on 8 May and John Butler on 22 May; the Port Douglas Carnivale on 14 to 23 May; the Great Barrier Reef Masters Games from 20 to 23 May; IRONMAN Cairns on 6 June; and the Cooktown & Cape York Expo from 11 to 20 June.

The member for Cairns, the tourism minister and I had the opportunity to walk through and see the expansion of the Cairns Convention Centre. We know that great funding invested by our government will allow a lot more events to happen in Cairns, including taking the Queensland parliament to Cairns once that project has been completed. Our investment in that expansion and renovation will mean more events and more jobs. I can also confirm to the House that we have poached another event from Victoria, the Sports Tech World Series, which I understand will be held on the Gold Coast for the next three years. We know that people want to come here and we know that we are potentially the events capital of Australia.

Whilst I am on my feet speaking about events it would be remiss of me not to note the support of the Brisbane City Council for the Olympics. I can confirm that yesterday I met with John Coates and we are in discussions with the federal government to organise a time when I can speak to the Prime Minister about the funding envelope that is needed between all levels of government so that we can go to the next stage of the Olympics candidature project. We know that the Olympics would set up Queensland for the future. I note and welcome the bipartisan support from the Leader of the Opposition. The sports minister and I will be catching up with Tim Mander in the not-too-distant future. This is a great opportunity for Queensland but it needs to be achieved through cooperation at local, state and federal levels.

Hospitals, Access

Mr JANETZKI: My question is to the Minister for Health. A whistleblower paramedic has told the opposition that patients are being transferred from the Maryborough Hospital to the Hervey Bay Hospital at an approximate cost of \$1,500 per patient, with about 200 transfers every month. How much has been spent on shuffling those patients this year?

Mrs D'ATH: I am happy to go off and look at the factual information around that statement. We are making a significant investment in the Maryborough and Hervey Bay area. I was up there on Friday to announce our investment in not only emergency departments but also extra beds for Maryborough and I will have more to say about that. We continue to be asked questions that suggest those opposite were not sitting in parliament yesterday when we talked about the additional investment that we are making to ease some of the pressures we are now seeing because of ramping, the pressures on our emergency departments and—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: It would be helpful if members put their comments through the chair. As I hear the answer, the health minister is being responsive to the question as it was asked. I would like to hear her response.

Mrs D'ATH: Those opposite continue to deny the issues facing our hospitals and our emergency departments right now from the increased pressure because of COVID. We heard from the Premier this morning that we now have 67 active cases, which means 67 hospital beds being taken up by positive COVID patients in addition to the almost 600 beds being taken up by people who should be in aged-care or disability facilities. We never hear those opposite talking about the obligations of the Commonwealth when it comes to disability and aged care and what they are going to do about it.

You cannot talk about the demand on our ambulance system without talking about the pressure on bed capacity and the pressure on our emergency departments. The fact is that we are seeing a significant increase across a range of categories, including category 5. That is why we are about to launch a positive community education program to educate people about what to go to their doctor for. We cannot have people turning up to an emergency department wanting a script refilled, stitches or splinters removed and that sort of thing.

Mrs Frecklington: Out of touch.

Mrs D'ATH: I hear the comment 'out of touch' from those opposite. They are in complete denial about what is happening in our emergency departments and with increases in those categories.

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition.

Mrs D'ATH: Those opposite continue to interject. The Leader of the Opposition is shopping around for stories, emailing electorate offices to scare people saying, 'They are not going to be able to get to your place when you need them.' It is absolutely shameful.

(Time expired)

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: The member for Kawana is warned under the standing orders. The member for Gympie is also warned. Your interjections were designed to disrupt the speaker on her feet. I was not going to disrupt her as well.

Regional Manufacturing Hubs

Mrs GILBERT: My question is of the Premier and Minister for Trade. Will the Premier update the House on our regional manufacturing hubs to create jobs and our election commitment to create two more, including in the Mackay and Gold Coast regions, as part of our economic recovery?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Mackay for her question. As everyone in this House knows, the fact that we had such a strong health response in dealing with COVID has enabled us to have a very strong economic recovery response. Part of that strong economic response, as detailed in our plan and our budget, is also focused on the regions. We need to ensure that our regions are being supercharged just as much as the south-east. That is why everyone on my team is dedicated to making sure we grow our regions and give the necessary supports, unlike the LNP. Those opposite come in here and talk about health, but they do not talk about how they cut 4,400 staff in health. Campbell Newman is out there today talking about a few things. I look forward to dealing with that a little later.

Our manufacturing hubs are really important. Manufacturing is critical to regional economic recovery. We have already created manufacturing hubs in Cairns, Townsville, Rockhampton and Gladstone, and now we are adding Mackay and the Gold Coast. I can announce today that our Mackay hub will be located at the Resources Centre of Excellence. We know how important that is. It was great to tour that centre with the Treasurer and the member for Mackay. We went into the underground mining simulator, the control workshop, laboratory and classrooms. We know that those opposite like underground. They like going underground to the cellar for those property developer donation dinners. The member for Surfers Paradise said, 'What am I doing here? Why am I here?' They like going underground.

These manufacturing hubs are really important. I can also say that we are finalising the Gold Coast hub location, which will be in Nerang. The new hubs will be staffed by June and our grants program will be underway by August. We can contrast that with the LNP, who did not have any plans for manufacturing in this state. They ripped \$30 million from industry support grants and business development initiatives between 2012 and 2015, and they went to the recent election wanting to reduce manufacturing funding by \$25 million. We know how the LNP operate: they cut and they slash. We know what they did to health. Queenslanders will never forget the damage the LNP did to this state.

Sunshine Coast University Hospital, Allegation of Workplace Assault

Mr BLEIJIE: My question is to the Minister for Health. Why did a female staff member who was assaulted by a colleague at work at the Sunshine Coast University Hospital get transferred to night shift to avoid the perpetrator who assaulted her rather than the perpetrator being stood down?

Mrs D'ATH: I am not aware of that particular incident. I am happy for the Manager of Opposition Business to refer that to my office. I consider that a very serious incident, if that is factually correct, and I will want to follow up on that particular issue. If these sorts of issues come to the attention of any member of parliament, I would hope that they would pick up the phone and follow them up with the minister and the government.

We are very proud of the \$1.8 billion hospital that we built on the Sunshine Coast. The Manager of Opposition Business has had many opportunities over the last two days to bring this to my attention.

Mr Minnikin interjected.

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

Mrs D'ATH: These are extremely serious issues that I am more than happy to follow up. I am happy to hear from the Manager of Opposition Business—

Mr Bleijie: I'm here now.

Mrs D'ATH: I am happy to find out from the Manager of Opposition Business, when this is referred to my office, when he became aware of this. How long has he held onto this?

Mr Bleijie: I am allowed to ask a question.

Mrs D'ATH: I take that interjection. They do not want me to ask the question at all, because it is relevant. If opposition members are sitting on serious allegations like this, just so they can bring them into parliament and play politics with them, it is shameful.

Ms Grace: Did she want this made public? Has he got her permission?

Mrs D'ATH: I hope the member has permission to raise this publicly. By the time I get back to my office after question time, I look forward to seeing that that complaint is already in my office so we can start following up. I take it seriously. I want to follow up on it immediately. I really hope that the opposition have not been sitting on this issue.

Fraser Coast, Works for Queensland

Mr TANTARI: My question is of the Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning. Will the Deputy Premier update the House on the delivery of Works for Queensland funding, particularly in the Fraser Coast region, and is the Deputy Premier aware of any alternative approaches?

Dr MILES: I thank the member for Hervey Bay for his question. It was wonderful to be in Hervey Bay last week. We visited the Scarness Jetty. We were there with the mayor of Fraser Coast, George Seymour, the member for Bundaberg and the member for 'putting Maryborough first', the member for Maryborough. We saw what a great project the upgrade to the decking at Scarness Jetty was. It is part of the Works for Queensland program that has already supported 22,000 jobs across 2,370 projects. It is not just the Scarness Jetty in the Fraser Coast region. There are five local decking upgrades as part of the \$9 million awarded to Fraser Coast in the last round, which they will follow up with a further \$16-odd million in the recently announced coming round. Already 470 jobs have been supported.

Standing on the beautiful jetty, I was struck by what a shame it was that Hervey Bay was not included as one of the tourist destinations in the Morrison government's half-price flights scheme—what a shame it was that all the whale-watching operators would not get that opportunity. With just a few days left before JobKeeper ends and those operators have the rug pulled out from under them, it struck me that there was a way the LNP could support Hervey Bay. They could extend JobKeeper or they could add Hervey Bay to the list of tourism destinations—or maybe the member for Ninderry could organise a long lunch there to support the Hervey Bay economy. Some of the members would be a bit perplexed: 'Why are we here?' Others would completely forget that they were there at all. I am sure their developer mates would love it. I recommend the Beach House Hotel. They do a great chicken burger. I think that would make an excellent long lunch venue for the member for Ninderry.

Everyone in this House knows that former premier Campbell Newman made some mistakes, but today he has outlined what his biggest mistake was. His biggest mistake in government was allowing his ministers to make silly decisions—decisions that they should not have been allowed to make. I observe for the benefit of the House that many of those silly ministers are still sitting opposite: the

member for Clayfield, the member for Everton, the member for Broadwater, the member for Kawana, the member for Maroochydore—oh, not the member for Maroochydore. All of those former ministers should come clean about the silly decisions they made that embarrassed Campbell Newman so that we can all be clear that it was not Campbell's fault; it was all their fault.

Gold Coast, Ambulance Services

Mr MOLHOEK: My question is to the Minister for Health. Does the minister find it acceptable that because of staff shortages on the Gold Coast there have been recent instances where graduate paramedics are having to work on their own as single officers, even on weekend, afternoon and night shifts?

Mr Dick interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Treasurer, you are warned under the standing orders. I have tried to give guidance in terms of directing comments through the chair and not at the opposition.

Mrs D'ATH: I thank the member for his question. It might surprise the member to know that I do not get involved in the day-to-day operational and staffing arrangements at each and every hospital. That is done by the chief executives and overseen by the hospital and health service boards. I am happy to have any of these issues raised by any member of parliament through my office.

Mr Lister interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Southern Downs, you are warned under the standing orders. I know it is a shock!

Mrs D'ATH: When those opposite want to talk about doctor shortages, pressures on nurses, staffing numbers, they should—

Mr MOLHOEK: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The question was not about doctors and nurses, it was about graduate paramedics.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, member. I allowed the question which was potentially asking for an opinion. I think you should allow the minister to answer the question.

Mrs D'ATH: I remind the member that the LNP cut 52 health staff from the Gold Coast and Robina hospitals. As the Premier said at the start of question time, we see the audacity of those opposite to talk about staffing pressures when they attacked the health system—they attacked our doctors and nurses and cut health staff. They come in here and question the pressures on our health system.

When it comes to the staffing allocation of paramedics, obviously that is done at a station level and at a regional level. It is not done by me. I am not advised on a daily basis of the staffing arrangements in relation to our paramedics. I have—

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: The member for Nanango will cease her interjections.

Mrs D'ATH: We have the childish interjections of those opposite who are well aware of the pressures—or should be because they have been listening to this for the last two days—on our hospital system. This is putting pressure on the Queensland Ambulance Service. I have acknowledged that. I have made it clear that we are meeting tomorrow with a group of chief executives, senior people across the Queensland Ambulance Service and Queensland Health, consumer groups and unions to talk about these issues and see what else we can do.

We are proud of our record investment in the health system. It is this government that has put on extra staff—extra paramedics, extra doctors, extra nurses—built new ambulance stations and provided new ambulances. It is this government that is committed to another 9,475 health workers over the next four years. It is this government that has put in \$250 million over the last few months to deal with the backlog of elective surgery. We saw a 60 per cent reduction in elective surgery because of the suspension of elective surgery agreed to at a national level. It is this government that is putting \$25 million in to deal with the issues of bed capacity. We are very proud of the investment we are making.

(Time expired)

Regional Queensland, Aviation Industry

Mr HARPER: My question is of the Treasurer and Minister for Investment. Can the Treasurer update the House on how the government is supporting regional Queensland through aviation? Is the Treasurer aware of any alternative approaches?

Mr DICK: I thank the member for Thuringowa for his question—a strong champion for his community of Thuringowa and the north of our state. Queensland's plan for economic recovery and job creation continues to lead Australia. A key component of that recovery is a competitive market for regional aviation. Our economy is supported by competition in the aviation market for one reason; that is, that the Palaszczuk Labor government saved Virgin Australia.

Today, we have competition and the choice to fly on a Virgin flight to Cairns, Townsville, Rockhampton, Hamilton Island, Proserpine Cairns, Mackay and Gladstone all because our government saved Virgin airlines. We saved it with absolutely no help from the Morrison federal government. We saved it even though every member opposite—every member of the state LNP—opposed our investment in Virgin airlines. The LNP wanted to send regional Queenslanders back to the Dark Ages. The member for Thuringowa knows this. They wanted to send them back to the lost decade after we lost Ansett when regional Queensland was served by a monopoly airline.

An opposition member interjected.

Mr DICK: I take the interjection. The Leader of the Opposition did absolutely nothing as a shadow minister, and now the shadow minister for tourism, to support our government saving Virgin.

We know they hate Virgin airlines, but there is one part of regional tourism they love. There is one part of the Virgin family that they really enjoy—Sir Richard Branson's Makepeace Island, nestled in the Noosa River. It is described as 'your private island escape'—'a sanctuary of seclusion'. I am not making it up. In July 2019 what better way to seclude oneself than with a private island lunch, a long lunch, with the member for Nanango and Peter Dutton—the most disliked politician in Australia. The most disliked politician in Australia asked \$999 a throw for lunch. As the *Australian* newspaper revealed, 'It appears the event was chock-a-block full of prohibited donors.' Peter Dutton put \$464 on the taxpayer bill for flights to go to that fundraiser with prohibited donors.

That is what the LNP's new politics looks like. On the one hand they use taxpayers' dollars to grift from prohibited donors and hide from public scrutiny at a luxury island—'a sanctuary of seclusion'—and on the other hand they want to wreck the one Richard Branson business, Virgin Australia, that really helped regional Queensland. They simply do not care about Queensland. This is what we have seen. The new politics from the Leader of the Opposition is just the same old LNP—no vision, no direction and no ideas for Queensland.

Hospitals, Access

Ms CAMM: My question is to the Minister for Health. The government's own data reveals one in four patients arriving at Mackay Base Hospital are being ramped on arrival. Will the minister explain why Mackay patients are being delayed from getting the care they need?

Mrs D'ATH: I thank the member for her question. I am sure she is happy to hand over where she is reading that data—the facts—from because, not surprisingly, after yesterday's attempt by them I would rather scrutinise the data for its accuracy myself. We have made it clear and I have made it clear over the last two days that we acknowledge there is pressure on the Queensland Ambulance Service currently and that emergency department and bed capacity is constrained for a whole range of reasons.

Ms Camm interjected.

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

Mrs D'ATH: I remind the member for Whitsunday about the cuts to Mackay when she wants to quote Mackay figures. The Palaszczuk government has invested \$493 million in the Mackay Hospital and Health Services—\$29.1 million more than the year before. On the other hand, the LNP cut 32 health staff from hospitals in the Mackay region. That is their legacy and yet they come in here and talk about what we are doing for the Mackay hospital.

I also want to acknowledge the assistant minister, the member for Mackay, who has been doing an incredible job travelling around the regions visiting stakeholders and hospitals. She has been hearing firsthand from them about the important work they are doing and what else we can be doing in the regions in working with them.

I have said time and time again for the last two days what we are doing to invest and to improve the situation currently: \$250 million for elective surgery and \$25 million, including \$15 million already released, to set up another 130-bed capacity. We are working with stakeholders including the Queensland Ambulance Service, Queensland Health, the HHSs, consumer groups and the unions. I will be meeting with them tomorrow to work through what else they think we can be doing to deal with these pressures.

We will also be talking with other states and territories at a national level because we are all seeing these pressures at the moment. Every jurisdiction is seeing these pressures at the moment. Globally we are seeing atrocious situations. Ambulances are not ramping; they are not even bothering to take patients to hospitals because they are so overrun with patients from COVID. Health professionals are having to make the decision of who lives and who dies when it comes to care for COVID. For those on the other side to continue to deny the pressures that COVID is placing on our system is just irresponsible.

(Time expired)

Women, Participation

Ms BUSH: My question is to the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence. Will the minister update the House about how the Palaszczuk government is supporting women's participation in leadership and male dominated industries and whether the Attorney is aware of any alternatives?

Ms FENTIMAN: I thank the member for Cooper for her question and for her many years of advocacy fighting for gender equality here in Queensland and across the country. Our government has an incredible track record when it comes to supporting and promoting women. In 2016 we introduced the Women's Strategy, a strategy to achieve gender equality for women and girls—the first for government in over a decade. When we came to government we reintroduced the women on boards target. When we came to government we were sitting at 30 per cent; we are now sitting at over 50 per cent of women on government boards and bodies. We have a woman Premier. We have a woman Chief Health Officer, who has guided us through the pandemic. We have a woman Police Commissioner. We have a woman Chief Justice. We have many women sitting around the cabinet table.

We have also introduced an equitable briefing policy—a 30 per cent target to brief women barristers. Not only have we met this target; we have exceeded it. When it comes to our targets for women on government boards and bodies and equitable briefing targets, we know that those opposite when they were in government scrapped them—abolished them. We know that targets work. We have at the moment our Prime Minister, who seems unable and, I have to say, completely incompetent in his ability to see, listen and believe women. At a time when women are roaring, 'Enough is enough,' we have a Prime Minister who is failing them.

Yesterday, we saw a Queensland minister, the minister for industry, Karen Andrews, finally speak out and say she has had enough. It is about time the LNP did what Labor did over 30 years ago and introduce quotas. The reason we have so many wonderful, talented women on this side of the House is that 30 years ago we introduced targets to put women into parliament. Finally, after all of the criticism levelled at the Prime Minister, he has now come out and said it is time to back quotas. If the Prime Minister is now backing quotas, my question today for the Leader of the Opposition is: will you finally do something to get women into the LNP and support quotas for your party? Words are cheap, Leader of the Opposition. Words are cheap. You said yesterday—

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, you will put your comments through the chair.

Ms FENTIMAN: The Leader of the Opposition said yesterday he wants to see more young women recruited to the LNP. Words are cheap. What are his actions to date? We know he replaced a member, a woman, to get his seat of Broadwater. He replaced a woman leader of the opposition to get his job now. Now we hear he is also thinking of replacing the president of the LNP. His actions to date do not support women in his party. Will he join the Prime Minister and Minister Karen Andrews and finally do something to get some women over there? There are only six of them! Look at this side of the House.

Hospitals, Access

Mr BENNETT: My question is to the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services. Recent government data shows that one in five ambulance arrivals at the Bundaberg Hospital are ramped and more than one in 10 patients are not seen within the recommended times. When will the government allocate the health resources that Bundaberg deserves?

Mrs D'ATH: The Palaszczuk government has already contributed significant funds—I think it is around \$6 million—to the business plan for Bundaberg Hospital. In relation to what we are doing about pressures on the Queensland Ambulance Service, the emergency departments and also bed capacity, that question has already been answered.

School Infrastructure

Ms McMILLAN: My question is to the Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing. Will the minister update the House on the Palaszczuk government's record investment in education infrastructure and advise if there are any alternative approaches?

Ms GRACE: I thank the member for Mansfield for her question. As a former principal, she knows how important infrastructure is in schools and I value her input into the education portfolio. She has such valuable input into where we go and what we do as a government.

I love nothing more than delivering for schools when it comes to building new schools, classrooms, air conditioning, solar panels, halls—the list is endless. We have had record investment in our schools—\$1.9 billion this financial year and over \$5.2 billion since we have been elected. It is a pleasure to be out and about to see exactly what is happening.

I love the saying: if you build it, they will come. That is exactly what has happened to the eight schools in Toowoomba that were earmarked by the LNP to be closed. There were 50 others earmarked by the LNP to be closed as well. I cannot wait to officially open the \$7 million building at Wyreema State School in the seat of Condamine. That school was earmarked to be closed, and the Premier herself campaigned with the local members against the member for Surfers Paradise.

If you build it, they will come. Enrolments at Wyreema have quadrupled. They have gone from 40 to 160. I cannot wait for the event to open that new building. I was thinking of asking the member for Ninderry to organise the event to open that building. He is so good at organising events that I was going to ask him, but I do not need a hideout. It is going to be a public event. As a former detective sergeant he knows all about hideouts, so he is pretty good in that area. Secondly, we do not charge to open schools, so he probably would not be interested. Also, I do not have to overcome electoral laws in order to do it. Member for Ninderry, I know you may be interested but you are probably not going to be all that interested.

Mr SPEAKER: Put your comments through the chair.

Ms GRACE: It is great to see all of the new development. They talk about silly decisions by ministers. I am sure that the Leader of the Opposition has put training wheels on the member for Buderim. They came out with a recent stunt about a new school that we are building in the electorate of Buderim at Palmview. They are wanting it now. They pulled the same stunt with Baringa State Secondary College, which was successfully opened by Labor. There they were calling for it to be opened. Someone from Education said we can open it in six months. You cannot build a house in six months but he wants a high school built in six months. We have spent over \$200 million in Buderim so far—there is a new school and two new halls. It reminded me of Dudley from Harry Potter: 'Last year I got 33 presents and this year I only got 32!' To be honest with you, I only wish they would say thank you.

Mr Mickelberg interjected.

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

Disability Advocacy Services, Funding

Dr MacMAHON: My question is to the Minister for Seniors and Disability Services. According to disability advocates, the funding the minister announced yesterday for disability advocacy services represents a cut of over \$1 million over two years from current funding. These services are already overwhelmed by demand. If this is the case, why has this funding been reduced?

Mr CRAWFORD: I think I addressed this earlier in my ministerial statement, but I am happy to go over it again for the member. Back in 2017 as we were moving into the NDIS there was a decision made by government to maintain what we call base funding for advocacy services—that was \$8.1 million—and that would run through to mid-2021. During the NDIS rollout last year in Queensland, and of course subsequently because of COVID-19, there was a top-up of around one-point-something million dollars that was put in there to help the sector with that advocacy work. Most of it has been done.

Right now we are in a position where we are negotiating with the federal government around what advocacy funding looks like across this country—not just in Queensland, but across all states. That work is underway. I addressed that in my ministerial statement. I said that work is very early and we need to do that work with the Commonwealth. In the meantime, as I said before, we have committed to another two years of base funding of \$8.1 million to the sector. I think I answered the question in my ministerial statement.

Regional Queensland, Health Services

Mr SAUNDERS: My question is to the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services. Will the minister update the House on how the Palaszczuk government is supporting health care in regional Queensland, including in my mighty electorate of Maryborough?

Mrs D'ATH: I thank the member for Maryborough for the question. We know he is committed to his community, and we know he advocates loud and proud for additional services for his community. Last Friday I was very proud to be up in Maryborough and Hervey Bay with the member for Hervey Bay talking about our new investment, which is \$12.13 million going into the two hospitals. That funding will go to contributing to extra staff in both emergency departments, extra clinicians and extra health staff for after-hours services. That came out of a peer exchange review late last year. Importantly, it will also open up 18 extra beds at the Maryborough Hospital. This deals with those pressure points we have at the moment: opening up the 18 beds; providing funding for the operational staff; extra staff across the two emergency departments; three extra clinicians across the two hospitals; and health workers for after-hours services, which I know was very warmly welcomed by member representatives from the cleaners, security and wardies through to the nurses and doctors with whom I met at both of those hospitals.

While I am talking about Maryborough and Hervey Bay, during question time today those opposite asked me why people are being redirected from one emergency department to the other. I am sure those opposite know that is normal practice between the two and it is not about capacity, because I am sure they would not seek to mislead the parliament in any way. Patients routinely access emergency care at their nearest facility. Depending on the patient's clinical needs, and therefore the types of speciality care required, it may be necessary to transfer a patient via ambulance to a facility that has the appropriate clinical capability. I am advised that quite often patients will be moved between Maryborough and Hervey Bay to receive subacute care. This is not an unusual practice, and to ask the question in the context of pressures on ambulances and emergency departments is in some way trying to suggest this has something to do with ambulance ramping.

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Leader of the Opposition, I have given you a fair bit of latitude today. You are warned under the standing orders. Minister for Health, you have 30 seconds to complete your answer.

Mrs D'ATH: Thank you, Mr Speaker. In that 30 seconds I remind those on the other side that 345 health workers from the Wide Bay HHS were cut when they were in government. We are spending \$15 million to open up 130 beds. They spent \$15 million advertising their waiting list for the waiting list. I know where I want the money spent: opening up beds, getting people out of emergency departments and into care. They are all about cheap politics and promoting themselves. That is what they do and they are known to—

(Time expired)

Hill Electorate, Public Housing

Mr KNUTH: My question without notice is to the Minister for Communities and Housing. In my electorate of Hill there are over 800 people waiting for public housing and more than 40 families seeking emergency accommodation due to homelessness. What action has the minister taken to address this massive shortage of emergency, transitional and long-term public housing in my electorate of Hill and in Far North Queensland?

Ms ENOCH: I thank the member for Hill for the question and his attention to what is a very important issue. I know that the member for Hill and those across the chamber are very aware that there are a number of different factors that influence the housing market. Whether it be buyers, investors, renters, and of course those building new houses, COVID has had an impact. We know that. The migration of interstate people into our state is also having an impact.

There are a range of measures we have put in place to support market growth in terms of housing in Queensland. That goes right across a whole heap of other different government agencies and portfolios. Whether it be home buyer grants, home builder grants or regional home building boost grants, all of those are part of the story of trying to grow our housing market in Queensland. Social housing and transitional and emergency housing are one part of a bigger story about what is happening in Queensland and right across Australia.

That is why our Housing Strategy, a \$1.6 billion investment in the construction of more than 5,500 social and affordable dwellings, is an important part of being able to resolve these issues going forward. Last year there was a \$100 million investment in our Works for Tradies program, which will see a further 214 houses commenced this year. Some of that is filtering into the member for Hill's electorate along with a number of other services. Last year alone we saw 220,000 housing support services provided to individuals and households across Queensland, and some of those are happening in the electorate of Hill. I know that the RentConnect program has been happening out in the member for Hill's electorate as well.

All of this is happening against the backdrop of pretty much inaction from the federal government. We know that the National Rental Affordability Scheme is about to end. That means there are already hundreds of properties coming off the scheme right now, putting more pressure on families and households. Over the coming years we will see 10,000 properties come out of the National Rental Affordability Scheme. That means 10,000 households in Queensland will not have subsidised rents, which will put further pressure on the market. That is why we continue to invest in social housing and affordable housing.

On top of that we have an \$11.4 million deficit in funding which the federal government provides to the Queensland government to support our sector—

(Time expired)

Far North Queensland, Road and Transport Infrastructure

Mr HEALY: My question is of the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. Will the minister update the House on the Palaszczuk government's investment in roads and transport upgrades in Cairns and Far North Queensland?

Mr BAILEY: I thank the member for Cairns, who is a great advocate for his electorate and the region in Far North Queensland. I know he is very happy to see all of the upgrades on the Bruce Highway south of Cairns. Robert Road to Foster Road is done, Kate Street to Aumuller Street will be finished this year, and of course in Edmonton and Gordonvale we are seeing hundreds of millions of dollars in Bruce Highway upgrades happening. That means hundreds and hundreds of jobs for Far North Queenslanders. That is what we love to see, and of course it was this Palaszczuk Labor government, with the support of the member for Cairns, that pushed to see the Captain Cook Highway added to the National Land Transport Network. This is very important reform in terms of infrastructure in Far North Queensland.

It is not just roads to the south of the city that are getting a lot of jobs, infrastructure and funding from the Palaszczuk Labor government. The Smithfield bypass, a \$164 million project that is very strongly supported by the member for Barron River, is advancing well. When the wet season is over we will resume sealing on the Peninsula Developmental Road in Cape York. That is a very, very important project which the member for Cook is a very vehement advocate of, as she is also of the \$107 million in safety works on the Kennedy Highway between Cairns and Atherton. We have also accelerated planning to duplicate the Cairns Western Arterial Road, which is very important for growth up there.

I mention the Cairns Western Arterial Road because what we are seeing is that the federal member for Leichhardt, Warren Entsch, has gone silent on the upgrades for that project. Last July Warren Entsch accused this government of stalling upgrades on the Captain Cook Highway, but last week he was trumpeting the project in the *Cairns Post*, talking about how good it will be when work starts later this year, but failing to mention that it will be this Labor government that delivers the upgrade.

Last July Warren Entsch claimed our government had turned a health crisis into an economic crisis in the Cairns region, but with the JobKeeper about to end we see Cairns tourism businesses crying out for action from Canberra and they are getting nothing. Warren Entsch is failing Cairns because he is failing to get any traction on JobKeeper from the beleaguered and embattled Prime Minister of this country, Scott Morrison. The federal Treasurer went up there with an empty wallet and just words, with no funding for Far North Queensland. Warren Entsch failed to deliver anything to help tourism businesses in Far North Queensland, unlike the member for Cairns and our other state members up there who deliver all the time.

Last month Infrastructure Australia added the Cairns Western Arterial Road upgrade to its priority list. Mr Speaker, I know you will be pleased to hear that. The Palaszczuk Labor government has accelerated the planning and committed funding to duplicate it north of Redlynch. We need Warren Entsch to stop stalling, stop being a failure to Far North Queensland and start delivering because JobKeeper has left everyone in the lurch—

Mrs Gerber: Mr Speaker—

Mr BAILEY: and he is failing Far North Queensland on road upgrades.

(Time expired)

Mr SPEAKER: Just a note, member for Currumbin, that the time had not expired. You should not be seeking the call until the time has expired. The minister still had an opportunity to round out his answer.

Right to Information, Legal Advice

Mrs GERBER: My question is to the Attorney-General. Is the Attorney aware of who instructed Kerri Mellifont QC to provide advice in relation to a government RTI process and who paid for this advice?

Ms FENTIMAN: I thank the member for the question. No.

Resources Industry

Ms LAUGA: My question is to the Minister for Resources. Will the minister outline the achievements of the resources sector since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Mr STEWART: I thank the member for Keppel for her question. We know in this House that she is a great supporter of the resources industry, and I thank her for her work in that area. It has now been just over one year since COVID-19 came to our shores, as we all know, and our resources sector has been the gold standard when it comes to a COVID-19 response. As many in this House know, I worked as a schoolteacher and principal before moving into politics, and if I was to give our resources sector a grade for their work during this pandemic, they would be handed an A+.

Firstly, immediate action and collaboration was required among the industry stakeholders, unions, government and health workers to ensure the best possible practices to keep our workers and our neighbouring communities safe. There was a big tick for that. Then, with our practices in place, we needed to roll out our COVID-safe plans for mines and quarries right across Queensland, ensuring that many Queenslanders stayed in jobs while the rest of the state was in lockdown—again, another big tick.

Lastly, rather than set and forget, we needed to ensure regular discussion, reflection and improvements were made to ensure best practice possible was being employed should another lockdown occur. I witnessed this firsthand when Brisbane was put into a three-day lockdown to manage a potential outbreak in the city. The collaboration and clear communication from all sectors of the resources industry was second to none. Once again, there was a huge tick for that.

Let us look at those opposite and how they would have handled the pandemic. Firstly, we had the former federal LNP resources minister come out and call for all FIFO to be banned during COVID-19. They wanted to shut it down. Not only would that have put Queenslanders out of work; it also would have had the potential to cause skills shortages right across the mining sector, right across the state, forcing mines to either close down or become potentially unsafe.

Then we had the former leader of the opposition go to the other extreme. She called for all borders to be opened—and how many times: 64 times—which would have let the virus run rampant through our mining communities. If that had happened—particularly, as you know, Mr Speaker, up through some of those Indigenous communities—it would have been absolutely devastating. Both decisions would have been disastrous for Queensland, and not even the most lenient of teachers would have given the opposition anything more than an F for their poor judgement and poor performance.

It is the Palaszczuk government which understands the importance of our mining sector and the safety of our miners. That is why we made sure our resources sector continued to operate and be the backbone of Queensland's economic recovery both during the COVID-19 pandemic and well into the future.

Mr Mander interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Everton, I have got my red pen out and you are warned under the standing orders.

Minister for Transport and Main Roads, Legal Advice

Ms SIMPSON: My question is to the Minister for Transport. Did the minister receive a gift of legal advice from Kerri Mellifont QC? If so, where was it declared in the Register of Members' Interests?

Mr BAILEY: I thank the honourable member for the question. This is a matter that has been so well canvassed over a long period of time. I have got nothing further to add. It has been thoroughly investigated by the independent watchdog. The opposition did not get the answer they wanted but it has been thoroughly investigated. The matter was closed a long time ago. They can flog a dead horse all they like, but it has been thoroughly investigated by the CCC, the independent watchdog. The matter has been closed a long time ago.

Mr SPEAKER: The period for question time has expired.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

Resumed from 23 March (see p. 695).



Mr PURDIE (Ninderry—LNP) (11.16 am): I acknowledge His Excellency the Governor in opening the 57th Parliament of Queensland. It is an honour to have been returned as the member for Ninderry for a second term. I would like to acknowledge all those members on both sides of the House who have been re-elected by their communities, and I welcome all those new members who have been given the great privilege to serve in this House. I would also like to pay tribute to those hardworking representatives who were not returned at the recent election—in particular, my close friends and colleagues, the former member for Bundaberg, Dave Batt, and the former member for Nicklin, Marty Hunt. They were no doubt two of the hardest working members and both represented their communities with humility, passion and integrity. They will be sorely missed. However, I wish the incoming members all the very best. They have very big shoes to fill.

I want to thank our former leader, the member for Nanango, Deb Frecklington, for her courage, dignity, honour and tireless energy. She has been a proud and strong voice for our party, our values and Queensland. She was ably assisted by former deputy leader, Tim Mander. I know that both Deb and Tim will continue to serve their communities with that same passion and energy. I also acknowledge our leader, Dave Crisafulli, and deputy leader, David Janetzki, whose vision and guidance will be instrumental in holding the Palaszczuk government to account. They will give Queenslanders the confidence that a future LNP government will repair the damage of a generation of Labor rule.

I want to do three things today: I want to thank my electorate and those within it who have helped me deliver parts of our shared vision over the first three years in this place; I want to talk about the local things, the sometimes small things that add up to real changes in the lives of our local residents; and I want to talk about the big things, the statewide issues I am passionate about, and how those opposite have failed to listen to our warnings and our advice for making this state better.

I want to thank the electorate of Ninderry and my local community for their support. I am humbled to have earned the trust of the electorate and I vow to continue to work hard every day to deliver on those local issues and priorities. My journey to re-election has been supported by a wonderful campaign team—an amazing group of party members, friends and volunteers. I want to pass on my sincere thanks to my campaign manager, the former member for Mansfield, Frank Carroll, and the rest of my campaign team, including Tony Philbrick, Tony Northey, Lance Barrett and the amazing Jenny Somalyay. Words cannot express my gratitude. They headed up a strong, positive campaign that focused on local issues and our track record. Joining them once again were a dedicated group of friends and supporters—too many to name individually—who did the hard yards, not only in the lead-up to the election but also dutifully throughout the past three years. Whatever the reason, whenever the time, I know I can rely on every single one of my team of supporters to back me, to counsel me, to hold me to account or to take me to task when needed.

I cannot continue without also paying tribute to those who gave me the inspiration and the motivation more than three years ago to make the shift from policing to politics. My wife, Andrea, and our two daughters, Emelia and Chloe, are a big reason why I am here and the reason I remain committed and passionate about serving our community and trying to ensure all Queenslanders can live in a safe and prosperous society. As I have said before in this House, while we may volunteer to become members of parliament, our families are conscripts. They did not put their hand up for this job, but my family have been unwavering in their support and love. For that, I owe it to them to continue to represent our community and to fight for those things we remain passionate about to the absolute best of my ability.

I would also like to place on the record that I appreciate how lucky I am to have the two best electorate staff in the state—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr PURDIE:—arguably. Kate and Kylie with the assistance of Cherie work tirelessly, mainly just trying to keep me on task, but they work equally as hard for every constituent who calls the office needing assistance. As I reflect on the past three years and those priorities that I listed in my maiden speech, I am proud of what we have been able to achieve for our electorate.

All politics is local. Fundamentally, our role in this place is to improve the lives of those we are elected to represent. What I am about to say may not be of interest to those listening in this chamber, but it is important to the residents of Ninderry and the Sunshine Coast. Over the past three and a bit years across the electorate we have secured over \$250 million in infrastructure upgrades, \$23 million for local schools, more police and a new police station at Coolum, funding for a new pedestrian bridge at Eumundi and over a million dollars in grants and sponsorship for local community groups and sporting clubs.

After three years of lobbying the government, during the election I welcomed Labor's acknowledgement of long overdue road infrastructure projects, including the duplication of the Sunshine Motorway, and supporting our plan to bust congestion in Coolum by upgrading the Yandina Coolum Road interchange and construction of a new pedestrian bridge at Seib Road. I was particularly impressed during the campaign to see the local Labor campaign team waving placards and protesting at the Coolum roundabout, the same site I met the Minister for Transport almost 18 months ago. They were calling on their own Labor government to back our plan to bust congestion at Coolum. I look forward to seeing the funding for these critical announcements in this year's budget as do the thousands of motorists who get stuck in the congestion every single day.

Another road project that is overdue for an urgent safety upgrade is Yandina Coolum Road, a major thoroughfare that was last year listed by RACQ as one of the 10 worst roads in the state. My community and I have been consistently requesting urgent safety and maintenance repairs for over a year. Despite the long list of extensive issues such as increasing traffic numbers, line marking and condition of the road surface to name just a few, we have been repeatedly told that the condition of Yandina Coolum Road is not classified as a high priority for upgrades. I can attest to untold incidents of near misses, significant damage to vehicles, dangerous driving, poor conditions, congestion, broken windscreens and an overall increase in traffic and road noise. Surely we do not need to add a fatality to this list before the road receives the urgent upgrade required.

One of my proudest achievements to date was playing a small part in a community-led campaign calling on the government to appeal the weak sentence given to a drug driver who mowed down and killed well-known and much loved Coolum identity Sharon Cuthbert outside her family home in 2017. More than 8,000 people signed our petition seeking justice for Sharon. I have got to know Sharon's husband, Michael, well and I remain in awe of his strength of character and resolve. If I was in his shoes I do not honestly know how I could get out of bed every day. I applaud him not only for his courage and determination but also for being the amazing father he is to both Makayla and Shylah.

Another satisfying achievement, thanks to a community-led campaign, was securing funding for a new pedestrian bridge on Seib Road in Eumundi. Locals have been lobbying government for more than 20 years for safe pedestrian access over the North Maroochy River, which is why I made it one of my top priorities during my first term. It took years of negotiation with council colleagues and the minister, but it was worth every minute of every meeting and every letter to finally secure the joint funding required for this critical infrastructure project. It was even worth the embarrassment of riding my daughter's scooter across the bridge while wearing a GoPro on my head to get footage in order to show the minister the dire need for this bridge. I acknowledge the minister for taking the time to watch it and for not laughing at me too hard. I look forward to celebrating with the wider community when the first sod of this project is turned in the coming months.

Another key priority was to give our police a permanent home in a new station after they had spent more than a decade working out of a demountable. I made a commitment to my former colleagues and the community to hold the government to account to deliver the new station, which was finally opened in September last year. It was another long battle but finally our local police have access to a future proofed, modern facility that will help them do their job of protecting and serving our local community.

I would also like to touch on some of the intangible highlights of the past three years such as the valuable relationships I have developed with a large number of individuals and community groups whose tireless efforts make such a tremendous difference in the lives of many across the electorate. I

have mentioned many of those groups and individuals in this chamber over the past three years. I speak of groups like Coolum Meals on Wheels where volunteers help prepare around 20,000 meals annually for the frail and elderly in our community. Under the guidance of president Rob Cobb, this group, which last year celebrated its 35th anniversary, is fuelled by the dedication and commitment of its volunteers. My community is blessed to be served by these community champions.

Another group of local champions are the environmental warriors behind the Coolum and North Shore Coast Care, a not-for-profit organisation started about 30 years ago. The group's president, Leigh Warneminde, is now leading the charge in coordinating over 200 volunteers. I have joined them for events such as the World Environment Day when I rolled up my sleeves and joined a handful of volunteers who regularly dig out weeds on the dunes at the beach at Coolum. Not only do they weed the dunes, which I can say is harder work than I thought it would be, they also look after the turtle nests and pandanus trees and organise educational activities for kids. I enjoy taking my girls along to see some of the turtle digs during the season.

Coolum heARTS is another local group worthy of recognition in this House. The group was started by Coolum locals Clive and Barb Holden a number of years ago and provides a range of classes and weekly therapeutic sessions for the physically and mentally disabled in the community. Like many community groups and clubs, they have struggled this year with many of their activities put on hold and their fundraising efforts halted.

Another community group I do need to highlight is Bli Bli Neighbourhood Watch. It was started only five years ago by a community champion Edith Blank and is now an award-winning and one of the most successful Neighbourhood Watch groups in the country. They have raised and invested over \$600,000 back into the local community, the majority of which has been to raise awareness of, and support for, victims of domestic violence. They have also been strong advocates for all victims of crime and have loudly called for tougher laws to help police protect their community from criminals, particularly repeat juvenile offenders.

There are many more such groups but it would be nearly impossible to mention each and every one of them in the brief time I have available today. However, I want to acknowledge their efforts and recognise the role they all played. I am so proud of the sense of community spirit that thrives in Ninderry. Over the next four years I will continue to use an opportunity in this House to showcase their achievements.

All of us sit here and listen to ministers talk about the government's policies and their implementation. We cannot help but worry about how they impact their own electorate and the rest of the state. There are two areas that I have particular interest in: the government's poor record on crime and their fundamental lack of an economic strategy. I have said before and I will continue to say that over 20 years of policing has taught me three basic principles: our people must be protected, criminals must be punished and our police must be provided with what they need to get that job done. We need effective laws that enable police to find, arrest and convict criminals, and we need enough police to enforce these laws.

Since I entered this place, I and others have been warning the government that its soft-on-crime agenda and continued watering down of the youth justice laws would end in tears, and unfortunately it has. The proposed amendments announced recently are widely regarded by our frontline police and CPIU detectives as window dressing: amendments to legal definitions that do not make any change to the overall spirit of the legislation and do not give the police the powers they need to do their job and keep the community safe. To properly protect our communities we need to protect the building blocks of those communities, our families. We must effectively protect our most vulnerable Queenslanders, our children. I have seen the aftermath of child sex abuse and the impact it has on victims, their families and our communities.

Last year I was approached by a group of parents in my electorate who were horrified to find that a convicted paedophile was not just living next to their children's school but was hosting kids' parties at his home. When they contacted the local police to report his suspicious behaviour, they were alarmed to learn that it is illegal for police to tell them or the school if he was a known high-risk paedophile.

Labor's current plan to protect the community from sex offenders is an honesty system. It relies on the honesty and integrity of upstanding, law-abiding paedophiles living in our community to report online any change in their circumstances such as that they are now living beside a school and hosting pool parties for kids! This is not good enough. Queenslanders deserve better. They deserve a government that puts the rights of victims above criminals. We must believe that a safe and prosperous Queensland is achievable and foreseeable.


This year will be forever etched in our minds as the year our lives changed irrevocably. The COVID pandemic forced every single one of us not only to change our daily lives but also to re-evaluate our future. We have had to challenge the way we view the world and our place in it. While it has tested our resolve, I am sure I can speak on behalf of all my colleagues when I say that we have developed a whole new appreciation for where we live. The stories and images of the impact of COVID in other countries are a constant reminder of the swift action that our leaders took in managing the impact of this pandemic. I acknowledge the health response that kept Queenslanders safe, but now our focus must be squarely on the economic recovery. We must get Queensland working again.

Families have been decimated and businesses destroyed as a result of the health crisis. We must now do everything in our power to concentrate our efforts on rebuilding this great state and on restoring the jobs that have been lost. Unfortunately, Queensland was not in a healthy position before COVID struck, so the task ahead of us will be monumental. Queenslanders may have been hoodwinked by Labor's orchestrated scare campaign when they went to the polls last October but they are now demanding a vision for the future and a road map to economic recovery.

In closing, I want to reflect on my vision for the term ahead—a vision that has been shaped not only by the events of the past three years but also by the same priorities I outlined in my maiden speech. The two highest priorities of any government are the safety and security of its citizens and to provide an economic environment in which its citizens can prosper. On these highest priorities, Labor has failed Queenslanders. Being able to work without living in fear of being a victim of crime is paramount to the stability and growth of a civilised society. A flourishing economy is fundamental to our way of life. Under Labor, Queensland has failed miserably.

As I have said before, I want my girls and all our kids to grow up in a society where they do not live in fear of being a victim of crime. I want them to be able to enjoy our pristine environment and to surf at our stunning beaches. Most importantly, I want to see my daughters able to live the entirety of their lives in our beautiful region, to get a world-class education, to gain meaningful employment, to pursue a career and to start a family of their own should they wish to do so. I know that I am not alone in my vision for my family, my community and our state. I look forward to the next four years, working hard to deliver that vision and rebuild our once proud state.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): I remind the following members that they have been warned: Burleigh, Maryborough, Kawana, Gympie, Chatsworth, Woodridge, Southern Downs, Whitsunday, Buderim, Broadwater and Everton.

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (11.32 am): I rise to make my address-in-reply for this term. I start by acknowledging the traditional owners of the land on which this parliament stands and the traditional owners of the land on which the electorate of Bancroft stands, the Gubbi Gubbi people. I acknowledge all those elders past, present and emerging.

I affirm my loyalty to the Queensland people. It is an honour to serve Queenslanders in the electorate of Bancroft every day as their MP. They inspire me and they teach me, especially those Queenslanders who rely solely on the mechanisms of government to deliver them the protections they need in their lives. They have a profound faith in government to help them out, because they have to. Sometimes there are no other backstops for them. I am always aware that everything for them can hinge on the quality of work that I do for them.

I congratulate the Premier and thank her for her strength and foresight. As we heard during the pandemic, we are safe because she is strong. Certainly, I congratulate the Speaker on his re-election to that position in this parliament.

This is my third address-in-reply speech. I will, of course, talk about what we aim to deliver in the electorate of Bancroft over the next years. We will lead off with a new fire station for Mango Hill and North Lakes. We have commenced the process of acquiring the land and planning. I hope to see that happening in due course. I thank Mr Keith King, the Mango Hill Progress Association and the Deputy Premier for their work in getting this done. We will build a new school hall at Deception Bay State School, the oldest school in my electorate. The school excels in looking after the children of families who absolutely rely on the state to provide the best education and the best start in life.

We will also start planning for the widening of Deception Bay Road. I thank the Minister for Transport and Main Roads for this. It is something I have been chasing for six years. Six years ago when we came to government I asked where this program was on QTRIP. I had seen it there when I was a councillor. I was told that it had been removed under the previous government. It has taken us a while to get that project restored to the program. It was part of the \$400 million in cuts that we saw in that time.

We will deliver a priority development area approval for North Harbour at the northern end of the electorate. That is the culmination of years of work and effort by many people. I thank former minister Jones, the former treasurer, Treasurer Dick, Mayor Peter Flannery, Councillor Mark Booth, North Harbour itself and the Deputy Premier.

We will help deliver an artificial running track at Zammit Oval in Deception Bay. This project has been on my radar for many years. I acknowledge that it will be delivered through a partnership between all levels of government—federal, state and local. I thank Adam White and Dave Armitage from Deception Bay Little Athletics and the Deception Bay Athletics Club for pushing this for so many years.

An outside school hours care centre will be built at North Lakes State College. During the election we promised half a million dollars for that. It will very much be welcomed. They are using many classrooms to deliver this crucial service. This is one of the largest schools in Queensland and it delivers an absolutely excellent education for our local children. I acknowledge the leadership of the executive principal, Samantha Knowles.

Like every member, at least on this side, I will welcome the air-conditioning of all of our state schools—every single classroom, library and staffroom. In our electorate, \$1.2 million is going in to air conditioning and the electrical upgrade. I thank Bancroft communities for pushing this. We came out early with petitions. I think it was a crucial part of getting this adopted.

I note that we will see continuation of Skilling Queenslanders for Work. I acknowledge Minister Fentiman as well as the member for Bulimba, who will be carrying this program through. This is an absolutely crucial program in my area. This program has put 1,000 locals into jobs, 750 of them from Deception Bay. It is an absolutely outstanding success. It really is changing lives in our electorate.

I also note that we will be funding some key local government projects in our area through COVID Works for Queensland and the community stimulus package; for example, the first stage of a community facility at the old Fisheries site at Deception Bay and redoing the electrical and mechanics systems at Deception Bay pool—one of those jobs that the council really appreciates getting done. I mention the upgrade of the sporting fields at the North Lakes State College and the Kinsellas Road fields. Lights, amenities and stands will be provided through this \$1 million program. I thank the sport ministers, Minister Hinchliffe and former minister de Brenni, for that program. Through local government we are funding seven parks upgrades in the area including Endeavour Boulevard, a new playground at North Lakes and a new amenities block at the Uhlmann Road boat ramp.

I am proud to be a member of a government that has kept Queensland safe. As we have all heard, people have said, 'Aren't we lucky here in Queensland?' I say that it is not luck; it is the quality of leadership in this state. It is the Premier making tough decisions and sticking by them. It is putting the Chief Health Officer at the centre of our response, following her advice and enacting it faithfully. It is building up the contact-tracing capability in Queensland Health—and remember that those units were cut under the previous government. It is creating a partnership between all government departments. That is not luck; that is leadership by a Labor government.

We will now be following our outstanding health response with a solid, nation-leading economic recovery plan, and that plan includes safeguarding our health, supporting jobs, backing small business, making it in Queensland by growing manufacturing, building Queensland by driving investment in infrastructure, growing our regions, investing in skills and backing our frontline services. It is clear that we are on the right track, and the statistics show that. The total number of employed people in Queensland is back to pre-COVID levels. We have the strongest jobs recovery in the nation, with 224,000 jobs returning since May last year, and this week we heard that full-time employment has risen by 53,800 in February alone. New housing approvals are now 70 per cent higher than in March 2020. New loan commitments for owner-occupiers are now 51 per cent higher than in March 2020. We are experiencing the highest investment in new homes since 1994.

All of this shows the confidence that not only Queenslanders have in this state but also the rest of Australia has in Queensland. We will keep on creating more jobs in this term of office. The economic recovery plan will be supporting 55,000 jobs and our election commitments will be supporting or creating another 50,000 jobs. The Palaszczuk government is delivering \$8 billion worth of economic initiatives that will drive economic growth in Queensland and drive job creation.

We have another challenge coming up though—namely, climate change, and that is why I am wearing my climate stripes badge today. The picture presented by the recently released *State of the climate* report from the Bureau of Meteorology and the CSIRO forcibly reminds us what we are up against. Last year was the hottest year on record, but the years surrounding 2020 will be seen as some of the mildest that we have had in 100 years time when the population looks back.

In Queensland we have seen a significant drop-off in autumn and winter rain. We have seen a heavy reduction in stream flow and along the Queensland stretches of the Murray-Darling Basin stream flow has dropped off by up to 60 per cent in some cases. On the Great Barrier Reef we have seen marine heatwaves which are creating coral bleaching events. There will be more heavy rainfall events in Queensland that will cause localised flooding, as we have seen this week, but we are having fewer cyclones, albeit with a higher intensity.

Climate change is affecting Queensland now. Queenslanders are already adjusting their businesses and their lives around it. Our nation is crying out for leadership from the federal government, but I am proud to be part of a government that is doing the heavy lifting here in Queensland. We are committed to reaching the 50 per cent renewable target by 2030, and we are on track. I know that in years to come I will be able to look back with pride on what the Palaszczuk government has delivered in this area.

There is other unfinished business that we have, and I am talking about treaty. Treaty is work that will take generations to finish and it will address generations of discrimination and disadvantage, but it can be our generation's finest achievement in this parliament. Treaty work involves a lot of talking and listening, and part of that involves truth telling. Truth telling means that we support Indigenous Australians to tell their stories. It means that we recognise the loss of life and the loss of land—massacres, displacement, loss and active resistance. It means framing our histories in a way to recognise Indigenous perspectives. There is a lot of primary evidence about what happened then, but we also need to acknowledge that these events may only be recorded in memory. What truth telling means is that we want Australians to be proud of their Indigenous heritage and see it as part of Australian culture. It is not about dwelling in the past; it is about reflecting and moving forward to a more positive future.

In this place we are good at talking, but some of us are not really good at listening. I refer to what the member for Surfers Paradise said in this debate earlier when he showed why we do not need members giving us more of their opinions. He said that we need to lead the way when it comes to inclusion and harmony and that we must not exacerbate tensions or inflame debates with inaccuracies or sweeping claims, and then proceeded to make a sweeping claim that could have inflamed debate and certainly did not contribute to the harmony. We do not need more lectures to First Nations people on Queensland history. How about we give our First Nations people a chance to talk directly to us and how about we focus on listening in this place?

Other unfinished business that I want to address—and I have spoken about this briefly before—are the barriers placed by the federal government for people in my electorate on becoming citizens. Most Samoans who have arrived in Australia through New Zealand after 2001 are not eligible for most benefits, as we are. They are stuck on the special category visa. They cannot access higher education or housing or a range of other things that we take for granted.

In Deception Bay there are many Samoan and New Zealand families who have been living in our community for 20 years. As I have said, their kids and grandkids go to our local schools and I see them working in some of the lowest paid and backbreaking jobs in Queensland. However, they cannot afford to go to uni because they are non-citizens. They are charged full fees. To become a citizen, you need to pay out thousands, maybe tens of thousands, of dollars in some cases and the process can take a long time—many years. These are the barriers that are stopping people in our community—dedicated community members in Queensland—from becoming citizens. It is unfair and I will be working to redress that situation with Aiga Samoa and many of the Samoan community in my area.

This is my seventh election campaign since the year 2000 when I put on shorts and Dunlop Volleys to go around Deception Bay in my first council election campaign.

An honourable member interjected.

Mr WHITING: Have I improved? Thank you! Once again it was a collaborative effort of many like-minded people and I want to pay tribute to my campaign team of Jenelle, Jaya, Stephanie, Ethan and Jenny. Jenny has been with me on all of those seven campaigns and I congratulate her for her fortitude. I want to thank my many volunteers—I will get to those later—but I also want to thank the ETU for standing up with me when I asked it.

I want to pay tribute to my wife, Sian—my strength and delight—and of course to my beautiful, rascally children who will watch this in time to come—Guy, Rebecca and Arabella. They are all at one school at the moment, so we are going to enjoy that. I want to again thank my mother, Margaret, who

always feels very much at home coming to this parliament. I also want to thank my wonderful darling sisters Jillian and Elizabeth and their families for supporting me as well and Sian's parents, Joy and Pat, who are a tower of strength and a support to our family.


To the electors of Bancroft, I say thank you once again and I say to you that the fire still burns within me—the passion to fight injustice, to stand up to bullies, to speak up for you and to fight on your behalf. I and my Labor colleagues will always be champions for you.

Mr Deputy Speaker Krause, the Deputy Speaker has reviewed and approved the remainder of my speech for incorporation. As such, I ask that the remainder of my speech be incorporated into the *Record of Proceedings*.

The speech read as follows—

I want to thank all these volunteers who have worked hard on the Bancroft campaign:

Abhi, Alistair Fournel, Barb Williams, Ben Chandler, Brendan Waite, Carol Lucas, Col Ellicombe, Colleen Carmody, Cynthia Hunt, Dan Hall, Darren Dickson, Dean Wells, Debbie Fox, Desley Porter, Diana Sparke, Dirk Bossard, Drago Domlija, Ed Nixon, Eileen Goodenough, Ethan Jones, Eva Fifer, Frank Foster, Irene Coonan, Isaac Baxter, Jan Macintyre, Jaya Tittagala, Bruce Head, Jennifer Whitlock, Jenny Foster, John Schembri, Joy O'Callaghan, Julia Wolverson, Keith McKenzie, Lilly Robinsonn-Hayes, Liz Hunt, Liz Ivan, Lyn McIntyre, Marcio Mostardeiro, Naginder Singh, Pat O'Callaghan, Prasadi Tittagala, Robbie Jones, Sarah Williams, Saroja Tittagala, Scott Stanford, Teresa Sharma, Trevor Andrew, Wendel Moloney, Marx and Julia Smith, Liz Hunt, Rohane Crichton, Margaret Su'e, Mitchell Hall, Tom Waters, Cara McLennan, Liz Broad, Meaghan Broad, Margaret Whiting, Nathan Jensen, Rob Shore, Almaria Hunt, Cynthia Hunt, Alison Hunt, Rhonda Nowakowski, Debbie Fox, Marji Hall, Afsheen Basha, John Holmes, Pat McShane, Rebecca Bellis, Michael O'Brien, Kim Dean, Jessica Klip, Trina Meurant, Stefano Bizzarri, Kieran O'Callaghan, Dean Wells, Steve Orlawski, Joanne O'Shanesy, Brock Taylor, Christine Wielks, Christine Lang, Ian Lang, Scott Russell, and Shannon Anderson, Waratah Blow, Zack Trapani.

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (11.49 am): Mr Deputy Speaker, I ask that you pass on my congratulations to the Speaker on his re-election to the 57th Parliament of Queensland. I have known Mr Speaker since he first entered parliament. We have served on committees and been opponents on political matters, but I think I am right in saying that although we have been in the past fierce opponents we have never been on unfriendly or unpleasant terms and, indeed, we might have shared a few of the same travails together, whether that be his Mythbusters or, indeed, the Strong Choices program. I look forward to his ongoing efforts at impartiality in this place, his enforcement of the standards set last term, his judicious and sparing use, I should say, of standing orders 252 through to 253A, particularly as regards myself—although I must say last sitting week stretched the friendship a little bit—and his occasional pearls of wisdom from Yoda and *Star Wars* and perhaps some of the more modern spin-offs of the *Star Wars* franchise, including the *Mandalorian*, when, after making some of his decisions, he might end with the exemplary explanation that 'it is the way'.

I also want to take the opportunity today to congratulate all those LNP members of the class of 2012 who are going to be celebrating their fourth term in this place. It was, indeed, an exciting time in early 2012 with the election of a government that swept away the cobwebs of a tired, disinterested and failing Labor administration.

It was a Labor administration—and we heard stories about health this morning—that had a fake Tahitian prince that ripped them off millions of dollars; a Labor administration that had ambulances full of patients that could not be seen by the doctors at emergency wards that they were turning up to; a Labor administration that could not even pay the doctors and nurses—they failed to do that; a Labor administration that could not organise a good time in a brewery with a fistful of fifties; whose own Premier said she was going to have to take—I think the expression was—a meat axe to the health department, split it in two and send it all their own different ways; and a Labor administration that sold billions of dollars worth of assets and still saw the debt increasing and fees, taxes and charges increasing.

It was also a Labor administration—and I see my good friend the member for Kawana here—that dithered over building the Sunshine Coast University Hospital for the better part of half a decade. It had three separate sets of plans and still had not signed a contract when we came into office. We got it sorted within the first three months. The Sunshine Coast University Hospital was courtesy of the LNP and the member for Kawana who campaigned, who walked in marches, who made sure it happened. It is, of course, great to be able to acknowledge the hard work of those members elected nine years ago as part of an administration that actually got on with the job of fixing the problems.

I thank His Excellency the Governor for delivering the formal speech opening the 57th Parliament. I congratulate the Premier and her government on the recent success in an election that was one of the most unusual we have seen in decades, an election held in the midst of a worldwide pandemic at a time when executive government here in Australia was, and still to a remarkable degree

is, able to exercise almost wartime-like powers to control every aspect of our civic life. Far more than the global financial crisis of 2008-09, which affected mainly but not exclusively institutions and markets, the COVID-19 virus stretched its tentacles into every corner of our daily lives. No-one looking at the election result could deny the influence the COVID-19 pandemic had on the results. No-one reading a paper or listening to a news report could deny its total dominance of our lives for the eight months leading up to the election on 31 October 2020.

I am sad that we in the LNP lost some good members in the election, but I am glad to see the new member for Whitsunday join the LNP team. I want to also thank the member for Nanango and the member for Everton for their efforts as leader and deputy leader respectively of the LNP. They put up a fierce fight and proposed many practical and long-term policies for the good of the people of Queensland.

Only those who have been in the position of opposition leader know the full impact it has on your life. From the waking moment to the end of the day an opposition leader must be not only a leader but a counsellor, a strategist, a tactician, a media performer, a fundraiser, a party peacemaker and also, and perhaps most importantly, a family member. I congratulate the member for Broadwater on his election unopposed to the position of LNP leader and I hope that what I have just said does not make him regret his decision, although knowing him as I do I doubt there is anything that will curb his enthusiasm for the mammoth task over the next almost four years, assisted by the member for Toowoomba South and, indeed, the entire LNP parliamentary team.

I am looking forward to taking up the cudgels in my role as shadow Attorney-General and shadow minister for justice, an appointment to a portfolio that I have actively avoided for all of my time in this place. Strangely, and given my earlier life as a practising lawyer, it is a role I have not held before. I must say though that it is a role I am enjoying, only to be surpassed by enjoying the role of actually being the Attorney-General and minister for justice in almost four years time. I look forward to meaningful and sensible debate over issues in the portfolio. So far we have seen a number of challenging issues raised, from concerns over youth justice to the current debate on coercive control and domestic and sexual violence. I will continue to support the principles of a legal system that is impartial, fair and responsive to the demands of our increasingly complex and diverse society.

It will be our job in opposition to ensure the government lives up to its promises, is answerable to Queenslanders and delivers a bright future, a future that does not burden coming generations of Queenslanders with the legacy of unrepayable debt or higher taxes, fees and charges and a legacy that delivers a less prosperous state, fewer job opportunities and a state in the doldrums. Having read the Auditor-General's financial audit report tabled in this place last week, I, like many Queenslanders, am not convinced that this will happen.

Importantly, the Auditor-General notes that debt is being used to fund the government's operating expenses for the first time in eight years. It was the LNP government that reversed this trend after the 2012-13 budget when we started the fiscal repair necessary after Labor's debt explosion from 2006 to 2012. The Auditor-General's report shows that operating cash deficits of \$6.6 billion will be experienced this year and almost half a billion dollars next year. This shows the government has well and truly let the debt genie out of the bottle.

Debt in the non-financial public sector increased by a staggering \$8.9 billion in 2019-20 and of this \$8.1 billion was in the general government sector—the day-to-day operations of government. That is an increase of 27 per cent in one year alone and double what was budgeted for in 2019-20. Importantly, this cannot all be laid at the feet of COVID-19. As the Auditor-General says—

... the financial performance of the Queensland Government had reduced over the previous two financial years, with expenses incurred increasing at a greater rate than revenue ...

The Auditor-General also bells the cat on page 14 of his report when he highlights that Queensland's net worth has actually gone backward. It has declined by \$8.6 billion. The Labor government's argument that borrowing is being used to build infrastructure clearly does not stack up. If it did we would see the assets supposedly being built with the increased debt show up as a positive on the balance sheet, but they are not.

Question marks remain over the government's Queensland Future Fund and the value of assets to be transferred to it. As I have previously said, all Labor's Queensland Future Fund proposal does is simply shuffle the deck chairs. Transferring assets from one entity to another simply denies the department that is losing the asset of its income as well as the value of the asset and transfers it to another, in this case the fund. It does not make any more money or generate any new revenue that was not or could not be already generated.

Labor, despite all the warnings, continues to plunder the investments held to meet the superannuation entitlements of the defined benefit scheme. We now see the results of Labor's raids on the DBF. It started in 2016 and has continued ever since. It is a pot of gold too tempting for Labor to resist and follows in the footsteps of that failed treasurer, Wayne Swan, who completely raided all the funds that had been put aside—the education fund and the science fund—undoing a decade's worth of the best work that the coalition had ever done.

Wayne Swan never delivered a surplus despite promising it year in and year out. He never saw someone else's money he could not plunder, and that has been carried on by this Labor government as they greedily turn their eyes to the funds that have been husbanded for decades to pay the superannuation entitlements of our hardworking government employees, and others now. They have not been able to resist it. Andrew Fraser was able to resist it and we resisted it, but not this mob. They came straight in.

What is the result of the pirate raids by Labor on other people's money? On an accounting basis the long-term investments are insufficient to fund the superannuation liability to the tune of \$1½ billion. That does not take into account the need to make the insurance payments following the 2011 flood claims that are also met from the assets held by the Queensland Treasury Corporation.

No-one sensibly argues that there should be no debt or that debt properly used cannot be beneficial, but wanton debt increases with no substantial plan to tackle the causes of the need for more borrowing is bad government. As the Auditor-General says—

Over the long term, the state must be able to fund its operations and a significant portion of its capital program from the revenue it earns. This is to ensure that a burden of debt is not unduly placed on future generations without the benefit of supporting assets and the services they provide.

I have long argued for the need for Queensland governments to prepare for the unexpected and to do so by ensuring enough strength on the balance sheet and in the operating statement to respond to calamities and disasters, because they do happen and they happen regularly—about every five years. However, in Queensland under Labor the magic-pudding belief endures and debt increases, net worth declines, expenses increase and the burden on future generations of Queenslanders gets even greater. Today's debt is still tomorrow's tax no matter what anyone else says.

In the opening address his Excellency delivered the government's agenda both courteously and clearly. It is not the manner of its delivery but its content that is my focus. Much of what it contained was neither new nor inspiring. Many of the commitments were rehashed or empty rhetoric with little or no concrete action outlined, as we continue to see. While that might be acceptable in an election brochure or campaign ad, it is certainly not the material for an opening address. Platitudes are no substitute for action and detail. I regret to say that the opening address contained little in the way of new thinking or new ways to solve some of the state's most pressing problems. With unemployment still at concerning levels and above the Australian average, state debt ballooning, deficits at eye-watering levels and falls in GST, royalty revenues and other activity revenues, there is little or no attempt to address long-term structural inadequacies facing Queensland.

Without a sound and sustainable financial base, our state will struggle to employ the teachers, medicos, police, emergency services personnel, health workers and others who provide the services we expect from government. How compassionate is it to introduce voluntary assisted dying legislation but not be able to provide the best in palliative care or mental health services for those in need? How clever is it to say that we will air-condition schools but not employ sufficient therapists and special learning teachers at a time when demand for those services far exceeds supply? How sensible is it to change the laws about consent in sexual assault cases or coercive control but not provide for the courts, health services and counselling that is so necessary for survivors? None of those matters were tackled in the opening address and at best were dealt with in a piecemeal fashion before the election.

I do hope that this four-year term will not be a term solely of spin, media grabs and a failure to act by this Labor government. If it is then those who always viewed a four-year term with suspicion will have their worst fears materialise and those of us who hoped for the time given in a four-year term to be put to productive use and genuine better government decision-making and planning will see those hopes dashed.

Finally, and most importantly, I again thank the electors of Clayfield for returning me for a sixth time to this place. The statewide swing that was evident across most of the state was not replicated with anywhere near the same force in Clayfield. My campaign team and I were able to successfully hold back the tide. It took a lot of hard work and a lot of community action to again demonstrate why the LNP is the right choice for Clayfield.

The campaign was mostly fought in good spirits and with good humour from those who turned up. In that respect I cannot let go unmentioned the total failure to participate by the Greens candidate. What a disinterested performance by Andrew Bartlett! After the original Greens candidate resigned amidst allegations of the Greens roting JobSeeker while he was employed by the member for Maiwar, of behaving poorly to female members and of improper fundraising, Andrew Bartlett was parachuted in as a candidate for the entirely cynical purposes of collecting taxpayer funding. So much for Greens' ethical behaviour.

Mr Bartlett showed up once on election day and then only for an ABC radio interview. For most of the election day he was ensconced in his coffee shop in New Farm while his booth workers did the hard work. Not once was he seen at pre-poll, not once at an information booth, not once at a community meeting in the electorate and he was a no-show on election day. Therefore, it was no surprise to see the Greens' attack on Clayfield fizzle out and die, and their vote drop by about another two per cent. In fact, the Greens' and Labor's performances were so average that, by some strange twist of fate, I managed to pick up the highest number of preferences from the pro-marijuana candidate—go figure! That could also have something to do with the abject failure of the Labor Party to deliver any services in Clayfield.

I heard the member for McConnel spouting about education and school halls. The fact of the matter is that the Kedron State High School hall—a school hall built more than 50 years ago when the school student population was 264—has not been rebuilt or replenished. Claims by the P&C, the school and me have been ignored by this Labor government for more than half a decade. Even though 1,400 students now attend that school, what does the Minister for Education do? She can find \$200 million for the Inner North State Secondary College, which has 124 pupils, 50 per cent of whom come from outside the catchment and the catchment of which comes all the way to the boundary of the Ascot State School, but she cannot find \$10 million for a school that already has 1,400 students thus delivering for the people who need it most. That makes a mockery of the education minister's claims. The member for Miller, who occasionally flouted out for a photo opportunity, has been promising an upgrade to the Albion Railway Station for the better part of four years but that is yet to be delivered.

I thank my campaign manager, SEC chair and most importantly friend, Julia Dixon. She is indefatigable. She organised, cajoled, rang up and turned up to ensure that we had the win. Jules is a terrific campaigner and she is passionate about the LNP. She is now heading the LNP's candidate recruitment, development and selection committee and will be playing a big role in the future of the party. My campaign team were invaluable. I want to thank them all, but there are too many of them to name here as I have run out of time, I am sorry to say, and there are some important people I still need to thank.

I thank councillors David McLachlan, Andrew Wines and Fiona Hammond who were a great help and support, as was Trevor Evans MP. The Young LNP came out in vast numbers and helped me. I thank my electorate staff: Katy, Aimee, Calum and Megan did a fantastic job during the campaign.

I want to thank my family. I am eternally grateful to Mary for her support, patience and perseverance. As I said in one of my better social media posts—

27 years married, 3 kids, 8 elections, countless functions and more nights away than I can remember and still putting on a bad fitting t-shirt and campaigning for me! Words are not enough Mary.

I was in no way surprised when in reply I received the comment, 'The only reason heaps of us hang out with you.' It is indeed an honour and a privilege to serve in the 57th Parliament.



Ms LUI (Cook—ALP) (12.08 pm): It is an honour and privilege to stand here for a second term as the member for Cook in the 57th Parliament. I start by acknowledging the traditional owners of this land, the Jagera and Turrbal people, whose land we share and I pay my respects to elders past, present and emerging. I honour nguzu muruygul, my ancestors, and nguzu buway, my Torres Strait Island heritage, as I embark on this important journey as a Torres Strait Islander member of parliament.

Walking into this place for the first time was daunting. I felt like I was living in two very separate worlds—as someone from a remote, culturally oriented community and as a politician. I come from a world where remoteness shapes every conversation for people's lived experience. It creates a vortex that only filters challenges and issues, where your postcode determines your social and economic status, placing people from these parts in the most marginalised and disadvantaged groups in this state. Then there is this world, a very privileged world where we make all the big decisions and where opportunities are created to influence change in society. Back then I was so afraid of losing myself to what was in front of me and where this new path would take me personally, so I did all I could do to

keep Brisbane away from Yam Island. Of course, it all changed in 2018, when I was given the wonderful opportunity to take our Premier, Hon. Anastacia Palaszczuk, to my home of Yam Island. It was on this day that my worlds collided. It was on that day that I realised I could be that person from a very disadvantaged background to be a politician in state parliament.

I know that there will be many others like me to come. It was a long time coming for Queensland to see their first Torres Strait Islander politician walk into parliament. I want to see many more First Nations people come after me. I want to see others from remote communities break the barrier that remoteness puts upon us and that limits the opportunities that may seem so far out of our reach. No opportunities are out of reach. It takes one to walk towards those opportunities, know that it is okay to be a little different, trust your journey and use your lived experience as a driving force to create change—and never forget where you come from.

I am humbled to be back for a second term to represent the people and communities of the electorate of Cook in Far North Queensland. I would like to take the opportunity to congratulate our Premier, Hon. Anastacia Palaszczuk, for a very convincing win in the 2020 state election. She is the only female premier in this country to be elected to parliament three terms in a row.

I would also like to congratulate every member of this House as we embark on this term to advocate for the betterment of all of our communities. I want to especially acknowledge and congratulate every member of the Labor caucus. It is an absolute pleasure to serve with all of you in a very diverse and progressive team. This government continues to break ground and lead the way in a progressive movement to create positive change for all Queenslanders today and for generations to come.

It is an absolute honour to be one of 21 outstanding female MPs in the Palaszczuk government and one of three First Nations parliamentarians to be elected at the same time. I would like to acknowledge my First Nations sister, Minister Leeanne Enoch, and Lance McCallum, member for Bundamba, as we embark on this shared journey to elevate First Nations issues in Queensland.

In my very first speech in the 56th Parliament I held a traditional island mat to signify its use in Torres Strait island culture. I used this mat in my first speech to show my commitment to the people of Cook that, no matter what the context, I would embrace the significance of what the mat represents, as a place to sit down and create an open dialogue around various issues.

Cook is the only electorate that consists of a large number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait island discrete remote communities, the only electorate in Australia that shares an international border—with Saibai Island in the Torres Strait situated only four kilometres from Papua New Guinea coastal villages—and where there is an international treaty agreement between Papua New Guinea and the Torres Strait that allows for the movement of people between the Torres Strait Islands and the coastal villages along with the western province of Papua New Guinea.

In my maiden speech I acknowledged that each township and community in my electorate has its own set of priorities and goals which forms the fundamentals for building stronger communities throughout the region. It has been my absolute pleasure to work closely with all of my communities to support their immediate and long-term aspirations to address social and economic disadvantage for people living in Cook.

I am very passionate about achieving positive health outcomes for people in Cook and am equally proud to see this government's ongoing investment in health service delivery and infrastructure, from Mareeba to the Torres Strait. Remoteness has always been a major factor determining health outcomes for people in my electorate. This government continues to listen in order to make the greatest difference to people's health outcomes. We listen not only to better understand the complexities underlying health outcomes but also to strategically plan for the future by investing in areas that would make the greatest impact.

Investing in infrastructure means that we can continue to deliver quality services into the future. I am pleased to see record investment flowing into the refurbishment of five primary healthcare centres in the outer islands of the Torres Strait to service local communities. A brand new primary healthcare centre on Murray Island and the redevelopment of Thursday Island Hospital and primary healthcare centre in the Torres Strait means that we can offer certain specialised services to people living right across the Torres Strait region. The Weipa Integrated Health Service received vital funds for the upgrading and refurbishment of the facility to establish a new primary healthcare clinic and birthing suite and a home for the new CT scanner, which was made possible as a result of a collaboration between

Rio Tinto, Mapoon Aboriginal Corporation and the Queensland government. Our investment into staff accommodation in areas such as Kowanyama, Bamaga and Mareeba means that we can attract and support health professionals to the region.

Our children are our future and they deserve quality education, no matter where they live. This government is serious about delivering quality education by investing critical funds into building, refurbishing and maintaining our existing educational infrastructure in communities. Whether it is building a brand new prep building in Mareeba or refurbishing a science lab in Cooktown State High School, this government believes in creating a safe learning environment for all of Queensland's children. I would like to acknowledge the Minister for Education, Hon. Grace Grace, for her drive and commitment to education in my electorate. I had the pleasure of accompanying Minister Grace to visit schools in the Torres Strait and Cape York to highlight the types of challenges these communities face.

I have always seen my role as working in close partnership with the local government leadership to achieve their aspirations. The vastness of the region makes Cook one of the most complex and diverse electorates in Queensland. My electorate is the only electorate consisting of 13 local government councils and one town authority. We have Mareeba on the Tablelands, Douglas shire on the coast and many small towns and communities in Cape York and the Torres Strait.

This government continues to look at ways to work closely with local government to deliver vital infrastructure projects. Works for Queensland and Building our Regions are two highly successful programs delivered, giving local councils the capacity and ownership over the projects they will deliver. These programs are delivering projects such as the Cooktown Airport, refurbishment of the Hope Vale community hall, the upgrade of the sporting field in Pormpuraaw, Iron Range Cabins in Lockhart River and the Mareeba industrial hub.

The good work of this government does not stop with delivering infrastructure and supporting service delivery. In Far North Queensland we have two World Heritage areas that are listed for their natural values: the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area and the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. The Great Barrier Reef is the world's most extensive coral reef system and the Wet Tropics contains an extremely rich and unique biodiversity. We have an obligation to protect our natural environment and biodiversity. It is up to us to do all that we can to ensure Queensland's natural environment and wildlife are safeguarded so that our future generations will be able to enjoy the environment the way we do today.

It is absolutely wonderful to be part of a progressive government—a government that is truly committed to protecting our environment and contributing to the environmental narrative for the future. In my first term, we saw legislation pass to support progressive environmental reforms like the Nature Conversation (Special Wildlife Reserves) Bill, the Environmental Protection (Great Barrier Reef Protection Measures) Bill and the Safer Waterways Bill. Most recently in this new parliament we passed the Waste Reduction and Recycling (Plastic Items) Amendment Bill 2020 to rid our state of the accumulation of single-use plastic items that clearly have no place in our environment.

Like everywhere else, we depend on viable industries to support economic growth and development. However, the geographical make-up of the region creates challenges for industries to thrive. I especially want to talk about the tourism industry as one of the key economic drivers in Far North Queensland, creating opportunities for both direct and indirect jobs. Visitors to our region use our tourism operators to explore places like the Great Barrier Reef and the Daintree, stay at our accommodation and eat at our cafes and restaurants, all the while supporting our local economy.

The more unique the products, the more enticing Far North Queensland becomes for people to visit. It gives us the opportunity to showcase our vibrant region and, at the same time, create awareness of environmental issues. Visitors come to our region to explore and immerse themselves in everything that Far North Queensland has to offer.

Let us not forget the talents in the region. If people love art like me, then the Cook electorate is the place for them. The Cook electorate is known for First Nations art with a never-ending trail of art centres from the Torres Strait through Cape York to the one in the Mossman Gorge community. They provide an income stream for local artists living in remote communities. I would love to see an art tour that takes people through the Cook electorate starting at the Mossman Gorge community and going all the way up to the Torres Strait.

Some of my favourites are the Aurukun carvings—and, in particular, the Aurukun dogs—fishing nets in Pormpuraaw and the canvas paintings in Lockhart River. I give a shout-out to local artists Silas Hobson and Thelma Omeenyo. I also love, love, love the work of Naomi Hobson from Coen in Cape York and the work of Erub Arts. I also acknowledge my favourite Torres Strait Island artists—Joseph

Au, Matilda Nona and Laurie Nona, and Alick Tipoti from Badu Island. I love seeing First Nations artists succeed in their field and making a mark nationally and internationally. Art is what I see, but it is the true expression of culture and connection to place that I truly admire and appreciate.

Everything is interconnected in Cook. While I think it would be a great idea to have an art trail throughout the region, we need to make sure we have safe roads. The Palaszczuk government is a government that commits to building better roads. I acknowledge the Minister for Transport and Main Roads, Mark Bailey, for his ongoing support and advocacy to see better and safer roads in the Cook electorate. This government invested millions into the sealing of the Peninsula Developmental Road in Cape York, the Kennedy Highway between Cairns and Mareeba and the Burke Developmental Road, amongst the many other road projects in Cook.

I want to briefly mention COVID. I have listened to the contributions of others in this chamber. As an Indigenous person from a remote community and knowing the health outcomes for people in those communities, I put on record how very grateful I am to this government for all its support in safeguarding communities throughout Cape York and the Torres Strait. Not only would the challenges have been huge for remote communities, the potential impacts could have been huge. We have seen results of this right throughout the world. I am very grateful that we have not gone down the path of devastation. We are here. We can still enjoy each other's company. I can still enjoy the company of my family back home and the people I care about. It is an absolute honour and privilege to be part of this government at this time and to be talking about all of our communities right across Queensland.

I will conclude by thanking a few people. I thank the Labor Party, Julianne Campbell, Zac Beers and all the wonderful staff at the party office for their support throughout the state election. I see Mr Healy looking my way. I want to acknowledge Mr Healy as well. Thank you for all of your support. I thank the Maritime Union—Dave Lyons, Gudge, Turtle, Watto and all the other members who came on board to support me when I needed it the most. I thank my Labor branch, the Mossman/Port Douglas branch. Bill Allison, Ken Schaumberg, Jacob Matysek, Aaron Fa'oso, Fernando, Rona, Gerry and Val, Gillian and all of the other volunteers, I cannot thank you enough. I thank James Matysek in NPA, Ranietta Wosomo on Badu Island, and Auntie Nancy and Nathan in Weipa, to name a few.

I want to especially thank my family and friends throughout Cape York and the Torres Strait for all their support. I know that I will never be able to thank you enough, but please know that I am eternally grateful. My brothers, Tom, Andrew and Harry; my only sister, Florie; my in-laws; and my nieces and nephews were all very excited during the election campaign. It was all hands on deck. Thank you for always being in my corner and thank you for all that you did and all that you continue to do to see me succeed.

I thank my mum and dad for dropping everything back home in the Torres Strait to be in Cairns to support me while I was out for long days and returning home exhausted at the end of my days. I love all that you do. Thank you for your support. Your love and support is everything I need. My children, Libby, Jonah, Mosiah, and my beautiful Shay, I cannot thank you enough for just being you, for trusting me and for loving me no matter what. My baby, Mosiah, you got your first job while I was out campaigning. That was very exciting. You got your driver's licence while I was busy at work. It does not mean I do not want to be there for you. I am blessed that you are the person you are—for not giving up, for going to school every day and doing your homework and for knowing that I will be home whenever I can.

It is a great privilege and honour to stand here for a second term. I am very passionate about my communities. I love my communities. I only want to see what is best for my communities throughout this term and into the future. The Palaszczuk government has been a rock for my communities in providing support and in supporting me in the job that I do. I am very grateful for every conversation I have and for every conversation where I can take my communities forward into the future.



Mr MILLAR (Gregory—LNP) (12.28 pm): I take my place in this 57th Parliament, proud to be representing the wonderful people of Gregory for a third term. I confirm my allegiance to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and her representatives, His Excellency the Governor, Paul de Jersey, and my loyalty to this parliament and to the electors of Gregory.

I congratulate the Labor Party on being re-elected to the government benches. I congratulate the Premier, Anastacia Palaszczuk, her ministers and all of her members of the Labor Party. I would also like to pay tribute to a magnificent woman in this parliament, and that is the member for Nanango, Deb Frecklington. I have never seen a more determined person go through what the member for Nanango had to go through during her term as our opposition leader. She did it with absolute distinction. She was an absolute privilege to work with and for, and she will always have my support.

I would also like to pay tribute to the member for Everton, Tim Mander. He was a very strong deputy leader to the opposition leader. He held that position with absolute grace, and he has become a good friend and well liked not only in the electorate of Everton but by the people of Queensland. He is well liked out in Gregory, even though we have a lot of North Queensland Cowboy supporters out there.

I congratulate David Crisafulli, the member for Broadwater, for taking on the leadership. He is a good man. He is a man I have known for a very long time and a good mate. I also congratulate David Janetzki, the member for Toowoomba South, for taking on the deputy's role. He is doing an absolutely fine job. I am looking forward to taking the member for Toowoomba South back out to Yaraka. We had such a great time last term. We were running a little late—I know the police minister is in the House—for our next meeting going from Yaraka to Longreach. We did stop at Isisford for a steak sandwich which was great. A steak sandwich at Isisford is very simple: two pieces of white bread and a steak—no salad.

Mr Ryan: That's how it should be.

Mr MILLAR: It is how it should be.

Mr Ryan: And deep fried.

Mr MILLAR: Yes, exactly. Madam Deputy Speaker, you cannot be a member in this place without a strong family. I pay tribute to my beautiful wife, Peta—whose birthday it is today—and my children, Lucy, Ellie and Poppy. I would like to pay tribute to my parents, Cameron and Joan Millar, and my two brothers, Hamish and Dougall Millar, who support me all the way. Family is very important.

You cannot be a good member without good staff. I have the best staff. I pay tribute to Nicki Heslin in my Longreach office, Laura Nolan and Mike Burns in my Emerald office, Kerry-Lee Ferguson and Lachie Little. We call him 'little Lachie'. He is in the Longreach office. He is a wonderful addition to the team and he will be a great advocate for Gregory down the track. He has just finished school. He is taking a year working with me and then he is off to university. I think he is heading down to QUT. You will meet Lachie Little if you come to an event on Thursday—but he is not little; he is about this high! He is a lovely boy, and I am so thankful he has come on board.

You cannot win your seat without the people who support you. I want to pay tribute to a bloke who has had a hugely successful time in the party winning elections for us, and that is Mike Burns, our Gregory SEC chairman. Mike has been involved in the party for over 40 years and he has won around 17 elections. Mike is also a tragic Broncos supporters. I have suggested that Kevvie Walters might want to bring Mike down for a few chats with the Broncos. Mike Burns is a lovely person, and I could not have done this job without him. He is a loyal friend and a father figure to me. He has known me since I was a little boy.

I thank Andrew Cowper from Aramac, Sonja and Peter Doyle from Blackall and Ross Drayton, my Gregory branch secretary. He is a wonderful bloke, a true champion and a very strong advocate for the people in the bush. He does a wonderful job. Ross is taking over the chairman's role of the Gregory SEC, and he will do a fine job.

I thank Graham and Lyn Johnson from the Emerald branch; Tim and Stevie Eversham; a beautiful lady called Rosemary Champion and her husband, Warwick, in Longreach—they do a fantastic job for me; Josh Adams in Emerald; Brett Walsh in Barky, along with Peter and Roberta Doneley and family in Barky. They do a wonderful job. Barky is the home of the Labor Party—I understand that—with the Tree of Knowledge. For the first time the LNP actually won the Barky booth. I am very proud to be representing Barky.

I understand the traditions of Barky to the Labor Party. It is respected and they do a good job, but I ask that we give a little more help and a little more funding to the Australian Workers Heritage Centre. It can be a true advocate for tourism, showing the history of not only the Labor Party but also Western Queensland and the shearing industry and the grazing industry. I ask that we put a little more money towards it. They have a great new CEO there. He is doing a great job and will do a great job.

I also pay tribute to Sean Dillon from Alpha; Sonia and Guy Burton from Emerald; Bruce and Helen Collins from Winton; John and Katrina Payne from Winton; and most people know this person—he is well liked—Vaughan Johnson, who was on my pre-polling booth for two weeks and on the polling booth in Tambo on election day. Vaughan does an absolutely great job. I wanted to thank those people first.

I would like to quote from Colin Boyce's speech during the last address-in-reply debate. It is exactly what I felt we did when we were growing up. He stated—

I grew up on my parent's brigalow ballot block and I remember the big tractors pulling the scrub—a government requirement of the day. The wheel has turned, and now we have proposed government regulation which will inhibit agricultural development in Queensland. It is time that people understand that our graziers and our farmers are the true practical environmentalists—the custodians of the land who look after it, nurture it and make it productive and sustainable. Australia was born on the back of agriculture and it remains at the forefront of our economy ...

Agriculture is so important.

Being the member for Gregory is a privilege and an honour. There have only been four members for Gregory since the mid-1950s and I am the fourth. The first was Sir Wally Rae, then Bill Glasson Senior, then Vaughan Johnson and then me. It is an absolute privilege. Every member in this House is proud of their electorates, but Gregory is particularly special. It is literally the beating heart of Queensland. It is also the parliament's biggest electorate running right across the centre of the state from an hour out of Rocky to the borders with the Northern Territory and South Australia. Gregory is more than a quarter of Queensland's land mass. It is basically bigger than many countries in Europe.

It has 13 major river systems which find their release in settings as different as Lake Eyre and the Great Barrier Reef. It has lakes, both natural and man-made, including Queensland's second largest lake—Lake Maraboon, or Fairbairn Dam, as we know. Thank God we have had a little bit of rain. Capacity is now up around 25 per cent. We have 100 per cent allocations until the end of June. I can guarantee that there is going to be a massive chickpea crop in the Central Highlands which will boost the economy around there. I ask anybody to come out and have a look. It is fantastic. We have natural lakes such as Lake Galilee near Aramac and other lakes all over the place.

With magnificent natural landscapes from Carnarvon Gorge to the channel country, world-class museums and 'bucket-list' events, Gregory is a magnet for our tourists from around the country and from overseas. Our tourism season will be starting very soon. If you are looking for a holiday, come west. We would love to have you out there.

It also produces much of Queensland's export earnings. In resources it produces coal, gas and renewable energy, as well as some of the finest sapphires and opals in the world. Gregory's farmers, too, are key export earners for Queensland. They are innovative, competitive and famous for producing quality produce. For instance, it takes only 10 days from being harvested on the Central Highlands for our chickpeas to reach consumers in India. This is a true 'coals to Newcastle' story and should make us all proud that Queensland chickpeas are renowned for their quality in India—home of the chickpea curry and dahl.

Gregory also produces wheat, sorghum, rice, mung beans, citrus, melons, grapes and macadamia nuts. We are big in textiles, with some of the world's finest cotton and wool which is widely sought after right around the world.

Lastly, Gregory produces premium and organic kangaroo, beef and sheep meat. Once upon a time you could go to the Brekkie Creek Hotel and see a sign saying they sourced their steak from Marion Downs. That is in Gregory and is a premium and organic operation. The beef industry in the Central Highlands is the biggest in Queensland and it produces massive economic opportunities for us.

Nowadays beautiful steakhouses such as the Black Hide and Cha Cha Char allow you to pick your meat by origin, breed and even pasture. I have long been of the opinion that Gregory's beef industry should be marketed this way. We offer feedlots and organic grass-fed from native Mitchell and Flinders grasses, to buffel pastures. Each produces a different dining experience.

It is heartbreaking to stand here and tell you what I told you at the beginning of the 55th Parliament: Gregory is hurting and for the same reason as in 2015. We are still in the grip of the same drought. Even though we have had a little bit of rain, we are still in the grip of drought. For some of my constituents it has been nearly nine or 10 years since they have had decent rain. We really have not had decent rain between Longreach and Barcaldine. There seems to be a cone over those areas where we have not seen those pastures rebound.

While there have been some falls, the promised La Nina rains have not come to all of Queensland. We have had big rains down here and of course in New South Wales, but in the Central Highlands and in the central west we are hoping for proper drought-breaking rain to end this drought. It has been going on for far too long.

I am sure that the member for Warrego and the member for Traeger share my concerns about the poor response of pastures in certain parts of Western Queensland, especially up in the north-west. We are also battling a grasshopper infestation, so the pastures that did respond were devoured within

weeks. I ask that the government be sensitive to the plight of people in Western Queensland. We need to make sure we get on top of this issue when we get into the wet season around October or November because those grasshoppers have been an absolutely devastating story for Western Queensland.

I also note the government's rightful focus on the COVID-19 pandemic and the economic and health impacts of that, but I also respectfully ask the Premier, Treasurer and minister for agriculture not to forget us out in the west. All of Western Queensland is still drought-declared and we need special consideration from our government. Drought wraps around communities slowly and squeezes the life out of them. Western Queensland's population is falling, jobs are being lost and businesses are closing because of the drought.

In his speech the Governor outlined the Labor government's plans for major infrastructure upgrades in Queensland schools. Please remember the boost this gives drought-affected areas. Emerald State High School needs a trade centre and staffing for rural education. This is vital for the Central Highlands; I implore the Minister for Education. We need to have a trade centre at Emerald State High School because that is where the Bowen Basin is centred. We need to have those trades for the mining and resources industries. We would like to keep our kids in town so they are able get their education there and then move into the mining industry and buy a house and start a family. That is how we keep our populations going.

Blackwater State High School should be excelling at offering the trade qualifications needed by the mining industry. Capella State High School should be able to prepare its students for farming and mining, and western secondary students need to be able to qualify to take up jobs in the expanding tourism and wool industries. When this drought breaks we are going to need shearers and associated industry skills to see the wool industry come back to what it used to be. I implore the government to put some effort into the education of our children. We have to keep our students. Once they leave grade 10 or 12 and if they want to do a trade—if they do not want to go to university—we have to ensure they can get trade skills in the local area.

The Central Highlands desperately needs a kindy support hub to help children and families with special needs. Children with special needs are a big issue in the seat of Gregory. We do not have the services we need to enable special needs children to stay in the area. What we find is that when these children reach a certain age, and certainly high school age, some parents are forced to move to the east coast or down to the South-East to meet the special needs requirements of their children. Right across Gregory's 54 schools we have issues with acting staffing levels. I have worked with the minister on many of these issues in the past, and I look forward to continuing to work with her on behalf of my constituents. I do plead with the minister, the Premier and the Treasurer to remember that the education dollars spent in Gregory do double duty in times of drought in terms of sustaining communities in Western Queensland.

Gregory earns a great deal for the state, and in our time of need we ask only for our share. I would like to specifically mention the Governor's reference to the Labor government's commitment to invest \$171 million in palliative care to ensure Queenslanders get the highest quality care at the end of life. I have helped Central and Western Queenslanders to support loved ones in their dying days, and I can tell you from personal experience that there is nothing more distressing than not being able to secure adequate and dignified care at this time. While the government made a promise around voluntary assisted dying, the blunt truth is that only a very small number of Queenslanders will use voluntary assisted dying but 100 per cent of us will need palliative care. It is only a question of when. Consequently, I will be jealously fighting for Western Queensland's share of the expansion of palliative care.

Another area where I have been fiercely advocating for my Gregory constituents is renal dialysis. The previous health minister was out there and we did talk about it. I know there has been the promise of a dialysis machine in Longreach, and I congratulate the Labor Party for putting that forward. Hopefully we will get a dialysis machine in Longreach, but we need a dialysis machine in Emerald as well. We do not have a dialysis machine in Emerald, and when people need dialysis treatment they have to go to Rocky. Sometimes people have to move away because they need dialysis treatment.

Another thing I would like to put on the record I will be fighting very hard for is a new hospital for Blackwater. Blackwater is a fantastic town just 70 kilometres east of Emerald, but it is the heart of the mining industry with mines such as Curragh and South Blackwater. The hospital in Blackwater was built back in the 1960s and basically has not changed. We have a population of 6,000 in Blackwater but really it supports a population of 12,000. I call on the health minister and the Palaszczuk government

to replicate the Blackall Hospital that has been built and put one in Blackwater as well. You have the designs. We have land available. We really need to make sure that we have the Blackwater hospital on the budget list coming up in the next couple of months, because the people of Blackwater need it. It would not only help the people of Blackwater but it also services the valuable mining industry. You have drive-in drive-out and fly-in fly-out workers coming in, and if something happens they use the local facilities, so we really do need an investment in the Blackwater hospital. I hope we can see that happen. No doubt the budget will come up, but we really do need to put that on the budget list.

I really am truly honoured to be the member for Gregory. This is my third term, and to be the member for Gregory is an absolute honour. The people of Gregory are absolutely fantastic. Whether you live in the Central Highlands around Emerald or you live in Duaringa or Blackwater, towns like Tieri or Springsure, or even Bauhinia—which is a wonderful community on the Central Highlands—or in the central west where you have great places like Longreach, Blackall, Winton and Barcaldine but also Windorah, Birdsville, Bedourie and Boulia—

Ms Leahy: Beautiful towns and beautiful people.

Mr MILLAR: I take that interjection from the member for Warrego, who has similar communities. They are beautiful communities and they do a fantastic job. It is an absolute privilege to represent them. Being the member for Gregory is not a hard job because you have so much support. Whether they voted for you or not, they do support you when you advocate for them.


I just want to see you turn up. If you are looking for a holiday through the winter I implore you to head west and come and see the Qantas Founders Museum, Australian Stockman's Hall of Fame, Waltzing Matilda Centre or the Australian Workers Heritage Centre—you can even go past the Tree of Knowledge—or you could head out to the back country down to Birdsville. We also have the Big Red Bash coming up and the Birdsville Races. You also have the Boulia Camel Races and the Betoota races. I would really encourage you to come and spend some dollars out there.

Ms Leahy: Come and see Queensland.

Mr MILLAR: Come and see the real Queensland. There is more to Queensland than just the Great Barrier Reef: there is the outback. I agree with closing our international borders, but we need to look at a reef and beef tour, where we fly them into Cairns to the Great Barrier Reef and then we get them into the outback and down to Brisbane to the South-East so we all get a bit of a share. When we eventually open up to international flights and tourists return, we have to remember that the tourism industry is the outback as well. We have to promote both the Great Barrier Reef and the outback to make sure that happens.

Ms Leahy: We grow the best beef in the world.

Mr MILLAR: We grow the best beef in the world. We also have the friendliest people and the coldest beer, so head out when you are ready. Madam Deputy Speaker Bush, I would also like to congratulate you on your role and your election to your seat. I look forward to working with everybody in this House and doing good things for Queensland.

 **Mr KING** (Kurwongbah—ALP) (12.48 pm): Madam Deputy Speaker, I would like to start by congratulating you and all new and returning members. Hopefully this term will be a very productive one for all of us.

An opposition member: Not based on the current *Notice Paper*.

Mr KING: I will ignore that. It is a great privilege to rise in this address-in-reply debate to deliver my second speech as the state member for Kurwongbah and a proud third term MP in another Palaszczuk government—one that has been returned with an even larger majority. I would like to begin by acknowledging the traditional owners of the land on which the parliament meets and pay my respects to elders past, present and emerging.

I always seem to refer back to the words I used when I rose in this place in the 55th Parliament as the member for Kallangur and gave my first speech. I said then, 'To say that my life has changed dramatically in recent times would be an understatement.' These words still apply. In my first term I must say I had a very steep learning curve—coming from an electrical project management role on construction sites in high-voltage substations to this place. I have to say though that representing members of the community was somewhat familiar ground, having been a workplace union delegate in my previous employment. I still got to represent people but the change was that there were a lot more of them. My second term as the member for Kurwongbah continued on with this, with a largely new area to represent.

Then the world changed. COVID-19 was thrust upon us. The whole landscape shifted. I am sure everyone in this place felt the enormity of representing their communities in those early days of uncertainty, anger and fear from all angles. Watching my neighbour, the then minister for health and ambulance services and member for Murrumba, Dr Steven Miles, along with Premier Annastacia Palaszczuk and Chief Health Officer Dr Young front up every day to give the latest news, whether good or bad, while undergoing the same turmoil in their private lives, filled me with pride to be part of the response to this shocking virus. What also impressed me was our teachers and our health professionals last year. They put up with a lot every day and they kept going and going. That impressed me.

What did not impress me was the constant undermining and sniping from opposition members and certain parts of the media. On 60 occasions, they asked for the borders to be opened—

A government member interjected.

Mr KING: Over 60 times? It was 64 to be exact. I will take that interjection. Hanson and Palmer took legal action to try to force open the borders. That was reprehensible. If ever there was a time to be pulling at the same end of the rope, 2020 was that time. They just did not get it and the election result showed that. I had little old ladies coming up to me on polling booths asking for a selfie with me—and this is something that does not normally happen—so they could prove to their friends and family they were voting Labor for the first time because we had kept them safe. I think that means we did represent the community well and we did get it right.

Speaking about the election, for the record I have to say that there was shameful gear put out from Cherish Life or whoever it was that both my LNP and One Nation candidates openly displayed and they unashamedly worked together as a team, but it turned off way more voters than they attracted. They had better go back to the drawing board with that. Even some of my well-known political detractors in my area expressed extreme disappointment in that gear; they said that it was not on.

We have been able to achieve a lot first in Kallangur and now in Kurwongbah. I am proud to be able to list some of these achievements. With my neighbour, the Deputy Premier, we will soon be opening the community centre that we received funding for when Kallangur was still an electorate. Dr Miles has built on this and made it into an impressive-looking place that will soon be manned and servicing both of our communities. It is similar with Dakabin station. Before there was Riverway Drive, there was Dakabin station. It does not even resemble the simple rail siding that I inherited from my predecessor, and it will soon be completed with a full upgrade, including more parking with further car parking to come on the Narangba Road side. I thank Gemma Gale and the Dakabin Station Action Group for their advocacy, persistence and patience.

While talking about rail stations, I can say that we have delivered an amazing new park-and-ride at Lawnton station and have in planning more parking at Narangba station as well as an upgrade of Burpengary station for disability access. We have delivered the Boundary Road and highway interchange and work has started on the Deception Bay and New Settlement Road interchange that I have long campaigned for with my friends the member for Bancroft and the member for Morayfield. Ironically, we copped some flak from our LNP federal member for Longman about this project being delayed, and he had to be informed that the delay in this project was because the Newman LNP government removed it from QTRIP and we had to get it back in. That was one of a few own goals from that gentleman. I will just finish the list of road projects underway in Kurwongbah. The Petrie roundabout will not be a roundabout for much longer as work has started to convert this long-term bottleneck into a free-flowing intersection.

We have committed to, have completed or are in the process of delivering a lot of community infrastructure. Due to our partnerships with council, my community will see the following: a brand new tennis centre in Narangba with six courts and a new clubhouse; new change rooms at the mighty Pine Rivers Bears to assist them as they not only take on being Moreton Bay's only BRL club but also field women's open teams, which they are doing quite well with; new change rooms and amenities at Narangba Rangers for the lower fields; and upgrades at the Narangba Crows and Burpengary Brumbies clubhouse. It was exciting to be part of the delivery of a great new soccer facility at the northern end of the Kurwongbah electorate which now houses the Caboolture Sports Football Club. That was a big loss for my northern neighbour, the member for Morayfield, but we have given him permanent visiting rights.

The air-conditioning upgrades to our Kurwongbah schools are underway and we are looking forward to the solar upgrades to accompany this. We have money for Jinibara State School to complete their outdoor learning area as well as their upgrade to the admin block. Petrie State School is currently getting new security fencing and Narangba State School will get disability access to their admin block. Lawnton State School has seen the start of works on its new hall, and I have a great deal of pride in

being able to secure this for the school. I thank Minister Grace for her visits to the school and support for this. They are also getting a new admin building to provide disability access and more learning spaces. Lawnton has needed some love for a long time and I am very pleased to be able to deliver that.

I recently visited the new three-storey Phoenix building at Burpengary State Secondary College, and I also opened the new STEM building at Genesis Christian College that we helped to fund. Our high schools have not missed out either. Also on education, our Moreton Bay campus of the University of the Sunshine Coast opened just before COVID hit and promptly had to change its delivery of courses. However, it is still one of the most exciting things to have happened in our community. It is doing well with remote learning, and the community is looking forward to the opportunities it will bring as it grows and thrives as we get on top of this pandemic.

In health, we are delivering a major redevelopment of Caboolture Hospital as well as a few new satellite hospitals in the Moreton Bay area. We have restored the wall at Lake Kurwongbah so skiers, paddlers, rowers and fishers can enjoy the lake as a purely recreational lake. All of these projects are providing jobs for tradies in our Moreton Bay community. That is what we promised and that is what we are delivering.

One more great asset in Kurwongbah is Lakeside raceway, and I make no secret of my passion for this place. In the last parliament our Transport and Public Works Committee undertook an inquiry into motor recreational activities to highlight what MRAs bring to our communities. I encourage all members to read that report because we all have enthusiasts in our areas and their needs are important. I look forward to continuing to help Lakeside to be a place where Queenslanders can experience not only motor racing but other forms of entertainment as well as driver training and other endeavours to make it a success story. A few detractors should not ruin an amazing, nostalgic place like this for the broader community. We will keep working to get a solution that works for the Kurwongbah and motor racing communities.

As the House would know, it takes a team to campaign for and win an election, and I would like to thank all my team and members of my branches—the Pine Rivers-Kurwongbah branch, the Petrie-Lawnton branch and the Narangba branch. I specifically thank the following people: the Doyles, who are more family than friends; Lyn Waugh; Di and Lance Baker; John Targuse; Mick and Maree Gillam; Janine Aitken; Jason and Vic; Bernie Ring; Rick O'Sullivan; Rhonda, Pattie and Kerry; Scott Reichmann and Kate; Ongy; Andrew Irvine; Kegan Sherf and Taylor Bunnag; Shane Urqhart; Bruce Humphreys; Jim Moloney; Liam Baker; Tom and Steph; Marie; Bob Crombie; Ed Nixon from the Burpengary Community Association—I always appreciate his advice and very few people know the Burpengary community like Ed; Dan Parsell; Kevin Butt; Shelley and Roger; Ronnie Coleman for driving me around in one of his lovely old cars and listening to me rant all election day yet again; the team from Powerlink and the electricity supply industry who never forget a mate; the mighty Electrical Trades Union, which I joined in the early 1990s and I have never regretted that decision for a moment; Shayne Kummerfeld and the RTBU crew of Barry, Tom, Jamie, Anthony, Jim, Luke and Kelvin; the Kurwongbah SEC and, once again, all of our branch members and friends who turned out; the whole Mogridge family for always being there when we need them; Linda Lavarch and her family, and I cannot say how good it is to have the former member for Kurwongbah on your team—her advice is always amazing as is being her friend; young Hamish, who I met on pre-poll who just wanted to come and help—he is a good kid and he has a big future ahead of him; Glen Frew; Eddie and Jeff; Ian and Michelle McJannett; Jeff and Anne, John and Gail, and Nick and Jerry who are always there when I need them; Lloyd; and of course Bonny who never lets me down.

I turn to team Kurwongbah. None of us would be able to do our jobs without a great team. I have heard others in this place say that they have the best team. I dispute that because I have got the best. I thank team Kurwongbah—Leanne, Lorraine and Katie—for keeping everything under control, including me. I also thank their families for putting up with the stress that working in an electorate office can bring.

I thank my family as always for being there. Thanks go to Ben and Ella, who since the election have given us a beautiful little granddaughter, and Natasha and Nicole and their families. My dad went through this for the first time and it was an eye-opener for him. I thank my long-suffering wife, Ang, just for being Ang. We will get that 25-year wedding anniversary holiday in sometime. COVID wrecked it this time but I promise it will be before our 30th anniversary, Ang.

Debate, on motion of Mr King, adjourned.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.00 pm.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

Debate of Motion, Suspension of Standing Order

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mrs Gerber): Honourable members, before I call the Premier to move this motion, I remind all members that earlier today the House agreed to suspend standing order 231 for the purpose of this debate. This means that debate on this motion may include matters which relate to other items of business on the *Notice Paper*.

MOTIONS

Women



Hon. A PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (2.00 pm): I move—

That this House:

1. notes the thousands of Queenslanders who participated in the nation-wide March 4 Justice rally to highlight the importance of equality and justice for women;
2. condemns harassment and assault of women across Queensland; and
3. supports all women across Queensland and their right to be safe in their home, workplace and community.

There is a big issue facing the women across this country and the time for action is now. Now is the time when we need strong leaders, we need strong members of the community, we need to stand united and we must take action.

The motion that I have moved in this House today is about highlighting the importance of equality and justice for women. It is about condemning harassment and the assault of women across Queensland and it is supporting all women across Queensland and their right to be safe in their home, workplace and community. Just the other week I was absolutely proud to join not just members of my cabinet and my government—and I note there were members of the opposition there, too—but also hundreds of women, if not thousands of women, who demanded that their voices be heard. Change must come and change must come now. Enough is enough. It is a time when we must stand united. We must make a change and we must change things. Whether young or not, women should not fear walking to their car or walking home and women need to be believed. This is of absolute fundamental importance.

How do we change this? We bring about equality by getting more women into different positions across this government, across society, across the boardrooms and across the cabinet tables, because when we change the composition of the boardrooms and the cabinet tables we change the conversation for women in this country. What is fundamentally wrong at the moment is the lack of leadership at a federal level, because women are not sitting around that cabinet table. I am proud that in this government the number of women who sit around this cabinet table has made a substantial difference to the way in which we approach issues. It takes strong women and strong men to support that change. I commend every single member of my government who stands proud and united with me when it comes to saying to women across Queensland, 'We support you. We hear you. We stand with you. We believe you.'

I have been appalled by the lack of dignity and respect shown to the women across this country—women who have been the victims of sexual assault over numerous years, who have said nothing. It took courage to come forward. These brave women are now standing strong and standing firm. I commend everybody who has been dignified, has shown respect and has shared those very deep and personal stories not just with their families or each other but also with the broader community. The time has come for change. I commend this motion to the House.



Mr CRISAFULLI (Broadwater—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (2.03 pm): I rise to support the motion moved by the Premier. Not only do I support it, but may I say how timely it is. I commend the Premier for the content of the motion. It has not sought to be political in any way; it has sought to raise an issue that we in this House should raise and speak about.


My contribution today is a very small part in this debate. It will be an opportunity for some brave people from both sides of this chamber to tell stories—stories that we have read in our newspapers and heard on our radio and at marches across the nation. If, as a leader of a major political party, my

contribution can show that this is a matter that is serious and one that must reflect cultural change, I will join with the Premier in not only supporting the motion but proudly saying that we are in this House together to do so.

I have listened to the stories of everyday women. Quite frankly, they have rocked me and they have moved me. When I reflected on some of the stories of women about what has happened in workplaces—snide remarks or things they have been asked to do—I can only reflect on how traumatic that must have been for them. I want to say that it is crucial that we give strength to those people who have stood up so that they know that this will lead to reform, that it will lead to lasting reform. I hope that today is the start of that journey in this House.

Yes, this is a fire that was lit in our nation's capital, but it is something that every workplace in this state and in this nation should look at. We should look at all of our processes and make sure that we have workplaces that are inclusive and respectful and that people are treated with decency. That does not mean there will not be robust debate. Of course there will be robust debate. However, we must foster an environment of respect, decency and inclusivity.


In the remaining 30 seconds I want to mention why this motion is so powerful. It does not just reflect the need for equality in the workplace; it also reflects the need for safety in the home. That is something that we as a chamber must continue to work towards. It is one of the key roles of a society to keep people safe, and that includes inside the home. We must embark on making sure that the *Not now, not ever* report is implemented and good quality, long-lasting change comes from it.

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Investment) (2.07 pm): I am pleased to rise this afternoon to support the motion moved by the Premier. The last few weeks have reminded all of us that so many women in Queensland have stories to tell about being denied the right to be safe in their home, in their workplace and in the community. The heart-wrenching stories from so many women and the misplaced responses from men in recent weeks tell us clearly there is much more—so much more—to be done. This is not something for women to fix or to address or for them to change their behaviour. Men committed the assaults, men broke the laws, men orchestrated the cover-ups, and men dictated the language to doubt or downplay or disregard women.

The sad fact is that despite everything we have heard from women in recent weeks, including the stories I heard at last week's March 4 Justice in Brisbane, too many men continue to fail to listen to women, and these are the men who need to listen hardest. In that vein I can think of no better use of my remaining time than to call on these men to listen—men in power and men who claim they are powerless.

We do not need men in power asking women to stand with them a week after telling the same women that they should be grateful they were not being shot in the street. Instead, we need men to stand with women. We do not need men in power weaponising their tears or responding to questions with unjustified indignance and spurious accusations. Instead, we need men to empower women. We do not need men in power issuing formulaic apologies. Instead, we need men to genuinely atone. We do not need men in power relying on their mates to confirm that near enough is good enough, to walk away from their responsibilities and to be grateful that the footy is back on. Instead, we need men to hold other men, including and especially their mates, to account. We need men to demand better of other men. We have built and continue to build a strong and vibrant economy in Queensland, but it will mean absolutely nothing if, in turn, we cannot build a society that ensures Queensland women are safe from, in the words of this motion, the threat of harassment and assault. It will mean nothing if we cannot build a society that sees all of us, regardless of our gender, race, religion or way of life, as equals.

(Time expired)


 **Mr JANETZKI** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (2.10 pm): I rise to speak in support of the motion before the House. I honour the courage of so many women who have recently spoken about their experiences, their harassment and their assaults. Brittany Higgins, honourable members from both sides of this House, community members and family have bravely spoken about experiences in their lives that never should have happened. Many of these experiences have been kept in silence for too long—unspoken, and quietly and painfully carried every day.

Enough is enough. The March 4 Justice rallies around the nation unveiled this fact. These rallies were held right across Australia, with 300 to 400 people marching in my home town of Toowoomba. I believe that over 40 towns or cities were represented across the nation. That is a true cry for national action. These last few weeks have provoked important conversations—long overdue conversations—in the workplace, in the public square and, most importantly, in homes. My wife, with a career in the performing arts, has shared instances of harassment with me that she has never shared before—

experiences that she felt ashamed to share with me, her best friend since we were 18 years old. That is why this motion is necessary. It is necessary because this parliament has a responsibility to send a message.

This is not a partisan political problem. It goes beyond politics, but there are political and legal solutions. There must always be consequences for actions. The law can always be reviewed to consider how it can better respond to allegations of sexual assault with empathy, with care and with respect—all of which can be achieved without diminishing due process. We must also send a message that men must do better. It was nothing but pure depravity on display in Canberra by male coalition staffers. If that is the culture of our young men, we have a national cultural problem. Let there be a rising up of young men like BBC's Mason Black, who displayed outstanding leadership in speaking with the young men in his care.

Victims must feel confident in coming forward to share their experiences—to be acknowledged, validated and believed. A culture that enables silence must be changed. This is not a political issue to be managed that can just come and go or a political issue that disappears as quickly as it arrives, because it matters deeply to women—and it should matter deeply to all men, too.


 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (2.13 pm): I join my parliamentary colleagues in acknowledging and paying my heartfelt thanks to the tens of thousands of women across the country and right across Queensland who marched for justice, who marched for respect and who marched for equality, who used their voice to speak for those victims and survivors who have been silenced and who together said, 'Enough is enough.' I was there, I saw you all, I heard you and I want you to know that we support and believe you.

Right now we have a Prime Minister who is failing women. Like so many Queensland women, I have been angry, frustrated and saddened by the words and inaction of our nation's leaders, because if we want respect for women in our community then we need respect for women at the top. Women are not safe—not in their workplaces and not even in the nation's parliament.

I support this motion in its strong condemnation of harassment and assault of women right across Queensland—assault and harassment in their homes, in their communities, in their workplaces and on our streets. I am proud that we have led the way in tackling violence against women. We will continue to look at ways to eliminate harassment and assault for women in our community. We do need the federal government to implement all 55 recommendations in Sex Discrimination Commissioner Kate Jenkins' *Respect@Work* report. That would be a good start. We know that there is always more to do, but we will always look at what more can be done to keep women safe.


This month we established the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce, a task force that will conduct a wideranging review into women's experiences in the criminal justice system. It will look at all issues, from education in our schools, prevention programs and support services to how to remove the many barriers that women face when they come forward and report violence. As a priority, the task force will look at how best to legislate against coercive control, a dangerous form of ongoing oppression used to instil fear in victims. The Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce will also report findings in relation to other areas of women's experiences in the criminal justice system.

We know that this has to be about more than just the law itself. We know that we need to look at everything from attitudinal change to early intervention and prevention to how our service system supports women—how we can make it so that the criminal justice system does not re-traumatise women. This is another step in the right direction to protecting and saving Queensland women's lives. We support you, we hear you and we believe you.

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (2.16 pm): I rise to contribute to this very important motion. As I have said publicly over the last week—and in fact for many years—no form of sexual harassment is ever okay. We need changes to attitudes from men and from women in power. As we in this House stand in a privileged position, it is incumbent on each and every one of us to listen to that next generation about how they believe they are being treated. When they look to their political leaders, irrespective of the side of parliament they represent, they should know that it is not okay to be treated in the manner that at times the women on the coalition side are treated by men in power on the other side of the chamber. I do not make that statement lightly, but I have sat in a position of power as leader of a major political party in this state. I have been treated with disdain and disrespect because I am a female who chose to represent a conservative political party in this state. This is an issue that is above politics. It is incumbent on each and every one of us in this chamber to say that and to understand that that is going on. It is above politics.

I have just had lunch with three incredible future leaders in this great state: Jasmine, Mia and Olivia. I said that I was about to talk on this very important issue. They said to me, 'Our male friends need to be convinced that women are still discriminated against.' That is from the mouth of a 17-year-old girl. 'The boys do not believe it is an issue, and my issue is that I don't feel safe when I leave uni at night.' These are three future leaders in our great state, and that is their young female perspective.


We also need to listen to future leaders such as Mason Black from BBC. His words rang true. We need to make sure that everyone across society knows that women deserve respect. They deserve to feel safe in their home, to feel safe in their workplace and to be respected in the positions they have in this great world of ours. I am very pleased to stand in this chamber and use the position of power that I have—and we all should unite—to condemn these vile actions.

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (2.19 pm): I rise to support the motion. I have been sitting here and thinking about exactly what it is that I want to say in my three minutes. I guess what I do really want to say is that in politics generally it is about timing and numbers. I think the timing is right that we as governments and parliaments around this country and around the world need to do something to call this out. The timing is absolutely perfect.

If we look at the numbers, tens of thousands of women around Australia and here in Brisbane in Queensland marched to say, 'Enough is enough,' and to have the roar of their voices listened to in huge numbers declaring that something needed to be done. I want to congratulate all of those women who took part in the march and say what an honour it was to be standing out there with all of my colleagues like the Premier and those opposite welcoming those women outside the parliament for a peaceful protest. It was disturbing when you read some of the signage that was made with their own hands, as were some of the words that were on those signs, and also disturbing are some of the accounts that we are hearing nearly every single day about what we are learning is happening under the carpet, hidden away, that is now starting to come out. We want to say to those people that they are not alone and they are correct in that enough is enough and that we do stand with them.

I know that we all have stories. Some of us have chosen to share them and some of us have not, but I know that we all would have a story to tell. I have spent all my life working for the equality of women, whether it is paid parental leave, domestic violence leave or equal opportunities at the Anti-Discrimination Commission. I am enjoying my role in education and I absolutely am determined to do what we can to improve education particularly in the area of consent and reporting. We must do better in terms of respectful relationships and the calling out of bad behaviour.

After the march one thing struck me. After the march I was listening to the radio travelling home and a radio commentator was interviewing a woman who had been in the march. They said, 'Okay, you've all marched, tens of thousands of you. What's changing? Where to now? What's going to happen?' They did not get the point. The point is: perpetrators beware. We will not be silent anymore. That is the point. The point is you can continue on the way you are. You can ignore the cultural change that is required. You can ignore the attitudinal changes, but women are uniting and saying, 'We will call this out now when it happens. We will no longer sweep it under the carpet,' because brave women are coming out all over the place. I end by saying this: perpetrators beware.


 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (2.22 pm): I rise to support the motion moved by the Premier of Queensland. There is no doubt that we are at a pivotal moment not only in Queensland but across Australia—a moment which recently saw thousands of people, both men and women, march in the March 4 Justice rallies across cities and towns not only here in Queensland but across Australia and it is a moment that has touched everyone. I want to acknowledge the courage of many of our elected representatives—the members for Nanango and Whitsunday as well as other members opposite such as the members for Waterford, Redcliffe and Bulimba—who have shared stories in the public domain because that has taken a lot of courage as elected representatives to shine a light on this issue.

Many members on both sides of the House have been appalled by the stories that we have heard, and I certainly have been shocked and appalled as well particularly when we think that we all have mothers, many of us have wives or female partners, we have sisters, we have friends who are women and colleagues—I have many medical colleagues who are female as well as fellow parliamentarians—and I am the father of a daughter as well.

To think of some of the instances where people have been sexually harassed, bullied and intimidated with the stories we have heard is just truly shocking. As not only elected representatives but also particularly as men—many of us in this place are fathers—collectively as a society we need to lead cultural change and lead some of the conversations with our sons but also lead by example as elected

representatives. There is a huge amount of work that needs to be done. There have also been leaders across the community—leaders from our QPS, including the commissioner to those other leaders in business, the legal profession and industry—who have shared their stories as well, and I want to acknowledge their courage.

Every single woman, regardless of background, creed, age or religious affiliation, needs to be safe in their workplace and in their community environment. It is not only a right to feel safe; they must actually feel safe. They must be safe in their homes, safe in their workplace and safe in their community as well as being free of discrimination. There is a significant body of work that needs to be undertaken with our schools, and I acknowledge the Labor Minister for Education in relation to the review that is being undertaken with sex education. Time is of the essence when it comes to the recommendations and the time lines of implementation. All school communities must work with parents, other community leaders and other school leaders to ensure that we eliminate sexual harassment, bullying and intimidation from all communities across Queensland and that women feel safe.

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (2.25 pm): It is unfortunate that we should have to move a motion like this in 2021, but I am proud to be able to speak to it. I want to acknowledge all of the contributions of everyone on this important motion. As members would know, I posted my story the day after the march last week because I wanted to give a voice to women in all positions to say that it is okay to speak up and that this is not just something that happened 30 years ago. It has always happened and it continues to happen. If people like me in a position like mine cannot speak up, then how do we expect an 18-year-old being harassed in the workplace today to be willing to share their story? That is why I told my story.

One thing that we have to do in changing the culture out there and talking about respect is talk about what is happening online as well, because people are becoming keyboard warriors which is exacerbating it. Why would women come forward and tell their stories when the harassment online is so appalling? I want to give a couple of examples, and I have asked Amy Remeikis if she minds me saying this and she has given me her support. Amy posted on Twitter—

Just for a moment, imagine what it has been like to be a sexual assault survivor working in Parliament House at the time, listening to this stuff. Doing your job. Calling it out. And then you keep getting stuff like this. All. The. Time.

The response—and I cannot read all of it—is—

the pm is a—

effing—

hero hope u gt raped again and they finsh the job thistime

I would hold this up but I cannot because of the word written across it and the image, but I will take advice from the Clerk as to whether I can table it. In my posts talking about a father of two wanting to kiss me intimately as a 13- or 14-year-old, one response was—

You had a bf at 13?

That is what they took away from my story? How about—

No way she's way to ugly for this to be true

Someone else put—

i thought the same thing

These are some of the other comments—

Must have been a blind man

Another one was—

Oh for gods sake, get over yourself. there are children being raped and females being abused or raped ... thousands of people male and female have been kissed or touched ... hope they aren't all going to come out whinging when many others have serious issues to deal with.

Yet another was—

Here we go ..

She must have seen the money after 30 years ..

Yet another—

Bla bla bla, it was 3 decades ago, shut up

And another—

Oh boo hoo she was harassed


And another—

Must have been desperate

And another—

d'ath is a waste of space ... & if they harassed her it was because she was a super ugly bottle blonde!!!!

These are just some of the comments, and they wonder why women will not speak up. This is appalling behaviour. If they want something current, how about two years ago when as the attorney-general I was groped by an international judge at a conference in this parliament? This is still happening today. It has to stop.


 **Ms CAMM** (Whitsunday—LNP) (2.28 pm): Just listening to members in this House from all sides, it is abhorrent what some have had to endure and I acknowledge the courage of the member for Redcliffe and other members in this House—the member for Cooper, the member for Waterford, the member for Gaven, the member for Nanango, myself and others—and I also acknowledge those members who chose not to tell their story publicly. For the public record even I edited and pulled back because of the harsh reality of what many here have had to face—that is, the social media trolling and the further victimisation and disrespect.

We sit back and wonder why women will not come forward and tell their stories. We have all experienced it. This is a watershed moment for Queensland, it is a watershed moment for women, it is a watershed moment for our society. I too am proud to speak in support of this motion. I acknowledge Brittany Higgins and her courage and Grace Tame who has been nothing but an inspiration to women across our nation.

I also acknowledge the men who have stood in solidarity with women and who have come forward and spoken out in support of women, in support for the March 4 Justice and in support for equity and respect. In particular I pay my respects to Mason Black from Brisbane Boys' College for his speech, 'The narrative needs to change'. He has provided an important tool to open up a conversation. As a mother of young men it has been inspiring to be able to have that dialogue in the context that they understand. I thank him for his courage.

I also acknowledge across my own community the local services of the Mackay Women's Centre and the North Queensland Women's Legal Service who I had an amazing afternoon with. They had organised their own March 4 Justice in Queensland.

As a conservative LNP woman I would also like to state on the record that I am appalled at what has happened in Canberra. I am appalled at staffers for behaviour that is just hard to believe. It is not acceptable. It is not acceptable as a conservative woman, it is not acceptable as a woman and it is not acceptable as a human being.


 **Hon. MAJ SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Youth Affairs) (2.31 pm): I rise to support the motion put forward by the Premier. I join with my Gold Coast colleague, Karen Andrews, in saying that I too have had a gutful of the way that the system continues to treat women in this country. I am the Minister for Youth Affairs and want to place on the record my contribution in relation to the huge numbers of young women in particular who every day are the victims of sexual assault. Every day they continue to be victims in this country because of a large proportion of male perpetrators.

I want to acknowledge the Minister for Education for her work and commitment to review the respectful relationships program within schools. At every school that I go to I hear from young women, and men as well, who want to know how they can engage in respectful relationships, in school and in their workplaces, in a dignified and respectful manner.

I acknowledge the shared stories that have been put forward by those opposite, by members of our front bench and by the backbench as well. I acknowledge also the women who have not been able to come forward and share their stories for many reasons. I think it is important in this debate that we acknowledge that there are still some very fundamental issues around why people do not share their stories, such as domestic and family violence. I think we are seeing some big issues at a national level around domestic violence leave and the need for women to be able to take leave from work to make sure that those perpetrators are held to account. I think it is also important that we acknowledge the

gender pay gap and why it is women feel they cannot leave disrespectful relationships. There are women in the early education sector and in the aged sector who, unfortunately, due to finances have to put up with this appalling behaviour time and time again.


I also acknowledge that on both sides we have had some contributions about the need for women in leadership. I agree with the Minister for Health that there needs to be some systemic change around the way that people refer to women in positions of authority, both in this House and on boards. I have had instances where people have left disgusting notes on my car or they have written disgusting things online. During the campaign I had a volunteer from one of my opposing parties write the most vile content on community pages. When we continue to allow this sort of conduct to occur we make it okay for every other person in our community to continue with this behaviour. It is incumbent on everyone in this House to call out bad behaviour regardless of what political party they are affiliated with.

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (2.34 pm): Quite simply, anyone who believes that a voice is less important based on gender is on a one-way track to mediocrity. Anyone who believes that they or their gender hold all the answers is on a one-way track to failure. Some would say that it is patronising for a male to speak on behalf of women fighting for equality, so I will speak as a father and a husband. My message to other men is a simple one and it is that every male needs to look upon their actions and words towards women as if those actions or words were being spoken to or done to their sister, their daughter, their wife or their mother. We as males must apply the same test to the actions of other men.

Undoubtedly 15 March 2021 will go down in history. For any person—man, woman or child—to have not been aware of the March 4 Justice is almost impossible. I want to add my voice to the message that enough is enough. What we saw on that day was confirmation that discrimination based on gender is something that we as a community must assign to the pages of history alongside other forms of discrimination. I cannot speak on behalf of the participants. I cannot say that I fully understand the effects felt by women who are discriminated against because I am a male, but what I will say is that the vast majority of men fully support equality, that the vast majority of men stand against violence against women in any of its forms and that the vast majority of men utterly condemn inappropriate treatment of women whether that be of a sexual or any other nature.

Discrimination or inequality in any of its forms is quite simply a failure to achieve our full potential as a group, as a community, as a state and as a nation. While we must actively speak against and oppose discrimination and inequality, we must always acknowledge the benefits of inclusion. We have an obligation to ensure that all women are treated equally, that they are able to reach their full potential; the same goal that we have for our wives, our daughters, our sisters and our mothers. We do not need to guide or lift women to reach their potential, but we do need to ensure the way is clear for them to do exactly that. The reason for doing it is simply that it is the right thing to do.

As a state, as a nation, as a community and as men we have work to do and it is work that must be done for the benefit of every man, woman and child in this country. For me there is a very simple message here and that is respect: respect for women, for who they are, what they can achieve and what they contribute. When you look at this chamber and the contribution that the female members make to this parliament, you truly understand how valuable that is.


 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumbidgee—ALP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning) (2.37 pm): It was very moving for me to join so many of my colleagues from the government at the March 4 Justice rally last week. The last few weeks have been challenging for our community. I was distressed to read about the experiences of my colleagues who are also very close friends. It has taken incredible bravery for these women to tell their stories. I admire them even more now. It is shocking how widespread this treatment of women is by men. It is so widespread that for every story told there are hundreds that may never be told. This behaviour at work and everywhere else cannot be accepted any longer. The way to change behaviours and culture has to start with leadership. It has to start at the top.

The Sex Discrimination Commissioner published a very detailed report about sexual harassment. She made 55 recommendations. It has been left gathering dust on a shelf somewhere. Surely if the Prime Minister were serious about this issue that would be a pretty good place to start. He has the recommendations; he just has to implement them. Until we see real policy change it is just more political spin.

The Prime Minister should have gone out and met the March 4 Justice protesters at their request. He should have met them in a place where they felt safe, not in a place where he felt safe. Even John Howard met with pro-gun protesters, wearing a bulletproof vest because of threats of violence. These women never threatened to shoot the Prime Minister; he should not have demanded that they be

grateful he did not shoot at them. He should not have needed his wife to tell him that rape was bad. He should not have reacted as a father; he should have reacted as a human. He should not have disclosed an allegation he was either aware of or made up about another person in another organisation because he did not like a question at a press conference. He should not have lied about when and what he knew about the Porter allegations. The government should have believed and looked after Brittany; they should not have sent in the cleaners and they should not have briefed against her in the media.


The Leader of the Opposition is toying with the idea of a quota and quotas matter, but culture and leadership do too. It is not good enough for people to experience things like this in the workplace, in their homes or in the community and anything I can do to support women I will do. I commit to doing whatever I can to support change and justice for women.

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (2.40 pm): To a large extent the events of recent weeks have shocked many in our community and, in particular, I think they have shocked many men by exposing behaviour that is utterly incomprehensible and utterly unacceptable. On no planet is it understandable, funny, appropriate or acceptable for men to behave in the way that we have seen in the past month. It has unleashed a torrent that we have all felt in our electorates, in the broader community and in our homes. Certainly it has for me. I have reflected on my time as a student both at school and at university, as a young lawyer and as a member of this place. I have reflected on some of the things that I have done, which I now see are not the way things should have been.

We have shared the experiences of those close to us: our friends, our families and our colleagues. I pay particular tribute to those in this place now and those who have been in this place—and I think of my friend Kate Jones—who have stood to tell stories that cannot have been easy to tell. I pay tribute to all the women who have shared their stories. I hope that as a result of those stories being told we will have a better community for women and that includes my 18-year-old daughter Kate.

Kate enjoys a full, happy and, dare I say it, privileged life. She went to a good school and has had a great education. She has great friends. As far I am aware, she is blissfully free from any of the troubles and traumas that we have heard about. But even she has hooked into and sent me text messages about the events of the last weeks. I hope things will be better for my 20- and 21-year-old sons. They will have a better life and live in a better community if their female friends have a better life and live in a better community. Our society will be better in so many ways in terms of community, work and family when women are afforded the same rights as men.

I say to all men that being a man does not mean it is okay to mistreat women. It does not mean it is okay to objectify and denigrate. Being a man means behaving properly, with respect, care and decency. Being a man means standing up and being counted in this debate. Finally, being a man means setting the example—not denying the problem—by standing beside and working with women for the change in attitude and behaviour that will see women feel able to participate in community life free from the fear of assault, intimidation and unwanted and unwarranted physical contact. That is being a man.


 **Hon. ML FURNER** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities) (2.44 pm): There is a movement for change and that change is much needed. I commend all the women from right across the nation and around the world who are seeking that change. They are seeking change for a better life—a life that should not have to be asked for, but a life that is warranted. While we should not be here today speaking on such a motion because these things should be granted, I am proud to speak on the motion moved by our Premier.

In 2008, upon entering the Commonwealth Senate as a Queensland senator, I did not hesitate when I was asked to become a white ribbon ambassador. I wear that badge with honour and pride. There are people in our society I do not refer to as ‘men’ but as ‘males’ because real men do not commit violence against women. Real men stand up and support women. Real men speak out against the perpetrators of violence and they speak up for the change that we need in our society.

One of the most enjoyable times in my life before entering politics was when I was a union official representing workers in many different workplaces. Unfortunately, many of the workers I represented were women who were violated, generally by supervisors, in their workplaces. I will never forget one particular workplace in Toowoomba. It was a small ice-cream manufacturing plant that is no longer around. A supervisor would call on women to climb ladders so that he could perv at their underwear while they changed machinery. He demeaned them and their involvement in that workplace.

That is why I believe that in our society all good men—separating them from ‘males’—need to ensure that women have the voice that they rightly deserve and that all women are treated with respect. The member for Moggill picked up on an important point that I also want to raise, which is that we all come from women. We all have mothers. For the life of me I cannot understand why a male would


commit violence against a woman and I never will. However, I will make sure that my voice is loud in support of women not only in this place and other workplaces but also in society as a whole. I will do that until I have no breath left in my body.

 **Dr MacMAHON** (South Brisbane—Grn) (2.47 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Premier's motion to uphold the safety of women in Queensland. I was proud to join the March 4 Justice last week, along with many of my Greens colleagues and other members of parliament, calling for justice for victim/survivors of sexual assault, changes to our justice system and an economy and society where everyone, including all women, have access to the services they need to lead a good life. In a wealthy state like Queensland there is no reason why women should go without housing or struggle to access health care, justice, jobs and education.

Currently there are at least 15,000 women and girls waiting for social housing in Queensland. That is 15,000 women and girls without a safe place to call home. It is 15,000 women and girls sleeping rough or sleeping in insecure dwellings and waiting, sometimes for years, for the safety and security they deserve. Women aged over 55 are among the fastest growing group of homeless across the country. The reliance on the private market to provide safe housing, which is something that both sides of the chamber have been pushing for decades, has well and truly failed. Rental vacancy rates are at 10-year lows, rents are skyrocketing and mortgage stress was at record highs just in October. We know that the lack of affordable housing is a huge factor that deters women from leaving unsafe relationships.

We also need to acknowledge the unique challenges faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women in Queensland who are still facing racism, discrimination, disproportionate levels of child removals, over-representation in prison, a lack of housing and barriers to health and education. I acknowledge the incredible work of women and elders on the front lines of First Nations struggles across this state.

In closing my contribution in support of this motion I say that, if the government is serious about supporting all women across Queensland to be safe in their homes and communities and is serious about meeting the calls from the thousands who marched last week, we need urgent reforms in our legal system and urgent investment in social housing in Queensland.

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (2.49 pm): I rise to fully support the motion moved by the Premier. I acknowledge the very courageous contributions from my colleagues across the spectrum and their personal stories. I acknowledge the support of the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Whitsunday and others for the motion.

Despite substantial advances for women in my adult lifetime—we have had two women premiers, an opposition leader, a prime minister, two governors, a chief justice and a governor-general—for those who support equal rights for women and for all people it is sobering to hear the stories of so many women and know that there are so many instances of sexual harassment and violence to this day, including rape. It is shocking. It is known to many people, but I think more people understand now than did a fortnight ago.

Between now and equality stand all too many perpetrators in our community who are so disconnected from others, who are so disdainful of women and who are ultimately fearful of women. Who are these perpetrators? They are men who shun real and actual intimacy and try to force their selfish, one-sided desires on others against their will. They are small men who take out their underdevelopment and their fear on others, damaging them in the process. Being a man is not about enforcing your will on women. That is not being male; that is succumbing to hatred. That is what this is about: hatred and people exercising it. Ignoring the will of others via sexual harassment and violence is criminal. It is not masculine. We have to do better as men. Sadly, we see it across the spectrum and across classes. We can do much better as a society and a community.

The question is: what must be done? Obviously, we clearly need to strengthen our legal system so that women can be better supported when crimes have been committed against them by perpetrators. We need to prevent it in the first place. To men in particular I say: we need to speak up for women every single time we see hatred being pushed forward by other men, particularly when it is only men together. When men share sexist jokes or practise ridicule of women in the presence of other men, those other men must stand up and enforce the standard that we support our women—that we support our daughters, our sisters, our wives and our partners. It is not good enough. Whether it is at the footy, on the street, on the bus or train or even on holiday, we have to stand up for equality every single time and set a higher standard. That is what we should do. Evil prospers when good people do nothing. We, as men, need to stand up for our women every single time and raise the standard.



Mr MINNIKIN (Chatsworth—LNP) (2.52 pm): I stand before the House today as a passionate ally and supporter of the courageous women, non-binary folk and men who exercised their democratic right to march last week in the Brisbane March 4 Justice. I won the lottery in life being born to a remarkably strong, intelligent and compassionate woman—my mother, Denise. Over the years she has told me about the entrenched sexism she experienced as a woman in Brisbane in the sixties and seventies. However, this attitudinal culture was not just entrenched with her generation; the issue has continued to persist through to today.

I would like to share the story of my dear friend Lauren, who is representative of the frustration and anger that many women continue to feel across society. Lauren is a tall, red-headed lady who was photographed holding a sign that proclaimed '#MeToo 1988. I was only 19' and featured prominently in the footage of the march in both local and national media. It was the first time she had ever participated in a protest march and the first time she had ever publicly identified herself as a survivor of sexual assault. I say 'survivor' rather than 'victim' because she is one of the bravest and most tenacious people I have ever met. I am in awe of her resilience and quiet dignity over decades of trauma and challenges.

Lauren was an intelligent, ambitious and optimistic young Air Force officer when she was raped by fellow officers—air crew, no less—within a week of her arrival at her Air Force base back in 1988. As a young woman serving in the military, she was often treated as a commodity to be either toyed with or tolerated rather than as an equal. Her story is one that is regrettably all too common in our society. I have had firsthand knowledge as her friend of the trauma and injustice that women like Lauren have endured for decades.

The voices of women like Lauren and their allies, of whom I proudly count myself as one, are being heard more loudly now because they have had enough. The insidious rape culture, sexual harassment, sexist microaggressions, structural disempowerment and systems of patriarchal oppression that have endured for centuries in one form or another have no place in modern society. They have to stop now.

We need to understand that misogyny and sexism are not a spectrum or a sliding scale of harm, with off-colour blokey jokes at one end and the rape and murder of women at the other. They are in fact part of a system where minor acts committed or tolerated by many people prop up and sustain a culture that enables egregious abuse of privilege and physical power.

We need to recognise that women are more than just our wives, partners, mothers and daughters. They are no longer society's handmaidens. They are individuals who deserve to be able to live, work and enjoy their lives in public spaces without fear of violence, harassment and disadvantage. We need to take them seriously and hear their concerns. We, as elected representatives, need to listen more and understand the important role we must play in dismantling systems of oppression and disadvantage, of levelling the playing field so that it is not just fair but also equitable and safe for all.



Hon. DE FARMER (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development) (2.55 pm): I have often thought the importance of leadership is underrated. Leaders of all kinds, not just political leaders, can play a role in setting the culture around what is right and wrong and in reflecting the sort of society we want to be. We have enormous opportunity to exhort those around us to be the best they can be but, equally, to reinforce the worst. When you translate that to the situation unfolding before us, as we all have over the last few weeks watched in horror, you see that the importance of leadership could not be more critical.


There is a wall of anger building against the Prime Minister as every single day, by his words and actions, he shows us that it is simply not in him to understand the issue of disrespect towards women, the pervasive experiences of sexual violence, sexual discrimination and harassment experienced by so many women. These things are like a foreign language to him. When women and men marched on 4 March he said, 'You're lucky we didn't shoot you.' When Tanya Plibersek presented the petition from more than 135,000 people asking him to take action, he got up and walked out. When Brittany Higgins aired rape allegations, his staff briefed journalists against her and her partner. When women and men rose up with a growing voice about the culture of Parliament House, he asked his wife what he should say. He asks women to stand with him, but he will not stand with them.

The Prime Minister's every utterance over the last few weeks has brought many of us to outrage and despair. If you are a woman who has been a victim of sexual violence, every word the Prime Minister has said would be like a stab in the heart. If you are a woman who never disclosed because you did not think anyone would believe you, because you thought you would be ostracised by your peers, because you worried that people would say it was your fault because you were wearing a short

skirt or you were drunk or you were flirting, because what would be the point because nothing would happen anyway?—if you were one of those women, you would be shattered. By his actions, the Prime Minister of this country is saying, 'You made the right decision not to disclose. We run a boys club here and don't you forget it.'

Some of the statistics around Australians' attitudes towards sexual assault and discrimination are frightening. Some 21 per cent agree that since some women are so sexual in public it is not surprising that some men think they can touch women without permission. Some 33 per cent agree that rape results from men not being able to control their need for sex. Some 42 per cent say that it is common for sexual assault accusations to be used as a way of getting back at men.


The Prime Minister and all of us—it is just fantastic to see that we are as one on this—need to show support through our words and actions. We need to join the tens of thousands of people across Australia who are saying, 'Those attitudes are not right. That is not the Australia we want to be.' If we do not do that, this thing will never stop.

 **Mr McDONALD** (Lockyer—LNP) (2.58 pm): Much has been said recently about the victims of sexual violence in Australia. While it is critical that the brave women who have been given their voice get the opportunity to tell their stories, it is critically important that their stories not just be heard but be believed. There is a huge difference. I would like to take this opportunity to discuss the perpetrators of sexual violence and, importantly, a culture that allows that to continue.

It is time to face facts. In Australia one in five women have been sexually assaulted or threatened since the age of 15, while one in two will have experienced sexual harassment in that same period. These are horrifying statistics. However, the one that horrifies me the most is that 97 per cent of sexual assaults and offenses in Queensland are committed by men. It is easy for many men to shy away from this fact and say, 'I have not attacked anyone' or 'It is not my problem', but the fact is, like it or not, we are all part of the problem. For generations men have prided themselves on working towards a fairer and more equitable society, yet each and every day women around our country are abused, raped, psychologically vilified and denied the basic rights that we take for granted. This needs to change.

The culture that breeds this behaviour is ingrained within the daily lives of men and that needs to change. Whether it be immature behaviour in the schoolyard, lewd remarks in the classroom or change room at a local sporting club, inappropriate advances upon women in the workplace, we are all guilty of allowing this behaviour to continue. I am sure every man in this House will at some point have heard or seen an inappropriate remark made about a woman and done nothing about it. This cannot continue.

We cannot be perfect, but we can educate ourselves and our community to stand up for what is right and do all that we can to fight this culture. Our actions speak volumes. While we turn a blind eye to our own failings and fail to take responsibility for them, we are silent. Ignorance may be bliss, but the time for ignorance has long since passed. I call on men everywhere to stand up, acknowledge your mistakes and take responsibility to ensure our next generation of young men do not continue to make the same mistakes. Good leadership sets a good culture. We must see a culture that does not include any of this inappropriate behaviour. We must see men and women in our community champion good leadership.


 **Mrs McMAHON** (Macalister—ALP) (3.01 pm): I rise to support the motion. I was proud to join many Macalister constituents, amongst the thousands, at the Brisbane March 4 Justice last Monday. I was proud to see our Premier and cabinet members meeting marchers at the end. Women were angry when they took to the streets, but the incandescent rage that emanated after our Prime Minister's response was overwhelming. The tone deaf remarks about such marches that are met with bullets in other countries was astounding. Like many women, we are used to the gaslighting. We know what that means. We heard it: 'I have allowed you to have your say and I have not hit you, beaten you or shot you; what a great guy I am.'

The statistics are staggering regarding the experience of women and sexual harassment and sexual assault in this country. I look to those women who have had the strength to come forward to talk about their experiences and I applaud their courage. When it comes to this experience, I have to say that I am no different. Given my previous employment in some of the most male dominated, testosterone-filled workplaces in the country, that would not be surprising to anyone here. I could stand here for an entire sitting week and not just three minutes talking about this. I put on a uniform at the age of 18 and I thought I was prepared. After all, I had already learnt at far too young an age that no good comes from being a female or appearing feminine. I adjusted my outlook on the world accordingly. I thought I was prepared.

At 21 years old being a trainee in a police car, I could count on one hand how many times I worked with another female in a car for an eight-hour shift. I was asked on a number of occasions by my senior male training officers up-front, at the start of the shift whether I was a dyke or a bike. In that first year I knew my place and how I was regarded by some of my colleagues—I was an object of disdain or otherwise.

It would take 16 years in the Army before I had a female commanding officer, and that opened my eyes. The calling out of the behaviour of my peers that she did was alien to me at the time. I had internalised it and I just outright expected it. I cannot thank her enough for opening my eyes.

Strange as it may seem given current circumstances, but the world of politics here in Queensland in this Labor government has been the most female dominated, safe and welcoming environment I have ever worked in. That of course does not take into account the commentary I hear over my shoulder on a regular basis. I support this motion.


 **Ms LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (3.04 pm): As the first female member elected to the state seat of Warrego since Federation, I rise to contribute to the debate supporting women. Firstly, I wish to acknowledge the members of parliament from both sides of this House who have spoken out to detail their own personal stories of sexual harassment and assault. I know there are also many other women who have rallied against violence and poor behaviour towards women.

There are women who every year in my electorate volunteer to raise awareness in our community of violence against women during the annual 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence. These women do not get their names in the paper, but they try to make a difference. They do, however, do a tremendous job creating community awareness about the issues that impact women and how change can happen.

These local women call out inappropriate behaviour against women locally, nationally and globally. They are the members of the Zonta clubs in Roma and Dalby and the club members around the world. I want to make mention of these women in this House because of the community service work they do to try to make a difference for women. I have been privileged to work with these women, particularly those in the Roma Zonta club, as a member on their campaigns to eliminate violence against women and improve outcomes for women and children.

Time in this debate will not permit me to name them all. I specifically want to acknowledge Heather Hall whose unwavering commitment to volunteering over many years for the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence is just amazing. Heather, your drive and energy is such an inspiration. Many people will meet Heather. When people do, I think they should commend her for what she does. I also want to mention Ree Price, Teresa Bradery, Ninette Johnstone, Wendy Jensen, Sue Sands, Christina Waldron, Megan Devlin and my dear friend Kell Freeman. These women contribute to the local public awareness campaigns to raise awareness of how one in four women today endure some type of physical or mental abuse in their own home. There is so much more to do.

The disappointing behaviour we have seen from our nation's capital shows just how much more work there is to do. There needs to be much more respect for others—for men and women—in our communities. There is a solution that will however be achieved by women and men working together respectfully for better outcomes.


 **Ms BUSH** (Cooper—ALP) (3.07 pm): What we are seeing right now is a clear and urgent message for women to be heard and for action to occur in relation to the experience of women in Australia. Women have also been emboldened by the stories of survivors—people like our 2021 Australian of the Year, Grace Tame, and Brittany Higgins who have highlighted the challenges for survivors in reporting sexual violence. I am so proud to now be part of a government that has led the nation in tackling violence, including sexual violence against women.

The landmark *Not now, not ever* report was critical in building the foundations to our latest announcement in establishing the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce. I commend the Premier and the Attorney-General for their leadership in this space. We as parliamentarians, women and men led by the Premier, marched and stood with the 10,000 people in Brisbane who marched for justice. It is leadership that perhaps our Prime Minister could learn from.

As I said last week, this nation is on fire with the experience of women in Australia. The Prime Minister may not hold the hose but he certainly controls the faucet. Rather than try to soothe and see the pain of women, he stood in Parliament House and essentially told us to be grateful because we could march without being gunned down. The Prime Minister goes home and privately questions 'What if this were my daughter?' rather than publicly challenge us to consider for one moment, 'What if these perpetrators were my sons?'

This is a Prime Minister who allows a member of his cabinet to take time off to deal with his mental health needs and his defamation case while simultaneously asking women to dip into their superannuation to fund their own escape from domestic violence. This is a Prime Minister who yesterday publicly stood up and urged women to come forward and report, saying, in one breath, 'You will be protected,' and, in the next, divulging an alleged harassment investigation in front of the nation's media without gaining consent from the complainant. But it gets worse: the media outlet named by the Prime Minister in this allegation has now stated there is no current complaint.

Where did the Prime Minister get his information from? It was reported to him by someone—we do not know who—the evening before. Perhaps the Prime Minister should have done his due diligence and looked into the substance of this claim before speaking out. Oh, but wait—of course, we know that he does not need to look at the detail. He does not need to read the dossier. He can just take someone's word for it that an event either did or did not happen depending on what is convenient. With this coming out of our highest office, it is no wonder we marched. I support this motion.


 **Mrs GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (3.10 pm): Rape, sexual abuse, sexual assault, sexual harassment—these are the actions that March 4 Justice demonstrators were rallying against. I stand with them. Sexual violence is never okay.

The experiences of Grace Tame and Brittany Higgins are not isolated. Almost every woman has this story. I have this story. I have felt shame for not sharing it, but I cannot—and that is part of the problem. I want to give a voice to women who have not felt like they can share their story. Their story matters too. You are no less important and this is no less about you because you cannot say what happened. You are survivors of sexual violence and you always will be, and this is what this motion is about.

I acknowledge and I thank the thousands of Queenslanders who participated in the recent nationwide March 4 Justice rally. I stand with every member in this chamber and I condemn the harassment and assault of women. I support all women in their right to feel safe in their homes, in their workplaces and in their communities.

We have heard so many experiences of women, of children and of the vulnerable who have been violated by sexual predators. If one thing resounds louder than anything else, it is that now is the time for change and action. Brisbane Boys' College captain Mason Black sums it up when he said, 'I wish I grew up in an Australia where the narrative that one in three women will be physically or sexually abused at some point in their life wasn't true, but it is.'

Hear in this chamber from members on both sides we have heard experiences of sexual assault. The whole chamber is united in support of this motion. We are at the epicentre of Queensland politics. We have the ability to see change enacted, and I want to be part of that change. I stand here in support of all women.

 **Ms KING** (Pumicestone—ALP) (3.12 pm): These last weeks have seen an avalanche of women's stories. Brittany Higgins has bravely spoken truth to power. We have heard brutal rape allegations against the Commonwealth Attorney-General and the Prime Minister's pallid response to them. We have heard how federal coalition staffers flaunted their foul disrespect for female MPs in their own party. Today we have heard reports of Senator Eric Abetz's slut-shaming of Brittany Higgins.

Women absolutely deserve to be safe. They deserve to be respected in their homes, in their workplaces and in their community. Women in Pumicestone have shared their stories. I have those stories. My loved ones have those stories. The stories just keep coming. This has been happening forever.


I say to the men of this House today: please stop saying you are shocked. Women are not shocked by these stories. This is our experience. This is our lives. If you must be shocked, be shocked by the Prime Minister's conduct yesterday. He said he cared about women and their safety. He said he was listening to women. Then, like a toddler throwing a tantrum when he did not get a cookie, the Prime Minister weaponised a woman's private confidential workplace matter and threw her under the bus to score a cheap political point and issue a threat against a journalist. It was disgraceful. It was disgusting. Then on 2GB this morning the Prime Minister said, 'Blokes don't get it right all the time.' That sounds a lot like 'boys will be boys' to me—again, disgusting.

The Prime Minister cries crocodile tears but he just does not get it. I say to those opposite: do not say this is above politics. Politics is at the very heart of this. I remind those opposite of some major obstacles to women being safe and respected. Stripping women of their reproductive rights makes us

less safe. Winding back industrial protections makes us less safe. Cutting domestic and family violence services makes us less safe. Destroying the Family Court makes us less safe. So much of what the LNP and the federal coalition stand for, the things they do in government, make women and girls less safe.

We have heard the Leader of the Opposition say he wants to see more women elected, but the proof in that particular pudding will be whether the Leader of the Opposition commits to quotas to guarantee women winnable seats. On this side of the House we would love to see more diverse faces on the other side of the chamber. The federal member for McPherson says she wants to talk about quotas but she is worried that LNP men will say that women are not there on merit. I ask now, if those opposite back women: which of you are prepared to stand up and stand aside to give more women a go, to get more women into your caucus and into parliament? Like the Prime Minister, those opposite are talking big for women, but will they back it up with support for quotas and with policies that support women?

(Time expired)

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (3.15 pm): I rise to speak to the motion moved by the Premier, Anastacia Palaszczuk. We are lucky to live in a democratic country with the freedom to speak freely and voice our opinion on issues we feel strongly about. We as MPs are the fortunate few who have the opportunity to speak in this parliament on issues such as this and to place our thoughts on the public record.

Watching the thousands of Queenslanders who rallied to express their views on equality and justice for all women was inspiring. Women and men of all ages and backgrounds stood together letting us know how they felt about women being treated with disrespect and how they were advocating for change now—not tomorrow, but now. Their message was heard loud and clear by all of us.


I was lucky enough to have had a very strong female influence as I was growing up—that was my mother. We became even closer after my father passed away, leaving us to manage the property where we both lived. She is still my sounding-board and I value her measured wisdom, depth of knowledge and understanding on many and varied topics.

No-one should feel vulnerable to negative impacts of another in their home, workplace or community. We should all feel safe. This is even more so for the women in our state, nation and the world. We need to ensure women are equal to their male counterparts and have the opportunity to feel free to voice any injustices they may have been subjected to.

I hold my female parliamentary colleagues in high regard and have always worked willingly and with great respect alongside them—on both sides of the chamber. I may not always agree with the policy position of those opposite but have always treated them with respect, and none of them can deny that. The female parliamentary staff I worked with during my time serving on committees were proficient and capable. I have a very high opinion and regard for their professionalism and knowledge.

In any given week I associate and communicate with females in my work environment, my social environment and my family environment. At all times I value their input and appreciate their contribution to our society. Since I entered parliament the Condamine electorate staff have been all female, with the exception of one male for a period of about 18 months. These ladies have been invaluable to the smooth operation of my office and the constituency I represent. Their empathy, kindness and understanding towards all people who come into the office for assistance and guidance have been an inspiration to me.

The events of the last few weeks have highlighted the injustices in many workplaces—and there are many. I made a comment to a minister opposite at a dinner we went to only a couple of nights ago about the lack of female representation. There is much work to do.

 **Hon. SJ STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (Minister for Resources) (3.18 pm): I rise to support today's motion and with it the thousands of Queenslanders who participated in the March 4 Justice. Not only in Brisbane did they demand change but also right across Queensland. In fact, in my electorate of Townsville the message was as clear as a bell. More than 120 of our cities' residents marched and called upon our federal member with a list of recommendations and a petition calling for change.


I stand with them in calling for change. I stand with the courageous women who have shared their stories of sexual assault, violence and harassment. They are united by personal experiences that none wanted and in seeking justice and action. I stand in solidarity with them. It is on all women and

men—all women and men—to stand together to effect cultural and generational change. We all need to stand up and say that we will not allow this behaviour to happen—not on our watch. It is time for justice, accountability and equality. I do this as a husband; I do it as a father; I do it as a son; but I also do it as a brother and an uncle. We all need to stand together.

As North Queensland Women's Legal Service solicitor Danielle O'Connor said, 'The harmful attitudes and behaviours towards women, they must stop, they cannot continue any longer.' I stand here today amongst my colleagues as we condemn harassment and assault. We do so because this government supports women across Queensland and their right to be safe.


I heard the member for Condamine talk about the women who have been strong and important in his life, and it reminded me that I too have been surrounded by some great women over my time, whether it is my own family or some of the strong female principals I have worked with, including a strong Premier and a number of her ministers. They have influenced me and my life and I appreciate everything they have done for me.

Stories of assault and harassment have been shared already by those in Canberra and our colleagues in this chamber. It is now time for the federal government to rise up, to listen and to take action. I hope the stories of survivors bring about real—real—ongoing change in our homes, workplaces and, more importantly, in our communities. Enough is more than enough.

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (3.21 pm): I rise to make a brief contribution in support of the Premier's motion. I, like other members here, was really proud to attend the March 4 Justice. It was a real privilege to be there and hear such powerful words spoken by victims, survivors and advocates. I want to express my thanks to everyone who turned out, everyone who spoke and especially to all those people who organised it, because I have no doubt that the hidden labour that went into organising that rally was largely done by women, as so much of it is more broadly across society.

On a personal note, I want to say how especially proud I was to hear my wife address that rally. That day she did not speak to her own experience of sexual assault and harassment; she spoke representing Children by Choice and directly to the relatively recent progress we have seen in advancing women's reproductive rights here in Queensland. It really helps us put into perspective just how painfully and unacceptably slow progress is on women's rights, not just here in Queensland but globally, and how extraordinarily hard we need to keep working to dismantle the patriarchy that has us stuck in this rut. There are centuries of legal and social patterns that need to be disrupted. It took almost 50 years of advocacy on the part of Children by Choice to finally see abortion decriminalised in Queensland, and that is something that I think we here should all be very proud of. More than anything we should be thankful to them for the work they put into it.

I want to thank Daile and the many other people in my life who have helped me understand more deeply what it means to be a good ally and to help me recognise that each and every one of us can do better. Each of us who enjoys privilege of any kind needs to recognise that we sit somewhere on a sliding scale of complicity as the owners of privilege, and as the occupiers of that privilege we are to some extent complicit in its perseverance. It is important to acknowledge as well that, as men, we do not deserve a medal. We do not reserve recognition for simply being an ally or for taking steps to call out rape culture. Each and every one of us needs to recognise that, if just being a decent human being is somehow noteworthy, it should tell us how low the bar is for men and just how far we have to go to see that course corrected.


 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (3.24 pm): I would like to start by thanking my colleagues right across the chamber for sharing their stories over the last week. I was moved to tears at the rally I attended along with many members of this House from right across the political divide. As I held my baby girl in my arms thousands of people sang together, 'I am woman, hear me roar.' I thank Brittany, Grace, Kate, Saxon and the women who paved the way for this movement with their stories. They have made such a difference. I knew that, standing at that rally with members of this House and the community at large, things are finally fundamentally changing and men are beginning to comprehend the magnitude of what it means to walk through this world—or even just down the street—as a woman.

I spoke to some of the men in my life, particularly my dad, a fair bit over the last few weeks. I hate to say it, member for Pumicestone, but he was truly shocked by the scale of this issue. I know that a lot of men have started asking their female friends and partners if they have experienced this kind of thing, and they have been shocked by the answer because they never asked the question before. When I spoke to my dad on Saturday last week he sounded almost despondent as he realised that almost every woman he knows has a story.

I know that men like to have a job to do. It is the best way they know how to help, so here it is. If you can do one thing—just one thing—to stop this disgraceful behaviour, if you want to show solidarity with women and what they have been through, you can do one simple thing as a starting point. When you hear misogynist comments, when you read them on a Facebook page, when you hear blokes slut-shaming a woman, say clearly, publicly and without equivocation, 'Hey, that's not okay.' I know it is a hard thing to do. It is a small thing, but it is a hard thing. It is embarrassing, but this behaviour starts early and we need to stamp it out. We cannot do that without strong male allies and we need you to step up. There is no acceptable level of misogyny. There are things you can do as men; there are actions you can take. It does not start and stop with not sexually harassing or assaulting women. That is the bare minimum.


As leader of this country Scott Morrison has failed this test. Only now is he even entertaining the idea of quotas. Quotas work; we can see that on this side of the House. In my first term in parliament an elected male member of the LNP told me that I am only here because of a quota in this House. Every single member of this House is elected by their community through grit and hard work. Many of us do it while balancing family responsibilities—especially, but not exclusively, women. We earned our place here just as you did. That is a great place to start: acknowledge that women have earned the right to be here.

I will finish with a word to the trolls who like to target women in positions of leadership and who I am sure will be all over the comments page of the media coverage of this motion: we are coming for you first. Your days hiding under rocks are numbered, and I know that Queenslanders will call you out when they see your disgusting comments online and when they hear them from your mouths.

 **Mr SMITH** (Bundaberg—ALP) (3.27 pm): Many social threads weave together our social fabric. When we allow a thread to unravel, by omission we contribute to the ripping apart of the social fabric that should uphold the rights of all in our communities. It is our responsibility in this House to uphold those rights and to speak up in order for those rights to be respected and observed. When addressing the right of women to not be victims in a phallographic society, it is the responsibility of each of us in this House to go back to our community and have a discussion concerning what is and what is not acceptable. It is our responsibility to have such discussions in our schools, community support groups, charity organisations and along our main streets with all constituents in our electorates.

This motion asks the House to condemn harassment and assault against women across Queensland and support all women to be safe in their workplace and communities. I extend that to my own experiences and what I have observed. We should condemn those adult males who approach a year 10 student who is clearly wearing her school uniform on a school excursion. We should condemn those who view women as a possession to be owned, as a challenge between mates, as another notch on the belt. We should raise up all women and men who together want to share in a respectful and progressive society. We recently heard some of the women in this House bravely tell their stories. We cannot overlook the fact that as members of parliament women on both sides of this House face a greater level of toxicity and hostility towards their presence.

It is not unique to Queensland. There is a subculture of vitriol directed towards women in all houses of parliament in Australia and across the many workplaces in this country as well. We are witnessing a new chapter in the history of Australia's attitude towards women. I want to make a very direct point to those in that toxic subculture who dismiss what is going on around them. At no point was it ever acceptable to harass women. At no point was it ever acceptable to assault women. I stand with all of those speaking in favour of this motion today, with all of those who marched or held a vigil and with all of those who will continue to hold high the beacon towards a safer community. There is no place in our social fabric for women to feel unsafe at home, at work and in public. I support this motion.

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (3.30 pm): I rise to support this motion. I too acknowledge those who have shared the incidents that occurred to them and I was proud to join the March 4 Justice last week.

I started working as an office junior in 1976. That was 44 years ago. The senior partner was notorious for smacking the female staff on the bottom, particularly in front of clients—it was sport to him—including me, a naive 16-year-old, more used to running around the local farms, just a little girl really. I am my mother's daughter though and, following her advice and in front of clients, after another sharp smack on the bottom I reminded this senior partner that I was only three years older than his daughter and whether he would like someone doing that to her. He never smacked me again.

Fast-forward to current and calling out, ignoring, avoiding or simply accepting the many, many, many more and varied examples of this disgraceful and unacceptable behaviour. I received a phone call from my daughter, who called me in tears from remote Northern Territory to tell me of the shocking

harassment, including sexual, that she had been subjected to at the hands of her supervisor. You can only imagine my heartache and my dismay. When she attempted to report this behaviour, she was asked to carefully reconsider as this man would likely lose his job because he had another complaint against him. She chose that path. However, the harassment continued. I flew to Alice Springs to support my daughter and she reported the behaviour. The officer in question resigned and no further action was taken. So 40 years on and nothing has changed. Harassment in the workplace still continues.

To my daughter and to the other women who have experienced this harassment, I believe you and I support you. My darling, I am so sorry—sorry that change has been so slow, sorry that this behaviour still happens and sorry that I could not stop this happening to you. I am frustrated and I am angry and I am disappointed. But now it is time. It is time for each and every one of us to stand up for what we know is the right thing to do. It is time to call out bad behaviour when we see it. It is time to not talk over the top of each other. It is time to listen—yes, really listen—when women are talking. And it is time to respect all women. I call for respect and I condemn harassment and violence against women.



Mr TANTARI (Hervey Bay—ALP) (3.32 pm): I rise to record my support for the motion put before the House today by the Premier. Today I want to leave my contribution to the words and story of a young woman from Hervey Bay who, on hearing the stories of the past few days, outlined to me what her experience has been of being a young woman growing up in our country. This is her story, and I am humbled that she has given me the privilege to tell it in this place. She wrote—

It's 2021. I am 19 years old, and I have lived more experiences of sexual, emotional and physical abuse than you can count on one hand.

Not in the streets at 2am in the morning, drunk. Not wearing provocative clothing or acting in a promiscuous manner. Not of legal age. In my school uniform. In my pyjamas in bed.

Every single day, for two years I was sexually and emotionally abused on my school bus. An hour long journey each way. If I threatened to leave him, he would kill himself and write a letter leaving my name as his reason to go.

Sometimes he was nice, he bought gifts for my birthday. Other days he cried to me and said I couldn't leave him alone or he would die.

Other days when I tried to leave, he left bruises on my thighs to remind me I couldn't. Some days he called me pretty. Others, he would say I was looking chubby, and it wouldn't hurt to skip a few meals, so I skipped 3 and a half weeks' worth and collapsed down a flight of stairs.

Then one night, he took it further. That day he'd overheard me tell my friend that my parents were overseas and tonight I was babysitting alone.

He decided to let himself into my bedroom through the open window, to rape me. I spent all night in the shower scrubbing the skin he'd touched, trying to renew myself.

The same school. This time a boy I considered friend, asked to sit beside me on the bus on the way back from a sports event. I agreed thinking nothing of it until his hand slid down my shorts and he whispered "don't move" into my ear. I froze and couldn't breathe. I went home and scrubbed myself for hours until I was red raw.

She went on to say—

Ladies and Gentlemen, I am sorry. I'm sorry so many women like myself, still need to fight for this cause. We are tired. Tired of living up to these toxic, generational societal expectations and being treated like commodities. We are human just like you. I shouldn't be re-living my experiences through my words today. These are memories I tirelessly work to bury every single day.

But today, I write with hope that we will begin to educate our boys, our men, our girls and our women on what is just and right through the current and coming generations.

Her story, whilst shocking, is told because she, like many of her generation, are now calling out what happens today in our society on a daily if not hourly basis to them. They are our sisters, our partners, our wives, our work colleagues and our daughters who now need our support as they bravely tell their stories. To you, all I say is that I hear you and I will do my best to change this toxic culture for today and tomorrow. I commend the motion to the House.



Mr KELLY (Greenslopes—ALP) (3.35 pm): It was a privilege to walk with members of our community at the March 4 Justice. It was uplifting to see the Premier and other members of this chamber there as well. I was greatly moved by the average women and men who have had enough and came together to raise their voices—people who, like me, are sick of hearing stories of harassment and having to offer comfort to family, friends, colleagues and strangers about sexual harassment, abuse and violence.


The society that I grew up in and I started my working life in was openly sexist, homophobic and racist. These values did not reside in my family and were actively discouraged by my parents, but these attitudes perfused our society in an active and at times casual way. I would like to say I stood outside

that society and called it out but, like most people, I was part of it without ever having the sense that our world was deeply flawed and that the little things that at best we tolerated and at worst we actually supported led to much bigger and worse things.

As I look back I see the deep paradox of being inspired by people like Rosa Parks and Nelson Mandela standing up for fairness in their communities without ever realising the little things and the big things that needed changing in our society. Fortunately, for me that change started and the values instilled in me by my parents made it easier to move in that direction, and I hope it is a direction I continue to move in. The Australian trade union movement started to educate people like me about discrimination, particularly the women in the movement, and that made us realise that things had to change.

I thought our society had changed a lot but clearly it has not. I am good friends with the federal member for Griffith, Terri Butler, and her husband. These are people I have been friends with for over two decades. They, together with their children, were recently subjected to the most vile attacks via email. If you want to see how far society has to go, let us just look at a couple of the comments that accompanied the story from the *Courier-Mail*, and the *Courier-Mail* did an excellent job of covering this story. 'Yajustgottalaugh' said she 'must've upset someone'. What? Upset them enough to physically threaten them and their children? 'Keeping the Whigs Honest' said, 'I agree that direct threats etc should be dealt with—but disagreeing with a politician is a national pastime'. I would like to thank Ann who responded by saying that 'Threats of violence is not a national pastime'.

My favourite is 'Michael F', who said, 'Get on board with bandwagon Butler'. Which bandwagon would that be? Would that be the bandwagon that the Premier, the Police Commissioner and the member for Nanango are on? Would that be the one that countless women around the country marching for justice are on? Would that be the bandwagon that is full of people saying it is really not okay to send vile, disgusting emails attacking a woman simply because she is in public life and stands up for what she believes in? Would that be the one with countless women and men on board who say they have had enough of the daily mistreatment, the small indignities that women have to suffer, the belittlement, the harassment, the assault, the rape and the murder? Well, I am glad to be on that bandwagon with Terri Butler if she will have me.

 **Mr SULLIVAN** (Stafford—ALP) (3.38 pm): I rise to speak in favour of the motion moved by the Premier earlier today. It is important that this government has recognised the national mood, building on the government's strong record and hearing those voices that are speaking very clearly. It is fitting then that this parliament, likewise, recognises that clear message as reflected in this motion today.


In rising today as a man I want to be reflective and perhaps sensitive in my language because I think that what the last month has shown is that insensitive words and insensitive responses can create more harm. I think the response, if you could call it that, that we have seen from Canberra, particularly from the Prime Minister, has done more and more harm. In speaking today, I do not presume to speak for my wife or other women in my life. That is not to say they are not outraged and disgusted by what they have seen. However, our collective conscience in this chamber is bigger than that.

I do not presume to speak for my colleagues, particularly those who have expressed very personal stories. I certainly do not want to speak over my colleagues, so I rise to speak in support of my colleagues. Of course, I rise to add my individual voice to this motion. What I can do with certainty is speak on behalf of my community.

I speak on behalf of the many constituents who have raised this issue with me. In particular I can speak for my Stafford branch members, who have explicitly and unanimously condemned what we have seen in our national debate. It reflects that they are grassroots members of our community, and I recognise their leadership and advocacy on this issue in their own right.

I was particularly pleased to join some local branch members along with my parliamentary colleagues at the march last week. I ran into friends from the legal profession, from the union movement, from the not-for-profit sector—to name just a few—and personal friends from right across the north side. It was a broad cross-section of the Queensland community, as has been reflected on by others in this debate today.

I thank the Premier for her leadership in moving this motion today and for her leadership on this issue more broadly. I commend the motion to the House.


 **Ms RICHARDS** (Redlands—ALP) (3.41 pm): I rise in support of this motion today. I think what we have heard in this chamber, what we have heard over the last few weeks, is really just the tip of a very large iceberg. There is a mighty boys club movement that has existed for generations among industries

and I say to those in that club: this motion is for you; please pay attention. To those brave women who have shared their stories, thank you for your courage. To those women who have not shared their stories for fear, for shame, for the embarrassment, this motion is for you, too.

The member for Redcliffe touched on social media. I do not think we can underplay the role of media and social media in the problem that we have before us today. It has exacerbated the issue and I think that every woman in this chamber, particularly given the profile of MPs, will have experienced some of the most horrid comments from people. These are people who do not even know us; they have never met us in person. They are keyboard warriors that have a sense of bravery and have been empowered by social media. We have to do better in that space. We absolutely have to do better. We all have a role to play in that.

To Mason Black, I commend you for speaking out to young boys because I think that is where it is at. That is absolutely where it is at: it is the leadership of our young men. As many contributors have said today, every young man has a mum. Our family units are important, and they have become ever more complex. I heard repeatedly last week during the public hearings for the youth justice reforms of the complexities within our families. We need to do better in that space. We need to do better about how we talk about this issue in our families and in our homes.

To my son, Luke, I say I am extraordinarily proud of the young man that you are. I know that we as a society need to come together and leverage off what Mason Black says. The more we can share that with our young men and women, the better we will be. I commend the work that is happening in the education space around respectful relationships. I think that that is really important, although there is always more to do in that space. Going forward, none of us inside or outside of this chamber can be a bystander on such a significant issue. I commend this motion to the House.

 **Mr BROWN** (Capalaba—ALP) (3.44 pm): I, too, rise in support of the motion moved by the Premier. I also thank her for her leadership in this particular area. I have been so inspired by the stories from both sides. I agree with the member for Pumicestone; I am not shocked. What I will be shocked by is actually finding a woman who does not have a story. This has prompted conversations since the subject first came up in recent weeks. I have had a number of conversations with my colleagues, with family and with friends, and I have not yet found a woman who does not have a story. Some women are not yet prepared to share their story, and I give them strength to do that. I will be shocked when I find a woman who does not have a story. We have heard the throwaway line, 'It's not all men.' However, when statistically every single woman has a story, there is something wrong with all men, and that is what we have to address. There have been plenty of suggestions about how we go about that.


I support the Premier's comments about making sure that we have more women representation—equal numbers in this place and equal numbers on boards. I was a union organiser for a decade in a union that had predominantly female members. There are industries dominated by women—particularly aged care and child care—in which they are paid \$20 to \$25 per hour less than male dominated industries with the same award. That is where we can put a value on it. People say we need to value women. We can put an actual value on their industries. There have been many occasions when childcare workers, aged-care nurses and personal carers have tried to have their award pay rates equalised to that of their male counterparts and it has been fought. We have to change that. We have to promote these female dominated industries to the same level and the same value. Until we do that as a society, we are saying to women, 'We do not value you. We are going to take advantage of your caring attitude towards children and towards the elderly and pay you \$20 to \$25 less than your male counterparts.'

Until we do that as a society, until we respect those women in female dominated industries—I know there are many more that I could talk about, but they are the two I have worked in—we are not valuing women. We need to address that. There are plenty of other things we could address, and I wish I had more time. I support this motion and I commend it to the House.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

Order of Business

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (3.47 pm): I move—

That government business order of the day No. 1 be postponed.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

CRIMINAL CODE (CONSENT AND MISTAKE OF FACT) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Resumed from 26 November 2020 (see p. 92).

Second Reading



Hon. SM FENTIMAN (Waterford—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (3.48 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

I thank the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee for its consideration of the Criminal Code (Consent and Mistake of Fact) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020 and acknowledge the committee's recommendations. I formally table the government's response to the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee's report.

Tabled paper: Legal Affairs and Safety Committee: Report No. 3, 57th Parliament—Criminal Code (Consent and Mistake of Fact) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020, government response [\[377\]](#).

The bill will amend the Co-operatives National Law Act 2020, the Criminal Code, the Gaming Machine Act 1991, the Interactive Gambling (Player Protection) Act 1998, the Legal Profession Act 2007, the Liquor Act 1992, the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000, the Racing Integrity Act 2016, the Wagering Act 1998 and the legislation mentioned in schedule 1 for particular purposes.

The government made an election commitment to reintroduce this bill and to implement all five of the recommendations made by the Queensland Law Reform Commission in its review of consent laws and excuse of mistake of fact. The QLRC found that there are benefits in amending our Criminal Code in relation to consent and mistake of fact. It will make the language of the code more accessible and it will hopefully result in more consistent and correct directions being given to juries.

The four principles of common law that the bill codifies are: silence alone does not amount to consent; consent initially given can be withdrawn; a defendant is not required to take any particular steps to ascertain consent but a jury can consider anything the defendant said or did when considering whether they were mistaken about consent—and of course anything the defendant did not do or did not say; and voluntary intoxication of the defendant is irrelevant to the reasonableness of their belief about consent.

The bill also implements the Queensland Law Reform Commission's recommendation to fix an inconsistency in the Criminal Code by clarifying that the definition of 'consent' in section 348 applies to all offences in chapter 32, including the offence of sexual assault. Codifying existing case law in the Criminal Code will strengthen and modernise the law in relation to rape and sexual assault offences. It will also make the law more accessible for Queenslanders and facilitate a more consistent and correct application of the law by judges, legal practitioners and juries.

The Queensland Law Reform Commission's recommendations were the product of an extensive review of the operation of the existing law. The transcripts from 135 rape and sexual assault trials and 40 appellate decisions were examined. However, the Queensland Law Reform Commission's report acknowledged that sexual offences raise complex issues that need to be addressed by changing the social practices which contribute to sexual violence, and this cannot be achieved by legislative amendment alone. This view was supported by the Queensland Law Society during the committee hearing. They said—

The solution to those problems probably lies in other areas of education, of social policy reform, of adequate resourcing across the multitude of government and not-for-profit bodies that support those people.

As I said when I reintroduced the bill late last year, the government acknowledges that there are a range of views on this bill and its scope, including stakeholders that are concerned the reforms in the bill do not go far enough in reforming the law of consent and mistake of fact. Before turning to how the government will address the barriers that so many women face in our criminal justice system, I want to take the opportunity to address some of the concerns raised by stakeholders during the committee process.

The QLRC found that the elements that already exist in Queensland law provide for a model of affirmative consent to the extent that consent is a state of mind that has to be given and a failure to verbalise or otherwise give consent is not sufficient. There are members of this House who have engaged in a public debate about this very important issue but are misinformed about how the mistake-of-fact defence operates. Let me be clear: our law on consent explicitly states that consent must be given.

The QLRC found at page 122 of its report that the Criminal Code already requires that consent be given 'by a person with the cognitive capacity to give consent'. It is a settled area of law in Queensland that a complainant who is asleep or otherwise unconscious does not have the cognitive capacity to give consent. As Justice Sofronoff, the President of the Court of Appeal, in the case of *Sunderland* noted, it cannot be overlooked that consent must be given. His Honour further noted in that same case—

The giving of consent, in the context of a charge of a sexual offence, involves the making of a representation by one person to another, to the effect that the first person agrees to participate in the sexual act that would otherwise be an offence. Such a representation might be made by words or actions or by a combination of both.

There are members of this House who say that the onus is on a victim to communicate their lack of consent to a sexual act. Let me be very clear: the case law in Queensland is that silence does not amount to consent. The bill now codifies this position.

In relation to the matter of affirmative consent, evidence given by the Bar Association of Queensland at the committee hearing indicated that the Queensland and Tasmanian models of consent are quite similar. The difference is really around the phrasing of 'reasonable steps'. I quote Ms Fogerty from the Law Society at the committee hearing on this point. She said—

The Tasmanian model differs from the Queensland law in a number of respects, although I think it is easy to overstate the differences. Tasmania does have provision for affirmative consent in the form of reasonable steps. The other aspect of those Tasmanian consent provisions is in relation to how intoxication may be used by a defendant. I think it is important to note though that under the Tasmania provisions a defendant can rely upon reasonable steps in the context of raising the mistake of fact defence.

One of the things that is overlooked in the current discussion is the way the Queensland provision works. There is enormous capacity for reasonable steps to be something that is taken into account. That is because of the objective test that is inherent in section 24—the requirement for a jury to look at what a reasonable person would think in the circumstances. That operates as a really effective safety valve that captures a lot of these issues in a clean and arguably more elegant way than the Tasmanian provisions, which are unwieldy and which have created issues for jury directions and issues in terms of understanding those directions. It is always in the interests of everybody in the community that laws be clear.

Unlike New South Wales and Victoria, where there is a higher threshold to secure a conviction in that the prosecution must prove intent to rape, in Queensland there is no such requirement. What is required to be proved is that a sexual act occurred and there was no consent given. The task is not as simple as comparing the offence provisions of different jurisdictions, because we know that each and every state has a fundamentally different underlying criminal law structure. We have to avoid unintended consequences in this complex area of criminal law. That is why it is so important that we examine these issues very carefully.

We know that Queensland women face barriers when reporting violence committed against them. From the time women report, and throughout their journey of the criminal justice system, we know that there are processes and procedures that add to their trauma. The Palaszczuk government's commitment to improving women's safety and experiences in the criminal justice system goes far beyond the Queensland Law Reform Commission's review and the implementation of its recommendations. Just this month, I was proud to stand with the Premier to announce a wideranging review into the experience of women across the system to be undertaken by the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce, led by Hon. Margaret McMurdo. In accepting recommendation 2 of the committee's report, the task force will look into possible future areas of reform including attitudinal change, prevention, service responses and, where necessary, legislative amendment.

We know that it takes so much courage and bravery for women to share their story, and we want to do everything we can to empower women by providing a safe and respectful place in which to do so. That is why the task force members will work closely alongside women with lived experience in the criminal justice system to hear their stories and to create better outcomes for Queensland women.

As a government we know that, while significant progress has been made to prevent and respond to domestic, family and sexual violence in Queensland, there is still much to do. This bill is just the first step in our government's reform agenda. The Palaszczuk government is committed to generational change. That is why we are leading an ongoing program of reform to end violence against women and to improve the criminal justice system for women.

The Queensland Law Reform Commission's report acknowledged that sexual offences raise complex issues that need to be addressed by changing the social practices which contribute to sexual violence and that this cannot be achieved by legislation alone. The Queensland Law Society, when providing its submission to the committee, emphasised the importance of education, social policy reform and the need to adequately support our frontline services. Whilst it is the responsibility of parents, carers

and society more broadly to educate and support young people in addressing issues of sexual harassment, assault and consent, we also recognise that education in schools is part of the solution. We introduced compulsory respectful relationships education into state schools in response to the *Not now, not ever* report. Minister Grace recently announced that her department will be conducting a review into the Queensland Respectful Relationships program and will be working with non-government and state education sectors, P&Cs and school communities to explore whether consent and reporting are adequately covered. This is an issue that impacts all of us in different ways, but it is vital for our young people, and our young women in particular, that we get this right.

In response to recommendation 3 of the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee report, I now table an erratum to the explanatory notes to the bill which will clarify that chapter 32 of the Criminal Code is not limited in application to sexual offending against adults.

Tabled paper: Criminal Code (Consent and Mistake of Fact) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020, erratum to explanatory notes [378].

I want to take this opportunity to thank the Youth Advocacy Centre Inc. for its advocacy in this space and for bringing this need for clarification in the explanatory notes to the government's attention. In addition and separate to the recommendation of the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee, the erratum to the explanatory notes also provides additional clarification to address concerns raised by stakeholders, including Women's Legal Service Queensland, about the use of the word 'anything' in proposed new section 348A(2), as they believe this could potentially make the position of victims worse as it will widen the current position of what is considered to be honest and reasonable to anything the defendant said or did.

I have consulted with the Director of Public Prosecutions on this issue and he has advised me that he does not share the view held by Women's Legal Service Queensland. However, to ensure that there is no misinterpretation, the erratum will further clarify that the provision will not alter the existing law. I again thank stakeholders for raising their concerns throughout the committee process. It is only with input from those members of our community who apply and witness the operation of the law on the ground that the law remains accessible to all.

By way of further addressing recommendation 3 of the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee's report, the Palaszczuk government also commits to consulting with the Youth Advocacy Centre and other relevant stakeholders to better understand their concerns regarding the application of chapter 32 of the Criminal Code to youth offenders.

The bill also amends the Legal Profession Act 2007 in relation to the Legal Practitioners' Fidelity Guarantee Fund. The fund, which is administered by the Law Society, was established to provide a source of compensation for persons who have lost trust money or property due to a dishonest default by a solicitor or law practice. The amendments will authorise the payment from the fund of any claim not paid in full since the commencement of the act due to the operation of the statutory caps on claims and will also provide clearer guidance to the society as to when the statutory caps should be applied in the future.

In response to a submission by the Queensland Law Society, the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee has recommended that further amendments be made to permit the fund to provide resourcing for measures likely to have a material effect in minimising the risk or magnitude of misappropriations. Consistent with recommendation 4 of the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee report, I foreshadow that I will be proposing further amendments to the Legal Profession Act 2007 to permit additional payments to be made from the fund for programs to identify and prevent trust account defaults and for educational programs to improve compliance and trust accounting systems within law practices. It is hoped that these amendments, which have been developed in consultation with the Queensland Law Society, will help reduce the incidence of claims against the fund, thereby preserving the balance of the fund to meet future claims.

Additionally, the bill implements the next stage of the Palaszczuk government's legislative response to the independent evaluation of the Tackling Alcohol-Fuelled Violence Policy. The amendments will enhance the rigour of the ID-scanning and banning regime in safe night precincts; increase the minimum duration of police banning notices; require three-yearly reviews of safe night precinct boundaries; and provide greater transparency and accountability around liquor and gaming machine licensing decisions.

As part of the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee's report, comments were made regarding privacy protections associated with the tackling alcohol fuelled violence amendments. In relation to the changes to ensure that staff members comply with ID-scanning provisions, I can advise that privacy

protections under the Privacy Act 1988 apply when recording, accessing or disclosing any personal information obtained from operating an ID scanner. The amendment in the bill operates within this existing framework and does not raise any new limitation on the right to privacy.

In relation to the changes regarding transparency in licensing decisions, the bill protects the privacy of applicants by ensuring any sensitive or confidential information relating to the applicant or their associates is not publicly released along with the decision. While the names of licensees and applicants are provided as part of new publishing of liquor and gaming decision amendments, it is also important to note that the identity of applicants for liquor and gaming licences is already publicly available through legislated mechanisms such as the public register of licences and the advertising of applications. Having knowledge of the person responsible for the licence allows members of the community, including those potentially impacted by the operation of licensed premises, to monitor and engage with licensees regarding complaints or issues that the licensee may be required to address under the Liquor Act and the Gaming Machine Act.

Comments were also raised in relation to the amendments implementing periodic reviews of safe night precincts. I can advise that the bill will not automatically grant extended trading hours to 3 am to licensed premises that become located within the boundary of a safe night precinct as a result of a review. Licensees wishing to operate until 3 am will need to apply to do this, subject to the ordinary requirements associated with the application process.

The bill also contains miscellaneous amendments that are proposed to support the integrity of regulatory frameworks in Queensland. The bill will provide a permanent process under the Liquor Act to exempt safe night precinct local boards and liquor accords from Commonwealth restrictions on cartel behaviour where they collectively limit alcohol supply or control price to minimise alcohol related harm, and this replaces a five-yearly application requirement to the ACCCC; provide flexibility for Queensland's exclusive sport and race wagering licensee by removing the requirement under the Wagering Act to round down race dividends for short priced favourites; and make a minor, technical amendment to the Co-operatives National Law Act 2020 to rectify an unintended omission.

The bill also seeks to codify the national consumer protection framework's ban on certain types of inducements applying to interactive wagering operators licensed in Australia whose wagering services may be accessed by Queenslanders. Specifically, the bill prohibits the offer of inducements to open, or refer a friend to open, an interactive wagering account, inducements which encourage customers not to close their interactive wagering account and free bets if customers are not able to withdraw payouts arising from the free bets at any time.

Consistent with the intent of the national consumer protection framework, the bill also requires Australian licenced interactive wagering operators to ensure that direct promotional or advertising materials are only sent to persons who provide their express consent. If a person attempts to withdraw their consent, they must not be provided with an inducement to discourage them from doing so.

Consistent with the committee's first recommendation, I commend the bill to the House.



Mr NICHOLLS (Clayfield—LNP) (4.07 pm): Rape and sexual assault are abhorrent. There is no excuse for these crimes and offenders must be punished. Society, and in particular women, must feel safe from such depredations. As the Women's Legal Service says in its submission to the committee on this bill—

Sexual violence is a violent and insidious crime that is a clear assault and takes away a woman's sense of safety, identity, control and privacy. It has severe and deleterious impacts on victims physical and mental health that can last a lifetime.

Laws have existed against rape for hundreds of years as an expression of society's condemnation of such offences, but they often have not been as effective in practice as we would have hoped and so the community rightly demands that laws dealing with rape and sexual assault are strong, clear and consistent. They must properly balance the presumption of innocence of an accused with the obligation to ensure that perpetrators are charged, tried and convicted and are not afforded excuses to avoid punishment. Those who are the victims and survivors of such crimes must have their right to sexual autonomy protected and must have confidence that the law and indeed the community have their rights and interests at the forefront of our justice system's consideration.

The bill we are discussing today attempts to address the issues of clarity and consistency. The report from the Queensland Law Reform Commission recommending the changes to be made to the Criminal Code by this bill is thorough and lengthy in its investigations and review of the empirical evidence. The commission makes five recommendations, and these are all taken up in this bill.

Four of those recommendations clarify codifying principles that can be distilled from the common law—that is, from the case law made by judges here in Queensland courts. One of the recommendations corrects an inconsistency in the application of the definition of ‘consent’ to the different offences in chapter 32 of the Criminal Code. This last amendment was recommended prior to a Court of Appeal decision the Attorney has already referred to in *The Crown v Sunderland*, a case from 2020 in the Queensland Court of Appeal. That decision, in fact, saw the court remedy of its own accord the misconceptions around the application of that definition.

Many groups with a substantial and longstanding interest in this area of our criminal law, especially those who tirelessly advocate for survivors and victims of, and work in the areas of, sexual and domestic violence have expressed disappointment with this bill. Even a short reading of the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee report No. 3 of February this year and the submissions made to the committee will highlight the concerns of those groups. Equally, the Queensland Law Society, the Bar Association and the Civil Liberties Council of Queensland and others state their support for the bill in the form that we are debating here today. Other groups have raised concerns about the effect of the proposed changes on young people, and I note the Attorney’s comments in the chamber just a little while ago in respect of that, together with Indigenous people and those with a disability.

Clearly then there is room for legitimate differences of opinion on the merits of this legislation. I think in these circumstances, when considering competing interests and fundamental rights, change must be carefully considered, it must be strongly supported by the evidence and at its heart it must deliver a better system than that which it seeks to replace.

This legislation does not seek to answer all the questions we in this place and the wider community might have about the way sexual offences are reported, investigated, deterred, punished and prevented. Nor does it answer the very real and legitimate failures of our society to address the longstanding and significant attitudes to dealing with breaches of sexual autonomy, sexual violence and the actions of too many men in their dealing with women—to be frank about it, the way in which women are viewed, treated and believed in society today. In this respect I think we must acknowledge the commission’s own statement on page 14 of its report where it says—

However, there are limits to what the criminal law is practically and properly able to achieve in terms of changing social practices. Sexual offences occur within a broad social context and raise complex issues that go beyond the criminal law on consent. Legislative amendment is only one means of addressing these issues.

While many may have hoped for more from this review and are critical of this bill, I do not believe fault lies at the feet of the commissioners. Indeed, if the changes advocated by many submitters were on the government’s agenda, a specific direction to draw up amendments to effect an affirmative consent provision in the code could have been given to the commission. Such is the case with the government’s direction on voluntary assisted dying. In that case the government has directed the commission to draft laws to give effect to a policy decision already made. In this respect it is important to note the government’s direction to the commission as set out in the report—

On 2 September 2019, the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Leader of the House referred to the Commission for review and investigation:

the definition of consent in section 348 (Meaning of consent) in Chapter 32 (Rape and sexual assaults) of the Criminal Code and the operation of the excuse of mistake of fact under section 24 (Mistake of fact) as it applies to Chapter 32.

The terms of reference required the Commission to examine the operation and practical application of those provisions and to make recommendations on:

- (a) whether there is a need for reform of:
 - (i) the definition of consent in section 348;
 - (ii) the excuse of mistake of fact in section 24 as it applies to rape and sexual assaults in Chapter 32 of the Criminal Code; and
- (b) any other matters the Commission considers relevant having regard to the issues relating to the referral.

In doing so the government again set some parameters for the commission—

In making its recommendations, the Commission was to have regard to:

- (a) the need to ensure Queensland’s criminal law reflects contemporary community standards;

as it should. This is an important one—

- (b) existing legal principles in relation to criminal responsibility;

This is another important one—

- (c) the need for Queensland's criminal law to ensure just outcomes by balancing the interests of victims and accused persons;
- (d) the experiences of sexual assault victims and survivors in the criminal justice system;
- (e) the views and research of relevant experts;

That is important. It continues—

- (f) recent developments, legislative reform, and research in other Australian and international jurisdictions; and
- (g) any other matters that the Commission considers relevant having regard to the issues relating to the referral.

The terms of reference ask the commission to prepare, if relevant, draft legislation based on its recommendations.

The commission was required to report on the outcomes of the review to the Attorney-General by 30 June 2020 last year.

The commission has done what was asked of it in this respect. It has done so after a thorough and comprehensive review of the empirical evidence, as anyone who has read the report of the commission can attest. No doubt had it been asked to draw up an affirmative consent provision it would have done so, but in fact it was not asked to do so. In particular it was asked to ensure just outcomes by balancing the interests of victims and accused persons. This is the key to understanding the commission's recommendations.

The commission had to weigh up competing and fundamental rights, rights long established in our legal system and accepted in our society. On the one hand it had to balance the right to a fair trial, including the presumption of innocence of the accused and the so-called golden thread of the criminal law: the obligation on the prosecution to prove every element of an offence. That had to be balanced with the fundamental right of complainants to liberty and safety and the individual rights of bodily integrity and human dignity.

It reviewed the law as it was asked and consulted widely as it was asked to do. It is unsurprising then that it returned the recommendations it did. It examined all transcripts of trials of rape and sexual assault carried out in 2018, other than those involving a complainant under 12 years old. This involved 135 trials. It undertook an analysis of relevant Queensland Court of Appeal decisions in rape and sexual assault cases occurring mainly between 2000 and 2019. The commission reviewed transcripts of a further 76 trials in which consent or mistake of fact was raised. These cases were referred to the commission by the judiciary, the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, Legal Aid Queensland and the Bar Association of Queensland.

It has also consulted widely with all those groups and organisations representing people with an interest in this area of the law. It received 87 submissions to its consultation paper and a consultation workshop was convened, attended by survivors of sexual violence and their supporters and advocates. One of the submissions identifies that over 35 people attended that consultation workshop.

In passing I want to acknowledge the significant time and effort many advocacy groups put into making submissions to both the commission's consultation paper and the parliament's committee process. I have read almost all of the submissions. Many are thorough and detailed. Their production required considerable time and research and I want to thank and acknowledge the authors for their effort and thoughtfulness.

The commission in its review also considered the approach taken in other jurisdictions, importantly in Tasmania and Victoria, where affirmative consent provisions are part of the law in those states. After having undertaken this quite lengthy and detailed task, the commission resolved that the existing law did not require extensive changes. I think it is important that the commission's conclusion is included in the record. It states—

Detailed examination of the existing law in this area does not generally reveal significant issues for reform to the definition of consent or the excuse of mistake of fact, as it applies to rape and sexual assault. The Commission does not recommend wholesale changes to those provisions. There is a risk that unnecessary amendments to the legislation might have unforeseen consequences for defendants, complainants or both.

One of the key strengths of the criminal law in Queensland is its combined certainty and flexibility. The Criminal Code sets out the general rules and the core elements of each offence and any excuses or defences. Their interpretation is permitted to develop on a case by case basis, having regard to the factual circumstances of each case and prevailing community attitudes and standards.

I think this is an important part of the commission's finding—

The jury system is also a significant part of this process.

The 12 women and men who are called on to make the decisions as the triers of facts in these cases are the representatives who provide the community attitudes and standards of our society. The report continues—

This inherent flexibility allows the law to continue to develop over time, while retaining the core meaning contained in the terms of the Criminal Code... The law regarding consent needs to be clear, for judges and juries as well as for the wider community. As a general aim, it is also desirable for the laws in Queensland to be reasonably consistent with those in other jurisdictions, taking into account fundamental differences between the common law and code jurisdictions... Reforms should also, where possible, be informed by empirical evidence... Given the concerns raised in submissions about ambiguity in the current provisions and having regard to approaches in other jurisdictions, the Commission sees merit in amendments that aid in providing clarity to the existing provisions.

These are important considerations. Law made on the run—law in such an important area made without the support of empirical evidence—is law that is bound to cause unintended consequences. Law made without a thorough and proper understanding of its effect and impact may well result in worse outcomes than those that are complained of at the moment.

This is a hotly contested area of the law. As the commission itself notes, being charged with this offence carries significant and substantial penalties and it is equally important that survivors are able to access a fair and free justice system in which they know that their complaint has been believed and has been proved according to the tenets of our system. Clearly the government accepts that conclusion given the bill that we are debating today. Clearly it does not believe there is the need for an explicit affirmative consent requirement in section 348. Of course, such a change would involve a fundamental rebalancing of rights and in effect a reversal of the burden of proof. Again I refer to the golden thread that someone is innocent until presumed guilty and that a prosecution must prove all elements of the offence in order to obtain a conviction.

The Tasmanian model of affirmative consent featured in many submissions made to the committee during its investigation of this bill. I note that at page 15 of its report the committee states—

When questioned on the number of successful prosecutions there have been under the Tasmanian model, WLSQ—

that is, the Women's Legal Service Queensland—

advised that it did not know but stated:

It has been law for 17 years. It is not like there has been a swathe of cases that have gone to the High Court in relation to the Tasmanian law talking about unlawful convictions. It is a solid law that has stood the test of time for 17 years.

That was said in response to a question asked during a committee hearing. Importantly, after the committee's public hearing QCOSS provided further information on the Tasmanian model, including comments from a 2012 PhD thesis by Helen Cockburn. According to QCOSS, Ms Cockburn's key finding was that the 'Tasmanian reforms have not lived up to their promise because judges and the legal profession have been reluctant to fully implement them'. The committee report further states—

QCOSS concluded that 'clearly, legislative reform as part of a larger suite of reforms—including judicial education—will most likely deliver better outcomes for sexual assault survivors'.

A few moments ago the Attorney-General referred to the comments made by the Queensland Law Society. Having heard them once we do not need to hear them again, but those comments are equally apt in respect of this matter.

More work is required to see whether an affirmative consent model is effective, that is, will it better protect, punish and deter and will it result in a better system for survivors and complainants in the legal system? It is also clear that changing the law will not of itself address the very real issues that survivors of sexual assault face when confronted by the legal process and the procedures for making a complaint and then enduring a trial that by any measure must be frightening, bewildering and confronting. This is an area where the LNP and I believe more work is needed. The treatment of survivors in the system needs to be improved. It needs to be made better. Those areas that are frightening, humiliating, confronting and challenging must be looked at. There must be a better process to give people more confidence in the system.

Given the extensive and thorough work of the commission and recognising the value of the amendments suggested, the LNP will be supporting this bill. Having said that, we remain open to the consideration of further legislative changes that, as I said in my opening remarks, are strongly supported by the evidence and that deliver a better system and outcomes than that which it seeks to replace. That must be the key to changes to this system: they must deliver a better outcome than that which they seek to replace.

This is not the end of the matter. I want to remark generally on issues that the bill brings to mind and that recent events have highlighted. In fact, we have just had a debate on some of those matters. As a society we must do more to ensure safe, rich and fulfilling lives for all of us. We need to engender more respect for each other, not less. We need to accept difference and embrace what it brings, not reject and diminish it. We need to call out behaviours and attitudes that seek to unfairly and improperly exploit differences in power and standing, and we must strive to change those behaviours and attitudes. For too long we have not done so. In particular, too many men have failed to do so when it comes to behaviour and attitudes towards women.

Passing laws in this place is important. Punishing offenders and protecting the innocent are important. In society there will always be those who prey on someone else. They must be punished and society must be protected. Much more importantly though is the opportunity being a parliamentarian gives us all to change attitudes, to demonstrate the change we want to see and to lead with our words and actions. That does not by any means suggest some sort of return to the Victorian times of Mr Darcy and Miss Bennet in *Pride and Prejudice* or a sterile environment of rigid rules and fraught interactions. It does mean that working together, having fun, embracing a relationship, enjoying someone else's comfort and physical intimacy require us to recognise that it is not fun, it is not agreeable and it is not respectful to ignore the rights and autonomy of the other person. We must continue the journey of respect and recognise that the feelings and rights of others are as important to them as our own are to us. The more we recognise that and the more we imbue it in our kids and our society, the better we all will be.

The remaining sections of the bill implement changes to the Legal Profession Act to allow the Law Society to revisit previous decisions, when it considers it appropriate to do so, to increase payments from the Legal Practitioners' Fidelity Guarantee Fund. The amendments allow for the full payment of claims since the commencement of the act in 2007 due to the operation of the previous caps set at \$200,000 for any single claim and \$2 million in aggregate for all claims against a single practice. The proposal has the support of the Law Society and, as the notes say, can be accommodated due to the healthy balance in the fund.

I also note the amendments proposed by the Attorney-General today. I note their purpose and the request of the Law Society and the committee to introduce those changes. I point out that university legal courses already require that students be taught about the importance of integrity and honesty when it comes to the maintenance of solicitors' trust accounts. It is part of the law course. It is also a part of the legal practice course. Those who have a law degree and seek to be admitted must do the course so must also understand their obligations to maintain the trust account of the firm or the business that they operate.

It is also a part of the continuing legal education course that the Law Society runs. I ask, in effect, how much more needs to be done in this circumstance to ensure that solicitors who are entrusted with other people's money are educated about the need to maintain their honesty and their fidelity duty in relation to their trust accounts. It may be that legal practice has changed dramatically and that the rise of micropractices has led to more of this occurring, to more defalcations on the accounts, but by no means can any solicitor who is being admitted to practice in Queensland today be unaware of their obligations to maintain the trust account in accordance with the requirements of legislation.


It may be that the funds that are to be made available are used for more investigations and to chase down those instances where there are those who do not do the right thing—and that is a good thing—but I think I would like, in due course, further information from the Attorney about how that money is to be spent. I note that the amendment also allows the Attorney to call for a report into such matters.

More changes are made in response to the final evaluation report of the alcohol fuelled violence policy. They effect a number of changes to the ID-scanning process, the banning regime and the effectiveness of safe night precincts. They are also intended to increase transparency around liquor and gaming decisions of the OLGR. For any members who are more interested in the detail of those matters, I commend the green paper to them. I am sure they will be fully informed as a result of that.

Finally, amendments are proposed to enhance consumer protection in relation to online gaming. In particular, restrictions are being placed on inducements to open an account or to refer a friend to open an online account, together with other changes in relation to bookmakers and their activities, including taking bets off course. The LNP will also be supporting these amendments.

In conclusion, change of the criminal law simply for the purpose of change and without effecting an improvement in the outcomes will not achieve what we would all hope our laws do—that is, protect members of our community, ensure offenders are appropriately punished and ensure the law provides

appropriate respect for the rights of those brought into its system, willingly or not. Ultimately, it is at the end of the line. By the time we get to the consideration of these matters, the event has already occurred. More needs to be done at that end of the process rather than at this end of the process. As I indicated, the LNP will be supporting the legislation that effect the amendments to the Criminal Code.

 **Mr RUSSO** (Toohey—ALP) (4.33 pm): I rise in the House to support the passing of the Criminal Code (Consent and Mistake of Fact) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020. The Legal Affairs and Safety Committee made four recommendations. The first recommendation was that the bill be passed. The second recommendation was that, in light of the comments of the submitters, the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence undertake consultation with key stakeholder groups as a matter of urgency with regard to addressing sexual violence in Queensland, including examining the experience of women in the criminal justice system as a whole and the possible future areas for reform such as attitudinal change, prevention, early intervention, service responses and legislative amendments as necessary.

The third recommendation was in relation to the application of section 32 of the Criminal Code as it relates to youth offenders. The fourth recommendation was in relation to amendments being made to permit the fidelity guarantee fund to provide resourcing for measures likely to have a material effect in minimising the risk or magnitude of misappropriations.

The previous and current consent bills are in the same form. The objectives of the bill include implementing all five recommendations of the Queensland Law Reform Commission, as detailed in its report *Review of consent laws and the excuse of mistake of fact*, by clarifying aspects of the existing law in the Criminal Code on consent and the excuse of mistake of fact. The Attorney-General stated in her introductory speech—

The bill implements all five of the commission's recommendations by amending the Criminal Code to make explicit four legal principles that can be distilled from the current case law of Queensland. Those principles are: silence alone does not amount to consent; consent initially given can be withdrawn; regard may be had to anything the defendant said or did to ascertain consent when considering whether the defendant was mistaken about whether the other person gave consent; and that a defendant's voluntary self-intoxication is not relevant to the reasonableness aspect of the excuse of mistake of fact.

The bill also implements the commission's recommendation to fix an inconsistency in the Criminal Code by clarifying that the definition of 'consent' in section 348 applies to all offences in chapter 32 including the offence of sexual assault contained in section 352(1)(a). These amendments to the code are intended to strengthen and clarify the operation of the law, ensuring a consistent and correct application of these important legal principles by judges, juries and legal practitioners. A transitional provision provides that the amendments to the code are to apply prospectively to offences in chapter 32 that are charged after the date of commencement but will be able to be applied to offences that are committed before commencement.

The bill also amends other legislation, including the Legal Profession Act 2007, to facilitate additional payments by the Queensland Law Society from the Legal Practitioners' Fidelity Guarantee Fund to claimants who have had a statutory cap applied to claims prior to 2016 and to provide clearer guidance as to when the statutory caps should be applied in the future. There are also amendments to the Interactive Gambling (Player Protection) Act, the Racing Integrity Act and the Wagering Act to prohibit inducements and wagering using free bets and to impose restrictions on direct marketing in the context of online wagering. There are also amendments to the Liquor Act, the Gaming Machine Act and the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act as part of the government's response to the final evaluation report of the tackling alcohol fuelled violence policy. The bill also contains miscellaneous amendments to the Liquor Act and the Co-operatives National Law Act 2020.

I practised law in Queensland for nearly 25 years before being elected. My view about the consent legalisation comes from defending people over many years from all walks of life and the concern that moving towards a pure affirmation model will cause more harm than good and will do little to advance the plight of victims and the issue of under-reporting of sexual assaults. It is an issue that affects females, with Australian Bureau of Statistics figures from 2015-16 showing that 79 per cent of reported assaults were against females.

A common thread about consent in relation to sexual encounters is that there is real difference as to how males and females interpret consent. As a father and a criminal defence lawyer, I must acknowledge that the view on the consent law may be a little stilled. I remember when I was first doing my studies to complete the solicitors board exams. You were basically left to your own devices, perhaps relying on someone else doing the same subjects. I faced many challenges, but I approached my studies not really knowing what areas of the law appealed to me. In my home town of Ingham, I was working for a solicitor who had a broad practice, doing personal injury matters, estate work and conveyancing. I cannot recall anyone ever asking my principal to defend them in a court of law, but I have vague memories of him relating a criminal case he was involved in when he did his articles in Brisbane.

At the time that I was studying the Criminal Code I recall lecture notes that referred to McNaughton's legal principles and read something along these lines: 'It is better that 10 guilty men go free than one innocent man hangs.' That principle struck a chord with me and has remained with me ever since. It is a fundamental legal principle that has stood the test of time and is important to our democracy. We change this at our peril.

I am asking myself: what advice do we give our children? If we cast our minds back to our youth, the pursuit of love was something we all sought. I was taught to be respectful towards others, so I hope I never have had an issue with no means no. These are difficult situations and conversations that need to be had. There is an urgent need for the discussions or conversations to be taking place in our homes, educational institutions and boarder community. If we do not have these conversations, we run the risk of causing real harm to each other.


The rise of the #MeToo movement has led to a discussion in the community about enshrining in law a different way to interpret consent for sexual interactions. In the background to these discussions there appears to have been recorded by the Australian Institute of Criminology an increase in the reporting of sexual assaults. This is where the issue for Queensland becomes, in my view, very difficult. There seems to be evidence that would indicate that sexual assaults, although on the increase in Australia, are still going unreported.

Advocates for changing the laws of consent and mistake of fact as enshrined in our Criminal Code say the amendments do not go far enough. They point to many Court of Appeal cases that have led to the acquittal of an accused relying on the proposition of consent and mistake of fact as set out in our Criminal Code. The proponents for change point to these cases as a reason to change the law to an affirmative consent model. If I understand the proponents correctly, they say a change in the law will lead to more convictions and victims feeling safer to come forward and report sexual assaults.

I am grateful for a *Time* article by Samantha Cooney from 17 January posted online. The article is headed 'The Aziz Ansari allegation has people talking about "affirmative consent". What's that.' The article refers to an article published online which sets out the account of what an anonymous woman Grace wrote about the situation. I encourage anyone who has a genuine interest in the debate to read the full online article in the New York *Time* publication. Grace said in the article that when Ansari texted her about their evening basically saying that he had had a good time, she replied that she was uncomfortable and told Ansari he 'ignored clear non-verbal cues; you kept going with advances'. Ansari replied—

I'm so sad to hear this. All I can say is, it would never be my intention to make you or anyone feel the way you described.

What occurred between Ansari and Grace depicts the complexities of this issue and the difference between how two people can perceive a sexual encounter. This is the reason I encourage caution in the way this issue is approached. This is also why I support the passing of this legalisation as a sensible approach to a complex issue and a commitment by the government that this is the first step in a holistic review of the experiences of women in the criminal justice system. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (4.42 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the Criminal Code (Consent and Mistake of Fact) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020. Quite simply, any instances of sexual harassment, intimidation and assault must end. There are significant events that we have seen in recent weeks. All elected representatives, community leaders, parents and teachers must work together to ensure that strategies are implemented to end this on behalf of women.

The legislation before the House seeks to implement all five recommendations of the Queensland Law Reform Commission's report titled *Review of consent laws and the excuse of mistake of fact* which was delivered to the Queensland government on 30 June 2020. The genesis for the report came in July 2019 when it was announced by the then attorney-general and minister for justice that the matter of consent in sexual assault and alleged rape cases would be referred to the Queensland Law Reform Commission.

In August last year the previous Criminal Code (Consent and Mistake of Fact) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020 was introduced into the Queensland parliament. However, with the dissolution of the 56th Parliament, the former Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee was not able to complete its detailed consideration of the legislation. With the commencement of the 57th Parliament of Queensland, the current legislation was introduced on 26 November 2020 and wholly in the same form as the previous bill.

As I have said earlier, this legislation will implement all five of the Queensland Law Reform Commission's recommendations by amending the Criminal Code to make explicit four legal principles as derived from current case law in Queensland. These principles are: silence alone does not amount to consent; consent initially given can be withdrawn; regard may be had to anything the defendant said or did to ascertain consent when considering whether the defendant was mistaken about whether the person gave consent; and a defendant's voluntary intoxication is not relevant to the reasonableness aspect of the excuse of mistake of fact.

As articulated by my colleague, the Liberal National Party's shadow Attorney-General and minister for justice, whilst these four principles can be distilled from current case law in Queensland, they are not currently and explicitly stated in the Criminal Code. The amendments that are enacted by this legislation will make these principles of case law explicit and in doing so will allow for clear and concise interpretation. I also note that other amendments will be made to the Criminal Code to fix inconsistencies and further clarify the application of the definition of consent.

Additionally, this legislation also amends other acts, including the Legal Profession Act 2007, a number of gambling, racing and wagering acts and the Liquor Act. I note that some of these amendments are aimed at reducing alcohol related harms, enhancing licensing transparency with respect to relevant applications and delivering consumer protections related to online gambling harms. Some of these matters, as they are pertinent to inducements when it comes to gambling, are important. As a specialist physician in the area of addiction medicine, I support these amendments.

I also noted during the contribution of the member for Clayfield, the shadow Attorney-General and minister for justice, some of the discussions with respect to the Legal Profession Act 2007 and the changes being foreshadowed there. Significant education is to be provided to lawyers and legal professionals with respect to how they manage trust accounts. I look forward to hearing the Attorney-General's contribution as to what will happen with the additional funds raised and the transparency of the expenditure of those funds.

As the Liberal National Party shadow minister for education, I wish to briefly address those aspects of the legislation that are pertinent to Queensland's system of education and the vital education of young Queenslanders when it comes to matters of appropriate behaviour, consent and healthy relationships. Whilst it is broadly accepted that parents and caregivers are responsible for the education of their children when it comes to sex education, it is equally accepted that this is a responsibility that is shared in collaboration with our education system and part of the school curriculum in order to ensure children receive the right information on matters, including respectful behaviour and language, privacy—particularly in the digital age—consent and sex.

This is a point that was largely echoed by the Youth Advocacy Centre, both in its submissions to the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee's examination of the Criminal Code (Consent and Mistake of Fact) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020 as well as in the testimony that was provided during the committee's public hearing in Brisbane on 21 January 2021. While the Youth Advocacy Centre highlighted concerns with how aspects of the Criminal Code would be applied to young people through the proposed amendments in the bill, there was still a substantial acknowledgement of the importance of adults understanding both the significant physical, emotional and sexual changes and pressures that young people, and particularly teenagers, go through at this time in their lives and the positive role that education can play. Specifically in reference to public hearing, Ms Janet Wight, Chief Executive Officer of the Youth Advocacy Centre, stated—

... education is absolutely critical in this space. It is absolutely critical for young people. Good role models would also help some young people of course learn their behaviours from what they see happening around them, including at home, which is highly problematic. We need to probably put more emphasis with young people into positive relationships. I know we do some of that already, but clearly things are happening which are not good behaviour, are not respectful, or young people have not had the ability to learn.

To that end, I note that independently of the focus and intent of the legislation before the House today, the Minister for Education has recently announced a review into sexual education in Queensland schools, with a specific focus on sexual consent. I acknowledge the Minister for Education's ministerial statement to the Queensland parliament this week about the broad stakeholder engagement the Palaszczuk Labor government is undertaking with respect to this review. The Minister for Education is pursuing that this important issue be listed on the Commonwealth's agenda for the national meeting of jurisdictional ministers for education scheduled to take place on 30 April 2021.

There is no doubt that there must be consistency of curriculum content. I certainly look forward to hearing more about the state government's further developed plan for implementation following stakeholder as well as state school and non-state school sector consultation. The Palaszczuk state


Labor government must ensure that there are firm time lines and that the developed plan to address this issue must be clear and concise and be able to be implemented as a matter of urgency given the importance of this issue within our community.

Similarly, it is important that when it comes to the education of our children, particularly with respect to sexual education, the Queensland state government must be as open, transparent and accountable as possible with both parents and teachers on the curriculum including the information and associated resources that are used.

There can be no doubt that critical to ending the scourge of domestic and family violence is the ongoing implementation of education programs and initiatives throughout the continuum of the education system. Kindness, understanding, empathy and compassion are the cornerstones of respectful relationships and these qualities must be further instilled in our young Queenslanders as a key component of school based education programs. Importantly, fostering the collaboration of community leaders, parents, teachers and carers as role models is the responsibility of all elected representatives. All of us in the Queensland parliament have a role to play to enable this collaboration.

I would like to take this opportunity to address the role of social media. Unfortunately, social media is being weaponised to harass, bully, denigrate, demean and even intimidate elected representatives including both women and men. This must certainly cease, particularly given adults are supposed to be role models for not only teenagers but also children. I note that a number of federal and state elected representatives have referred matters to their various police forces, whether to the Federal Police or here in Queensland to the Queensland Police Service.

I thank all of those who made submissions and provided evidence to the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee. I also thank the Queensland Law Reform Commission for undertaking the necessary work to enable the drafting of today's legislation including commission chair, the Hon. Justice David Jackson, commission members and the commission secretariat, led by director Mr David Groth. They have certainly done some significant and important work in bringing this legislation to the parliament via the government. I, along with the Liberal National Party, support the bill.

 **Mr HUNT** (Caloundra—ALP) (4.51 pm): I rise today to speak in support of the Criminal Code (Consent and Mistake of Fact) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020. I would like to thank all the members of the committee and the secretariat for their work on what is a strikingly important issue.

Being a male, I can absolutely understand the critical need for action in the area of sexual violence, but the irrefutable fact is that it is overwhelmingly committed by men against women and, as a result, being male, I will never be able to speak with full authority on this matter. I can empathise. I can sympathise. I can support. I can speak out. I can and do act on all of these things, but the truth is I will never really and completely know what it is like.

Like most other gentlemen in this House, I have never had to watch my drink. I have never had to second-guess the idea of walking home alone. I have never had to hold my car keys in such a way that I might have to weaponise them. Not once have I been asked to consider my wardrobe when thinking about my safety on a night out. Not once have I ever had to consider my sobriety when leaving a venue other than to ensure that I do not drive. I have never had to ask a trusted friend to walk me home. My son will, in all likelihood, never have to be concerned about these things either—but what we must ensure is that these considerations are never a concern for anyone.

In light of the data, we must work towards a quantum shift in thinking. When I say 'we' I mean we the males in this chamber. We hold positions of significant influence within our respective communities, but it is not just our role to lead by example. It is our role to challenge the behaviour, the stereotypes and those problematic elements of masculinity that make discussion and laws around consent necessary.

The underlying circumstances speak to the fact that from the evidence collected from victim support groups sexual assaults are tragically under-reported. Victims are fearful of coming forward to register complaints because they do not believe they will receive fair treatment.

The committee recommends that the Criminal Code (Consent and Mistake of Fact) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill be passed. The committee further recommends that, in light of the submitters, the Attorney-General undertake consultation with key stakeholder groups as a matter of urgency in regard to addressing sexual violence. The committee recommends that the Attorney-General give consideration to the application of section 32 of the Criminal Code as it relates to youth offenders. The committee also recommends that further amendments be made to permit the fidelity fund to provide resourcing of measures likely to have a material effect in minimising the risk or magnitude of misappropriation.

What is clear from the QLRC report, and is worth reinforcing today before outlining the consultation process, is that silence alone does not amount to consent, that consent initially given can be withdrawn and that a defendant's voluntary intoxication is not relevant to the reasonableness aspect of the excuse of mistake of fact. The consultative framework around the proposed changes were significant. The previous bill was introduced on 13 August 2020 and referred to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee the same day.

On 30 November the committee invited previous stakeholders and submitters to make written submissions on the bill by 12 January 2021. Forty-seven submissions were received. It is pleasing that a number of submitters expressed support for the proposed amendments. The Queensland Law Society stated that they believed the 'amendments do strike an appropriate balance in what is a very difficult area', while the Queensland Council for Civil Liberties also expressed the view that the 'amendments incorporate or at least state explicitly in our law the principle that no means no'.

To this end, clause 8 of the bill inserts new subsections into section 348 of the Criminal Code. New subsection (3) will provide that a person is not taken to give consent to an act only because the person does not, before or at the time the act is done, say or do anything to communicate that the person does not consent to the act. New subsection (4) will provide that if a person does or continues to do an act after the consent to the act has been withdrawn by words or conduct, then the act is done or continues without consent. These are very explicit provisions dealing not just with consent but also with the withdrawal of consent.

Other submissions made note of the fact that they would like to have seen a consent model where consent is described as mutual, ongoing and communicative. QCOS, for example, would have preferred a model that directly addressed catatonic immobility reaction and centred on an affirmative consent approach or an 'enthusiastic yes'. Similarly, the Women's Legal Service Queensland supported a definition of consent that required a reflective and positive agreement between parties engaged in sexual activity.

Clause 9 of the bill inserts new section 348A into the code. DJAG explained that there is no explicit reference to what use, if any, a jury can make of any 'steps' taken by a defendant to ascertain consent. The proposed new section 348A codifies that a jury can, nonetheless, take into account any steps that were taken or the absence of any steps that were taken depending on the facts of the case.

In closing, I refer to my opening remarks about tackling this subject matter in the broader community. I recently had occasion to meet two year 12 student leaders on the Sunshine Coast. These remarkable young women not only spoke of depressingly familiar instances of sexual assault but also spoke of the role that young men need to embrace if the problem is to be addressed at the source. Discussions are well and good, but listening is even more vital at this time. These two student leaders spoke not just of common instances of inappropriate behaviour but also of the environment and the constantly reinforced social expectations that fosters this in men of all ages.

Similarly, I spoke to two staff in one of the local cafes near my electoral office. Both of these young women spoke of the difficulties around withdrawing consent. They felt that a woman was under considerable pressure to never withdraw consent and that there were underlying dangers in doing so. This is completely unacceptable.

To our youth and those who mentor them, to our students and workmates, and to all the male leaders, role models and exemplars I say this: stop looking for a loophole in morality or in a moment. Do not look for a reason as to why this sort of behaviour is okay. Be 100 per cent honest with yourself. We all know when this sort of behaviour is not okay. Then once you get to that realisation act on it—and listen. Listen without an instant rejoinder that starts, 'Yeah, but what about?' Listen until it gets uncomfortable, because I guarantee it will not be as uncomfortable as the dark thoughts that cross a woman's mind when she is walking home alone. This is the other side of the consent coin.

Although the response from advocacy groups was varied in its level of support for the amendments, what is very clear is that the committee supports the call from advocacy groups for more to be done to address sexual violence and support victims and complainants. To that end, I am delighted that the Women's Safety and Justice Task Force will be part of a wide consultative process that makes recommendations on: coercive control; the need for a new offence of commit domestic violence; and any other area of future reform to improve women's experience in the criminal justice system. On that basis, we are certainly in a much better place than previously. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Hunt, adjourned.

MOTION

Electricity Supply



Mr KATTER (Traeger—KAP) (5.00 pm): I move—

That this House—

1. acknowledges that the Queensland government should maintain control of, and responsibility for, investment decisions regarding major electricity infrastructure, including in renewable generation, through regulation, ownership and operational roles;
2. acknowledges that leaving such investment decisions solely up to private developers and individual companies means Queenslanders miss out on important economic development opportunities and well-paying stable jobs;
3. is committed to securing the future of the North West Minerals Province by integration into the National Electricity Market and national power grid through construction of CopperString 2.0 with operation and ownership roles by government entities; and
4. will support an energy reserve policy that ensures Queensland households and businesses can benefit from the state's abundant energy resources, including coal, gas, renewables and future hydrogen production.

I rise in support of the motion. In particular I would like to address points 2 and 3. Point 2 states—

2. acknowledges that leaving such investment decisions solely up to private developers and individual companies means Queenslanders miss out on important economic development opportunities and well-paying stable jobs;

This relates to another motion, and the clearest and best example we have relates to the rollout of gas and LNG in Queensland. In my opinion, the way in which it was rolled out was diabolical. The free market approach let private industry decide, so there were inefficiencies in relation to where pipes went. There were three LNG trains, and I think there is a pretty strong argument that only one should have been built. As a result, all of our gas was bumped up. We lost the competitive natural pricing advantage we had. It went from \$3 a gigajoule to \$24 a gigajoule. I am told it has settled back down to somewhere around \$11 or \$12. That is still a hell of a lot more than what we were paying in the first place, so I am not sure how that worked out for anyone.

There are no jobs left out around those pipes—or hardly any. We have a few jobs left on the LNG trains, but you have smashed the competitive advantage we had on gas pricing which put at great risk the North West Minerals Province, which is 100 per cent reliant on gas-fired power and a whole train of value supply line all the way to Townsville. As I mentioned before, the copper smelter, copper refinery, the biggest fertilizer plant in the southern hemisphere, the phosphate that relies on the sulphur off the copper smelter—these thousands of jobs I am talking about were all based in Townsville. They have all been put in jeopardy because we left it to the vagaries of the market. There was no gas reserve policy like WA had at the time. Everyone celebrates what a wonderful job they did over there. Most of the rest of the world had reserve policies, but we did not.

Paragraph 3 relates to securing the North West Minerals Province. I refer to an article in the 22 March *Australian Financial Review* because this speaks volumes. Vast Solar is saying they have to do a joint venture with Stanwell, which is the power station that closed down at Mount Isa. They are suddenly going to build a big solar project out there. It says—

Stanwell was the original generator of power in Mount Isa before it shut its Mica Creek plant at the end of 2020—
just closed—

leaving APA Group the dominant generator from its gas power stations in the region.


So we have a monopoly there now. We are not connected to the grid out there. It continues—

Mount Isa is not connected to the National Electricity Market, with the result that the Vast Solar project does not need to be competitive with the low average wholesale prices on the NEM but against higher prices.

They are saying, 'We have a great project here because we can capitalise on the world's highest power prices if you got out of the North West Minerals Province.' The issue we are supposed to be addressing is to get prices down, but they are celebrating the fact that they can take advantage of these high prices. I will say that again: right now in the North West Minerals Province we have the highest power prices in the industrial world. I am led to believe it is down to \$40 a megawatt hour; \$140 to \$200 a megawatt hour if you are trying to start a mine in Mount Isa.

As for the north-west blueprint and building anything out there, we have \$650 billion in resources still sitting in the ground, an amazing enabler for the Queensland economy—for the Australian economy—but you have to enable that stuff with competitive power. The CopperString project can deliver it at around \$100 a megawatt hour—or a touch higher maybe—and \$200 for the majority of users down to \$100 is an enormous enabler, so it must be a priority.

I will acknowledge the Premier has been very positive and given some assistance to date, but I have to say that 10 years ago there was a lot of positive talk around CopperString. Everyone thought it was going to happen. Xstrata, the precursor to Glencore, said, 'Yes, it's all going to happen,' and it did not. It fell over. They built Diamantina. It was self-serving for Xstrata and they have regretted it ever since, but it fell over because it was not driven to the finish line. It has to be driven to the finish line. It is very startling to hear Vast Solar say, 'We're going to take advantage of higher prices into the future.' We have to connect to the NEM like coal and gas in the Surat Basin have all been able to do in Queensland. As a parliament we must support connecting to the NEM in the North West Minerals Province in order to prosper from it.

 **Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement) (5.05 pm): I move the following amendment—

That all words after 'jobs' in paragraph 2 be omitted and the following inserted—

3. is committed to securing the sustainability and expansion of the resources sector including the North West Minerals Province by supporting and enabling growth in the generation and transmission of cheaper cleaner energy delivered through the National Electricity Market, including through support for and enabling of further investment, including projects such as CopperString 2.0, whilst retaining the critical role of government ownership of energy assets; and notes the government's support for CopperString 2.0 including \$14.8 million investment and underwriting of the initial development costs; and
4. will support energy policy and domestic gas policy that ensures Queensland households and business can benefit from the state's abundant energy resources including coal, gas, renewables and future hydrogen production.

There is only one side of this House that can come in here and talk about their record in delivering lower power prices and building job-creating infrastructure. There is only one side of this House that can come in here and talk about how they stopped the sell-off of our assets and kept our power companies in public hands.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr de BRENNI: I am glad they are listening. Since we came to office there have been 44 large-scale renewable projects coming online, generating 4,600 megawatts and \$8.5 billion of investment. It is this Labor government—to answer the question of the members opposite—that is building more transmission infrastructure to support more job-creating projects—a publicly owned electricity capital pipeline worth over \$2 billion over five years.

This government has a laser-like focus on creating decent, secure jobs because it is all about lower power prices that will deliver more manufacturing jobs by enabling the decarbonisation of Queensland's largest emitters. It is cleaner energy that will help the resources sector to remain sustainable. Not only do the new minerals projects need transmission; they will need firm, reliable generation as well. This is absolutely true for the North West Minerals Province. The Palaszczuk government is enabling new projects in this sector by growing generation and doing the planning for transmission of our cheap and clean energy into and around that region. We will create a low-emission industrial ecosystem to support investment and job security for workers in the north-west.


This government is a supporter of projects, including CopperString, which do just that. As the member for Traeger said, we have put our money where our mouth is. In May last year the Premier announced that our government will invest \$14.8 million in CopperString as part of our economic recovery plan. At the recent election the Premier committed to underwrite the initial development cost of the project to help get it off the ground. I recently joined the Deputy Premier and representatives from Sun Metals and CopperString to announce a further \$17 million agreement backed by the Palaszczuk government. We will continue to work closely with CopperString as we deliver this project. We have a clear track record and we are well on our way to meeting our renewable energy commitments.

One would think the LNP would be on board with this. One would think that, after seeing and hearing the potential for jobs and the opportunity for lower power prices, they would jump on board with our approach. But, sadly, that is not the case. Again and again, we have heard members of the opposition calling renewables in this state a fantasy—that is how they have described it. All that does is undermine job-creating projects. We have heard crickets from the opposition leader. He has failed to call out the member for Callide who has described our renewables as fantasy. He has failed himself to support renewables in Queensland. The LNP have failed to support the thousands of women and men who work in the industries that renewables offer a lifeline to. I am talking specifically about high-emission electricity intensive manufacturers and the resources sector itself.

I want to also make this point: our government will move quickly to ensure our policies support the creation of more renewable projects, more jobs in manufacturing and more jobs in resources—good, secure, well-paying jobs in existing and emerging sectors. Queensland is poised to lead the

nation when it comes to the future of hydrogen development and production. The eyes of the world are on Queensland and we are determined to take advantage of the abundance of resources—in particular, our wind and solar opportunities—to create jobs and export that hydrogen to the world. It is pretty straightforward. Renewables equals jobs. Hydrogen equals jobs. As well as that, unlocking the North West Minerals Province with projects like CopperString means jobs too. It is only the Palaszczuk government that will deliver those jobs.

(Time expired)

 **Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (5.11 pm): I support the motion moved by the member for Traeger, and particularly the first point which states that this House ‘acknowledges that the Queensland government should maintain control of, and responsibility for, investment decisions regarding major electricity infrastructure, including in renewable generation, through regulation, ownership and operational roles’.

The purpose of the electricity industry is to drive economic development and jobs, not just profit for electricity businesses, either private or government owned. I would much prefer these businesses were government owned. At least the profits would then go back to schools, hospitals and roads, not to overseas companies. We want to ensure that the government does not bow down to corporate pressure but instead maintains control of the electricity industry through regulating, operating and, most importantly, owning the asset.

The economic rationalists will moan about the importance of the free market and how government intervention supposedly creates inefficiency. However, recent history does not support this view. We do not want a repeat of Queensland’s uncontrolled development of the LNG export industry which delivered a tripling of gas prices and the destruction of Queensland’s energy price competitive advantage and the manufacturing industry. In 2006 there was a bad decision by the Beattie government when they sold off the retail arm of our energy sector. The LNP cheered on the sale and they were also disappointed that they did not go further and sell off our energy generators, poles and wires. I table one of those speeches.

Tabled paper: Extract, dated 30 November 2006, from the *Record of Proceedings*, Queensland Parliament, speech by the member for Clayfield, Mr Tim Nicholls MP, titled ‘Electricity and Other Legislation Amendment Bill; Energy Ombudsman Bill’ [\[379\]](#).

We were told that electricity prices as a result of competition would decrease but, since then, electricity prices have tripled. Yes, there has been competition—after the electricity prices have tripled. The free market approach, asset sales and privatisation have led to nothing but higher prices for customers, less secure work for Queenslanders and bigger profits for overseas shareholders. The sale of Queensland Rail was another example of that.

We are strongly for renewable energy. There is a project that is very important to my heart because it is in my electorate. The Tully Millstream Hydroelectric Scheme was an approved project. A tunnel had already been constructed. It would have saved \$200 million in electricity generation losses coming from the south. It would have powered 100,000 homes. It would have been a massive job-creation project for that region. However, it was knocked on the head. I believe that if that project had taken place we would now be receiving cheaper power in North Queensland and clean energy.

In terms of regulation this is very important, because we are saying that the government needs to regulate. We are in support of cogeneration, as I have sugar milling companies in my electorate. It is about embracing that where they invest into cogeneration—the burning of the sugarcane bagasse which creates the energy which powers homes. It is a marvellous opportunity. I believe the government needs to invest in this and support these sugar milling companies. The main thing is to regulate to ensure that the money flows back to the canefarmers and the community, which will give them the advantage of increasing cane supply agreements and more money will flow back to the community.

As I was saying, we are supportive of renewable energy. These are great projects. Our big concern is that we have renewable energy projects that are funded by the taxpayers, but they are overseas companies which create the power, the power goes back into the grid and then the money goes overseas. This needs to be regulated. We need to look after the state government owned energy assets before we look after overseas companies. Some of these solar farms and wind farms are pretty good, but we have to be very careful that it is not privatisation by stealth.

We want to avoid repeating the mistakes of the past where the government lost control of the industry to overseas companies. If that happened, shareholders and the Queensland consumers would again pay for it in higher electricity prices and lost jobs. I commend this motion to the House.



Mr McCALLUM (Bundamba—ALP) (5.16 pm): I rise to speak in support of the amended motion. I am always more than happy to stand in this House and talk about our government's record on public ownership of energy assets in Queensland. It is the Palaszczuk Labor government that stood shoulder to shoulder with workers and stood against the LNP's privatisation agenda. Who could forget the LNP's asset sales agenda in 2014 under Campbell Newman? It was a plan to sell off Queensland's energy assets right down to the poles and wires. My own Bundamba community has not forgotten and I know Queenslanders have not forgotten either.

It was the Newman LNP government that put Swanbank E power station into cold storage, sacked 25 workers and prepped it for sale. They started to close down Tarong Power Station and, if given the chance, they would not have stopped there. At our state owned energy providers—Energex, Ergon, Stanwell, CS Energy and Powerlink—as well as the ports of Gladstone and Townsville, the for-sale signs were printed and ready to go, but it was the Palaszczuk government, the trade unions fighting on behalf of their members, like the Electrical Trades Union, and an overwhelming number of Queenslanders that stopped their privatisation agenda. They said no to cutting, sacking and selling. They said that Queensland is not for sale.

As a result the Palaszczuk government has kept our energy assets in the hands of Queenslanders for the benefit of Queenslanders. Dividends do not flow overseas to multinational shareholders—as they would have under those opposite—but they go straight back into the pockets of Queensland families and businesses. Due to continued public ownership and well-considered policy, Queenslanders have enjoyed the lowest average wholesale electricity prices in the National Electricity Market for the past three years, and the benefits will continue to flow, with power prices forecast to fall a further 14 per cent over the coming three years.

At the height of the COVID pandemic, the Palaszczuk government was able to deliver \$600 million of genuine cost-of-living relief thanks to our publicly owned energy assets—with \$250 in utility rebates being rolled out to Queensland householders and \$500 to small businesses. For the benefit of the member for Traeger, I can report to the House that in North-West Queensland our government's relief package supported over 11,700 households and 1,800 small businesses to the tune of \$3.8 million. This is a direct result of continued public ownership and it would not have been possible if the LNP had sold our energy assets.

We all know that cleaner, cheaper energy means little unless there is security of supply. That is why since 2015 we have invested over a billion dollars in transmission and distribution infrastructure. As Queensland expands its renewable energy generation, it is this transmission infrastructure that will deliver our cleaner, cheaper electricity to homes and businesses across the state. That is why our government has also put \$145 million on the table to fund transmission infrastructure in our three renewable energy zones.

With expressions of interest for a further 192 projects, representing 60,000 megawatts of clean energy, we are encouraging even more investment by making it easier to connect to the national electricity market. Between Cairns and Townsville our initiative has attracted very strong interest from a variety of projects and primarily these projects will support the growing demand for new economy minerals extraction and processing that are critical components required for renewables and the new technology sectors. We also have our \$500 million Renewable Energy Fund for our publicly owned generators.

Townsville has long been the industrial hub of the north, and that is why Korea Zinc is investing millions of dollars in their Sun Metals zinc refinery to allow for future growth powered by clean energy. In 2018 Sun Metals built Australia's largest industrial solar farm and continues to set the pace for industry powered by renewable energy.

The Palaszczuk government is committed to securing an affordable and clean electricity supply for North Queensland. We are committed to supporting the economic and employment opportunities from renewables in the north and north-west of our state. It is a fact that on this side of the House all members acknowledge the significant opportunities presented by cleaner, cheaper energy.



Mr DAMETTO (Hinchinbrook—KAP) (5.21 pm): I rise in support of the motion in full moved by the member for Traeger. We have all failed Australians in terms of our resource industry over the years. State and federal governments have failed them all the way back to when we started pulling minerals out of the ground. Instead of doing what the United Arab Emirates did and pull our oil out of the ground and make a brilliant profit out of selling it to the world market, we took the lazy option. We let private companies from overseas come into our country, pull our minerals out of the ground and we took a lazy portion of royalties off the back end. That is what we have in Australia.


We should not be arguing about where the money to fund our hospitals, roads, local governments and things like that comes from. We should be paving our streets in gold. However, this parliament and the federal parliament have failed the people of Australia by not capitalising on the resources that are owned—and should be owned—by the Australian people, not sold to the highest bidder overseas leaving us a small royalty to take off the bottom.

Everyone in this House should agree that we have the leading energy resources in the world. We have some of the best thermal and coking coal, some of the largest deposits of gas and some of the best renewable assets and resources in the world. Unfortunately, we have some of the highest electricity prices in the world, especially if we take into consideration the North West Minerals Province. We are about to delve into new industries like hydrogen. We have an opportunity, even off the back of the gas industry and the gas opportunities that will come in the future, to put in place the right control measures to ensure that Queenslanders have cheap electricity to run their businesses. Unfortunately, unless we support a natural gas or energy reserve policy in this state, we will be failing future generations.

When it comes to coal and gas-fired electricity that drove the market in the minerals processing industry, high electricity prices have detrimentally affected our ability to compete on the world market in the production of cheap products, mining and the recovery of resources. If we were able to provide cheap electricity for these companies in Australia we could once again compete on the world market.

Significant damage has been done over decades by crippling gas prices. Previous governments have cost Queensland its energy competitive advantage and we have missed out on tens of thousands of jobs and billions of dollars because we cannot get cheap power and gas to those places wanting to do these jobs. I have heard of refineries and other places in New South Wales that have explored other options when their PPA agreements for gas have run out. One company in particular has gone back to burning coal, which is viewed in Australia as a dirty product, because they cannot obtain cheap gas. We should be moving towards cleaner energies and better opportunities. Unfortunately, we are going backwards because of failed policies from the past that we have had to live with.

Through our gas being sold off, we have seen other things happen across the spectrum as well. We have seen a scenario where we can no longer compete with overseas competitors. I attended a dinner the other night with Professor Garnett, Director of the Centre for Natural Gas at the University of Queensland. He pointed out something that was very alarming to me. We have about seven billion people in the world right now. We might think that future gas markets will be driven by policy, but they will be driven by demand. By 2050 we will have about 10 billion people on this planet who will want our coal, our renewable energy, our hydrogen and our natural gas. If we do not have the protections in place to ensure that Queenslanders and Australians can afford that product in the future, we will have failed our children. We will have failed the generation that comes after us and we would have given up our competitive advantage when it comes to being able to produce and conduct local manufacturing and refining here in Australia.

 **Mrs MULLEN** (Jordan—ALP) (5.26 pm): I rise to speak in favour of the amended motion. The Queensland government has a strong record in supporting the North West Minerals Province and we are committed to further developing the north-west's potential. On this side of the House we understand the valuable contribution that this region, its people and mineral mining and processing make to our state's economy. As one of the world's richest mineral-producing areas containing copper, lead and zinc as well as major silver and phosphate deposits and strong rare earth potential, we recognise these minerals are vital for the manufacture of everything from cars to computers to planes and technologies and devices that have yet to be created. Along with this world-class resource, what Queensland offers is regulatory certainty and stability of government that is attractive to potential investors.

However, we recognise that there are also challenges to investment in this region due to its isolated geography. There are challenges that require government to act and find solutions. We are proud of our record supporting the north-west through a range of measures that include \$39 million for the North West Queensland Economic Diversification Strategy, \$380 million of previous funding commitments for the Mount Isa rail line and \$80 million to reduce rail access charges on the Townsville to Mount Isa rail line. We also delivered a multimillion dollar deal to secure more than a thousand resource and manufacturing jobs by supporting operations at the Mount Isa smelter.

The North West Queensland Economic Diversification Strategy, developed in close consultation with key regional stakeholders, outlines initiatives across three critical themes for the north-west: one, to attract and support investment in the province; two, to strengthen the supply chains; and, three, to

build sustainable communities across the 10 local government areas of the province. Through these themes, the strategy aligns with the government's plans to leverage the north-west's competitive advantages in resources, agriculture, tourism and other sectors to support employment and economic growth.

Although mineral resources will remain the primary industry for this region, the strategy aims to support the growth of other industries that can weather commodity cycle impacts to optimise local employment opportunities. This includes supporting long-term sustainable employment; strengthening the services, employment outcomes and business opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people; identifying opportunities in new markets and through the supply chain; supporting innovative commercial methods; building business capacity and entrepreneurship in the area; setting a framework to enhance and optimise enabling infrastructure; strengthening industry and cross-government coordination; and encouraging investment in significant economic development and diversification projects. Much work has already been done at a local level to attract and retain workers and their families.

We also recognise that the north-west has a strategic relationship with surrounding areas. Critical supply chain and value-adding industries in Townsville rely on the commodities exported from the province. However, we acknowledge that one of the challenges faced by the region is the cost of electricity. This is an issue that our government is acting on.

As mentioned, we are of course providing \$14.8 million to support the development of the CopperString 2.0 project. On top of this, as the minister indicated, we have signed an implementation agreement that will underwrite further development costs that the project will incur. This agreement will assist the project as it pushes for its remaining approvals and to demonstrate that it stacks up financially. Members should not take my word for the support our government has given to the project. Joseph O'Brien, the managing director of CopperString, has congratulated the Queensland government for the collaborative approach our government has taken to the project. We have the runs on the board, but there is more to be done. The Palaszczuk government will do the work to ensure the north-west maintains its competitive advantage as a world-leading source of critical minerals.



Mr ANDREW (Mirani—PHON) (5.30 pm): I rise to support in its entirety the private member's motion moved by the Katter party. Now is the time to rebuild Queensland's economy after the devastating impact of the pandemic. In order to do that, we need the government to invest in North Queensland, not just in businesses in the south-east corner. The CopperString project is a massive project that starts in the electorate of Herbert and runs all the way out to Mount Isa. It will connect Townsville and Mount Isa as well as all of the generators along the line. The project has the capacity to totally transform the North West Minerals Province by adding more supply to the market and driving down power prices for locals, businesses and the mining industry.

The province has some of the largest copper, lead, zinc and silver deposits in the world as well as massive deposits of rare-earth and new economy minerals. It also has some of the most reliable and consistent renewable energy resources in the whole country. It has the potential to deliver thousands of new jobs and billions in royalties for the entire state. However, in order to achieve this the area desperately needs the cheaper energy prices the CopperString project will bring.


This motion calls on the government to support the project and to support the North West Minerals Province. It asks the government to commit to: supporting the North West Minerals Province and its one trillion tonnes of proven reserves that are able to be accessed and utilised and the new minerals that are held in the region; ensuring the CopperString project proceeds; and building the great water projects that have already been identified in North Queensland. I refer to Big Rocks Weir at Charters Towers, Urannah at Mackay, the Hughenden Irrigation Project, the Richmond irrigation scheme, Cave Hill at Cloncurry, Nullinga at Cairns and the water project at Laura. There are lots of opportunities for North Queensland, provided government regulators support companies that are ready to invest in and build our regions. It is in our regions that we grow our food and fibre and mine our best minerals. They also give us the revenue to run the state.

I call on the government to guarantee that future renewable energy generation projects are built, owned and operated by the state government. We do not want to see what we saw in Dysart, with talk of backpackers coming in and doing the work. It was not a good thing. Queensland has fought long and hard to keep our public electricity assets in public hands. We will not sit back and see our state's electricity generation network privatised by stealth or by any other means. We need to support our electricity workers and all the electricity assets we have. We need the government to commit to build, own and operate our renewable energy future.

Increasingly we see governments in Australia bowing down to the neoliberal framework that transforms government from a provider to an enabler of private provision of service. This has to stop. We should not be outsourcing or privatising Queensland essential services. In effect, that is what we are doing. The government should be investing directly in the construction, ownership and operation of renewable energy projects. There are billions of available funds in the publicly owned CleanCo budget that the government could use to do this.

In September last year, the Queensland government announced \$500 million in new funding to set up a renewable energy fund. The Treasurer said at the time that the moneys would be used to increase the public ownership of commercial renewable energy projects and supporting infrastructure. I would like to see some of that money, hopefully, put into the Mount Morgan region to shore up its water supply. Perhaps a power generator could be established as well. The government needs to show the workers and the community that it is investing in the future of Queensland and jobs and training, investing more in the renewables projects themselves.

It would be nice to see some of the renewables projects manufactured here in Queensland instead of them being outsourced overseas. Wouldn't it be lovely if the big wind turbines and our solar panels were built and installed by Queensland workers? The government must also reinvest, with strict conditions, the profits of CS and Stanwell to construct renewable energy generation assets. Doing this would provide a clear path to a fair transition for workers currently employed in the coal-fired generation sector and within the electrical industry in Queensland.

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (5.34 pm): I rise to speak in support of the amendment. The Palaszczuk government knows that there is huge potential in the North West Minerals Province. The demand for resources such as copper, rare-earth minerals, cobalt, nickel and more that Queensland has in abundance is growing throughout the world. That is why the Palaszczuk government has invested more than \$30 million to identify the next generation of commercial deposits of these minerals and others in the North West Minerals Province. Just last year our government provided a one-off incentive payment to extend the operation of Glencore's Mount Isa copper smelter and Townsville refinery beyond 2022 as part of the North Queensland economic recovery plan.

Mr Harper: Save jobs.

Mrs GILBERT: Yes, it is all about jobs. Rebrickng and other maintenance work will be provided for through the support package at the smelter for the next four years. An additional investment of more than \$500 million will be provided to Glencore to continue operation of its copper smelter and refinery. Our commitment sends a strong signal to the resources industry that the Palaszczuk government is investing in the North West Minerals Province, because ultimately that means more Queensland jobs. According to Glencore, this combined investment will help to maintain 750 jobs at the smelter and refinery on top of 1,000 indirect jobs.


Every member on this side of the House understands that cheaper, cleaner energy will deliver more jobs for Queensland. In fact, some of Australia's biggest employers have already chosen a clean energy future. Companies like Rio Tinto, Sun Metals, Wilmar Sugar and Agri-Corp with its meatworks have indicated that they can create more manufacturing jobs by going with renewables. In my community of Mackay, renewables and low-emission fuels will play a critical role in growing local manufacturing and sustaining our resource sector, along with the thousands of jobs they support.

In Mackay, Linked energy is fully off the grid. It is a solar powered engineering workshop. It produces its own solar energy, which it puts out onto mining sites. It services the mining industry through what it makes in its engineering workshops. This is an example of renewables, mining and manufacturing all working together to provide jobs.

Fortunately, since the Palaszczuk government was elected renewable energy development has been booming. Large-scale projects have come online and are being built, injecting \$8.5 billion into the Queensland economy. The investment has created over 7,000 jobs in construction alone. Almost all of these jobs have been in regional Queensland.

Queensland now boasts five of the top 10 solar suburbs in Australia, with rooftop solar being the biggest generator in the state. The great city of Mackay is shining bright. We have ranked fifth in Queensland and 10th in the country for rooftop solar, with over 10,000 systems generating over 61,000 kilowatts. Feeding this clean energy into the grid is our strong network of transmission infrastructure. As Queensland expands renewable energy generation, it is infrastructure that will deliver our cleaner, cheaper electricity to homes and businesses across the state. That is what families want—cheaper power.

When the Palaszczuk government announced the establishment of our renewable energy zones we committed \$145 million to fund transmission infrastructure, with expressions of interest for a further 192 projects representing 60,000 megawatts of clean energy. We are encouraging even more investment by making it easier to connect to the National Electricity Market. If those opposite had their way, our publicly owned energy companies like Powerlink would not be working for Queensland but overseas multinational shareholders, because alongside Powerlink the LNP wanted to flog off Energex, Ergon, Stanwell and CS Energy to the highest bidder. If this were a debate on public assets, I know which side of the House I would rather be sitting on. Mums, dads and businesses want modern, clean, cheap power that delivers jobs. I commend the amendment to the House.

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (5.40 pm): I rise to speak to the motion moved in the House by the Katter party and the amendments moved by the member for Springwood, the Minister for Energy. The motion at paragraph 1 states that the House 'acknowledges that the Queensland government should maintain control of, and responsibility for, investment decisions regarding major electricity infrastructure, including in renewable generation, through regulation, ownership and operational roles'.

The LNP believes in a free market in our energy sector to provide Queenslanders with the opportunity to maximise all options for the generation of electricity for business owners and for householders. The government of the day has the responsibility of managing our energy resources, ensuring electricity infrastructure is upgraded and maintained, and the operational logistics of supplying reliable energy. Excluding an opportunity for energy generation due to the government wanting sole control could jeopardise our pursuit of new energy sources for our future needs. Paragraph 2 of the motion is that the House 'acknowledges that leaving such investment decisions solely up to private developers and individual companies means Queenslanders miss out on important economic development opportunities and well-paying stable jobs'.

Any government should be working with private developers and individual companies to secure our future energy requirements to build a better Queensland, one with workable investment outcomes to ensure the state's economic wellbeing, our energy sustainability and robust job security.

The price of electricity is set by a combination of regulated prices set by the Australian Energy Regulator or market contracts offered by retailers at prices decided on a commercial basis. Having private investment and competition with the regulators watching over the price of electricity will ensure all consumers are not paying above the price set. Rural and regional areas of Queensland have limited choices in their electricity supplier today and this needs to be rectified so that consumers do have the opportunity to compare the cost of electricity to their homes and businesses.

Paragraph 3 of the motion states that the House 'is committed to securing the future of the North West Minerals Province by integration into the National Electricity Market'. This point is proposed to be amended by the government, and we can accept that amendment. The LNP is committed to safeguarding the future of the North West Minerals Province and has always supported this project through the construction of CopperString 2.0. It is expected to cost \$1.5 billion, with the Palaszczuk government's total contribution of \$15.98 million to date. Queensland is going to need strong significant investment from the private sector if the North West Minerals Province is ever to feed into the national power grid. The project completion time line of three years is difficult to imagine right now without more investment from government and private investors. The project has the capacity to inject \$154 billion in minerals production up to 2050 and over 3,000 jobs.

With regard to paragraph 4 of the motion in terms of the amendment proposed by the government, we can accept that amendment as well. We need affordable and reliable electricity to be delivered to each and every household and every business, large or small. Without it, our future does not look good. I am supportive of an energy policy. However, it has to include the affordability and reliability aspects. Just having abundant energy resources is not enough.

With regard to a couple of issues that were raised by other speakers, I note that the sale of our generators came up quite often. The sale of those generators would not bring near the money that was talked about at one stage. I note that in the last Audit Office report the decrease in Stanwell, CS Energy and CleanCo amounted to a \$1.1 billion downgrade. They combined and their revenues dropped \$1.5 billion in that same period, so their value has dropped dramatically. They still generated 68 per cent of this state's energy, yet their values are decreasing. Another thing that was mentioned in the Audit Office report was the government's plan for a smooth transition to its renewables target. I have not talked to anybody in the industry who can tell me that plan—nobody—so I would ask the government to produce that plan. Show us that we have a firm, committed plan that will deliver consistent, reliable electricity.



Hon. GJ BUTCHER (Gladstone—ALP) (Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water) (5.44 pm): Tonight I rise to support the amendment to the motion because I know that electricity input costs are an important issue for Queensland businesses right across the state of Queensland, especially as we continue our regional economic recovery. This is a particularly important issue for those in regional Queensland—and I am very proud to be the Minister for Regional Development—and critical to the long-term success of manufacturers that I also advocate for every day in my role as the Minister for Manufacturing.

The manufacturing sector contributes more than \$20 billion annually to the state's economy and, more importantly, it employs over 163,000 people. That represents around seven per cent of the state's total workforce, and I am proud to say that 25 per cent of those jobs are in regional Queensland. These jobs support families, they support people buying a house and they build strong regional communities. I stand here today not just as a minister and community representative from a great community in Gladstone but also as someone who knows this all firsthand. I raised my family in regional Queensland, working in Gladstone's energy intensive alumina refinery and manufacturing industry. That local supply chain alone supports thousands of jobs in Gladstone and surrounding regions. To continue to secure regional jobs for the future, these manufacturers need growth in the generation and the transmission of cheaper, cleaner energy delivered through the national energy market.

We are continuing on our plan to bring prices down in Queensland. We have the energy trifecta—the lowest average wholesale price on the eastern seaboard, reliable supply, and a planned expansion to a renewable energy future. Queensland manufacturers can feel secure in their future under this government. Wholesale prices have almost halved since 2016-17. We are investing in hydrogen, we are investing in gas and we are investing in renewables. We are investing in CopperString 2.0 and, through my department's Queensland manufacturing hubs network, we are working every single day to help deliver them and build energy literacy and make improvements for their energy usage and efficiency, thereby lowering energy bills in regional Queensland.

We have been doing this by working with Ai Group to undertake a project to conduct energy audits of 20 manufacturing businesses to determine their current usage and to identify savings and reduce the waste that they have in their businesses. This was based on a pilot program that found a number of opportunities for energy efficiency, including peak lopping, which is staggered starting of machinery to spread the load over time; more efficient compressors in their businesses as compressors which are consistently cycling through are a major energy user; heat recovery in those businesses; boiler tuning; and increasing energy literacy among business owners. We are also assisting manufacturers in regional Queensland to adopt new technologies such as robotics and autonomous systems, build skilled workforces and also introduce world's best practices.

Our government's Advanced Manufacturing 10-Year Roadmap and Action Plan is being implemented in partnership with industry to help drive the transformation of our manufacturing industry to become even more competitive, access new supply chains and markets and generate new highly skilled jobs in Queensland. These initiatives will underpin the creation of thousands of minerals, mining and industrial manufacturing jobs for generations to come and stimulate large-scale renewable energy investment.

I am proud to be part of a government that backs Queensland's manufacturing jobs and I am pleased to support the amendment to the motion. Where would our Queensland manufacturers be if the LNP had its way? Our borders would be open, with jobs at risk, and our assets sold, with electricity prices skyrocketing. In 2012 those opposite went to the election promising no asset sales and lowering prices. By 2015 they were selling every energy asset that overseas accountants could get their hands on.

(Time expired)



Mr BERKMAN (Maiwar—Grn) (5.49 pm): I rise to make a contribution on this private member's motion brought by the member for Traeger. While we disagree with the Katter's Australian Party on a great many things, there is a lot in this motion that we do agree with them on. The strong support for public ownership that is evident in this motion is absolutely something the Greens support and that we have been vocal about for some years now. There are some pretty much indisputable facts for Queenslanders in leaving energy generation to the private market. It means less stable energy, it means less secure jobs and it means less for ordinary Queenslanders but more profits for multinational energy corporations that we are inviting into this state.

Both Labor and the LNP have left virtually all new renewables generation to be built in Queensland to be built and owned by the private sector. Since Labor privatised electricity retail in 2006 prices have nearly doubled. These are the sorts of facts that bite every day for Queenslanders. Under current plans, the proportion of electricity generation owned by Queenslanders will drop. This was laid bare in estimates this year. We had confirmation that the government's policy is to maintain majority public ownership as we transition to renewables. That is compared with the current level of public ownership which is around 67 per cent.

Mr Boothman interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Pause the clock. Member for Theodore, you are warned.


Mr BERKMAN: That is a pretty significant drop. That represents a 17 per cent drop in public ownership under current policy settings. Seventeen per cent of our publicly owned generation assets will be privatised by stealth. We need to talk about CleanCo. It is clear that CleanCo is a PR exercise. It is the flagship for the government's renewable policy at the moment. Under CleanCo the proportion of publicly owned renewables in Queensland will drop. Since it was announced in 2018, CleanCo has not built any publicly owned renewables.

I understand that of the 1,000 megawatts that it has been touted to deliver, 720 megawatts will be power purchase agreements. They will be guarantees to buy electricity off private generators, effectively locking in their profits. Only 100 megawatts—a drop in the ocean—will be publicly owned by CleanCo by 2024. Adani has built more renewables than CleanCo. Shell has committed to building more renewables than CleanCo.

Under the plan that the Greens took to the state election we would end electricity privatisation by establishing Energy Queensland, a democratic, public authority that has responsibility for all generation, transmission and distribution networks and retail. Our plan would have meant 20,000 megawatts of publicly owned renewables, which is closer to 80 per cent public ownership, by 2030.

Broadly speaking we do support CopperString 2.0 and expanding into the North West Minerals Province. This needs to be done responsibly, with strict environmental regulation and good enforcement of that regulation. It is essential that we get these raw materials for the renewables expansion. We need them to reach 100 per cent renewables as quickly as possible. What we cannot support, which is in both the Katter's motion and in the government's amendments, is ongoing support for coal and gas.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change could not be any clearer: we cannot afford to keep using fossil fuels. They cannot be the basis of our energy system for any more than they absolutely need to be. It is an absolute dereliction of our duty to future generations. It is reprehensible for the government to continue to offer false hope by holding out the promise of jobs in coal. Coal is dead; it is on the way out. If we do not offer stability through that transition for those communities that rely on the resources sector that is digging up thermal coal or the electricity sector, we will have absolutely failed in our duty to Queenslanders. Electricity is an essential service. Private corporations simply should not be allowed to profit from something that every Queenslanders needs to live a good life. I support much of the intent of this motion, but in the interests of a safe climate we cannot support it overall.

 **Hon. SJ STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (Minister for Resources) (5.54 pm): It is the Palaszczuk government that is backing all sectors of the Queensland resources industry with real policy and real financial support. The resources sector supports more than 68,000 jobs right across the state and represents \$49 billion in exports. Queensland leads the nation when it comes to our domestic gas policy.

The Palaszczuk government has released more than 20,000 square kilometres of land for gas exploration and production from which gas can only be supplied to the Australian domestic market. In September 2020 we awarded petroleum and gas tenders that included three areas for domestic-only gas supply across 453 square kilometres in the Bowen and Surat basins. These releases have led to further market diversification. Two of these areas were awarded to Comet Ridge and the other to Senex Energy located next to its Project Atlas. Project Atlas was the first domestic supply condition tenure and has been kicking goals ever since it commenced production in January 2020.

Just last month Senex Energy reached an incredible milestone at Atlas by reaching its nameplate production of 32 terajoules a day ahead of schedule. That is not a day ahead of schedule; that is 32 terajoules a day ahead of schedule. Senex is now supplying Queensland gas users with 10 per cent

of their natural gas requirements which is vital for creating and supporting jobs in the manufacturing industry. That is not all. Last month Senex Energy agreed to a further domestic gas sales agreement with our Queensland owned power generator, CleanCo, for 2.5 petajoules of natural gas in 2022. This will also be supplied from Senex's Atlas project.

The Palaszczuk government is doing all the heavy lifting when it comes to both domestic gas supply and policy. The Commonwealth government needs to come to the table and support additional gas infrastructure in Queensland to get our abundant gas supplies to market. I would encourage gas reliant manufacturers in the southern states who feel like they are not being heard to move to Queensland where this government values gas for local business. Why would they not? We are the envy of the southern states when it comes to COVID, we have great weather, we have great opportunities to develop more manufacturing, we have great people and sometimes we even play the footy they play down there.

When it comes to the North West Minerals Province the Palaszczuk government is doing everything in its power to untap the huge potential it represents. There are opportunities in traditional metals like copper, lead and zinc, but there are also great opportunities in emerging resources like cobalt, vanadium and scandium—sometimes called scandanadium—which will play a key part in the world moving forward. We have developed a strategic blueprint for the North West Minerals Province and backed it with a \$27 million Strategic Resources Exploration Program, which has a strong focus in areas around Queensland's North West Minerals Province.

On top of that, we have the \$13 million New Economy Minerals Initiative and the additional \$10 million Collaborative Exploration grants to help explorers discover those new economy minerals and support future jobs in Queensland's resources sector. Combined, this is around \$50 million in initiatives and COVID-19 support which has helped our resources and exploration sector continue working strongly despite the global pandemic and could increase exploration and investment in the North West Minerals Province.

We all know that a key part of unlocking the North West Minerals Province will be through important infrastructure such as CopperString 2.0. Not only will it create hundreds of jobs during construction; it will also provide cheaper and reliable power for miners in the North West Minerals Province which will help new and smaller mines open in the future along with those that are already operating. It has been 233 days since the federal member for Herbert promised the people of Townsville that \$195 million would stay in the city after the federal government failed to fulfil their election commitment to build stage 2 of the Houghton pipeline. After 233 days here is the opportunity: invest in CopperString 2.0 because that is where we need the investment. It is only the Palaszczuk Labor government that has the vision and the foresight to secure our domestic gas supply, stimulate investment in exciting new resource provinces and futureproof our energy needs.

(Time expired)

Amendment agreed to.

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

Resolved in the affirmative in accordance with special sessional orders.

Motion, as agreed—


That this House—

1. acknowledges that the Queensland government should maintain control of, and responsibility for, investment decisions regarding major electricity infrastructure, including in renewable generation, through regulation, ownership and operational roles;
2. acknowledges that leaving such investment decisions solely up to private developers and individual companies means Queenslanders miss out on important economic development opportunities and well-paying stable jobs;
3. is committed to securing the sustainability and expansion of the resources sector including the North West Minerals Province by supporting and enabling growth in the generation and transmission of cheaper cleaner energy delivered through the National Electricity Market, including through support for and enabling of further investment, including projects such as CopperString 2.0, whilst retaining the critical role of government ownership of energy assets; and notes the government's support for CopperString 2.0 including \$14.8 million investment and underwriting of the initial development costs; and
4. will support energy policy and domestic gas policy that ensures Queensland households and business can benefit from the state's abundant energy resources including coal, gas, renewables and future hydrogen production.

**CRIMINAL CODE (CONSENT AND MISTAKE OF FACT) AND OTHER
LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL****Second Reading**

Resumed from p. 775, on motion of Ms Fentiman—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (6.06 pm): I am a son. I am a brother. I am a husband. I am a father. I am a boss. I am a colleague. I am a friend. I am surrounded by amazing women and girls who enrich my life and the community in which I live and work. I abhor all violence. I particularly abhor violence towards women and children. Sexual violence has no place—no place—in our society. My wife, Taryn, and I are raising our sons to be strong but gentle, providers and protectors. We are raising our daughters to be strong, confident, safe and under no illusion that, like my sons, when they grow up they can do whatever they set their minds to.

The conversation the nation is having at the present time needs to be had. In fact, it is long overdue. The stories we are hearing should never have happened but because they did it is important that they are shared. Our society needs to change its culture. It starts with each individual, with each family, with each community and this parliament can play its part, as we do today in debating the Criminal Code (Consent and Mistake of Fact) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020.

I am a member of the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee. The inquiry we undertook on the bill was challenging and that was before we saw unfold the events in our nation's capital. At the outset I thank my parliamentary colleagues on the committee and, in particular, the committee secretariat—Renee, Margaret, Kelli and Lorraine.

As member for Clayfield detailed, this bill arose out of a very specific request from the former government to the Queensland Law Reform Commission, the QLRC, around consent and mistake of fact. The bill proposes to amend the Criminal Code to implement the five recommendations of the subsequent QLRC report. As the explanatory notes advise—

The recommendations in the QLRC's report are based on a rigorous examination of the operation of the laws on consent and excuse of mistake of fact in Queensland. The transcripts from 135 rape and sexual assault trials during 2018 and 40 appellate decisions from between 2000 and 2019 were examined in addition to another 76 trials referred to it at its invitation. The QLRC's analysis should be recognised as extensive constituting an almost exhaustive and entirely forensic examination of the current operation of the relevant laws in Queensland. The rigorous approach of the QLRC has produced an objectively solid evidence base for the most appropriate form of legislative amendment in response to the community concerns which gave rise to its Terms of Reference.

The QLRC's extensive and rigorous review did not find evidence to support a conclusion that Queensland's current laws should be the subject of extensive change. However, the QLRC concluded that some aspects of the existing law of Queensland would benefit from being made more explicit in the Criminal Code.

The member for Clayfield and others have referenced the specific recommendations, so I will not reiterate them. Suffice it to say, four of them relate to principles that can be distilled from the current case law in Queensland but are not currently explicitly spelled out in the Criminal Code. Those principles are: silence alone does not amount to consent; consent initially given can be withdrawn; a defendant is not required to take any particular steps to ascertain consent but a jury can consider anything the defendant said or did when considering whether they were mistaken about consent; and the voluntary intoxication of the defendant is irrelevant to the reasonableness of their belief about consent, though it can be relevant to the honesty of that belief.

A number of submitters to the committee, particularly those from the legal fraternity, highlighted the fact that these legislative changes codify existing case law. For lawyers and judges this is not always seen as necessary, but I like how the Bar Association of Queensland explained when asked if the changes were required. They said—

Not technically, no. I do think that if the law is more readily understandable by juries, if it is more readily understandable by members of the public who read the Criminal Code—because at the moment, even though it is absolutely there in the case law it would not be readily apparent to someone reading the Criminal Code. In that sense—and there has been some discussion about the educative aspect of legislation—we do not oppose it on that basis. We see that it serves a purpose. Our committee's view is that it does reflect the state of the law at the moment. It is not inappropriate for legislation to do that. We would not have said it was strictly necessary, but we support the Queensland Law Reform Commission's view that it would be useful, and on that basis, we support the bill.

Counteracting the argument that technically the amendments were not necessary were the submissions advocating that the bill amend section 348 of the Criminal Code to introduce an affirmative and communicative model of consent—that the amendments did not go far enough. For example, the

Queensland Sexual Assault Network said that an affirmative model would assist in addressing incidences of freezing. Similar views were expressed by the LGBTI Legal Service, Rape and Domestic Violence Services Australia, Rape and Sexual Assault Research and Advocacy, QCOSS and the Women's Legal Service. In particular, the Women's Legal Service Queensland, in voicing a request of many, called for the Tasmanian model to be provided. They said—

I would say that the way the Tasmanian law introduces this is that it says essentially that a mistaken belief by the accused as to the existence of consent is not honest and reasonable if and then it goes on to say they did not take reasonable steps in the circumstances known to him or her at the time of the offence to ascertain that the complainant was consenting, so that is the way that it is iterated in the Tasmanian Criminal Code. What they are saying is that if the defendant has not taken reasonable steps to ascertain consent then they cannot even rely on the defence for the excuse.

I was interested to know if that model had led to clearer and more successful prosecutions. Whilst the WLSQ was not able to provide quantitative results demonstrating such, as the member for Clayfield mentioned, QCOSS subsequently provided a 2012 PhD thesis by Helen Cockburn. As the member for Clayfield said, the key finding, as presented by QCOSS was that the 'Tasmanian reforms have not lived up to their promise because judges and the legal profession have been reluctant to fully implement them'. QCOSS concluded that 'clearly, legislative reform as part of a largest suite of reforms—including judicial education—will most likely deliver better outcomes for sexual assault survivors'.


In response to calls for a more affirmative model of consent along the lines of the Tasmanian model, the Queensland Law Society highlighted that the two states have quite different laws in this space. As others have read that into *Hansard* I shall not, but I direct members of the Glass House electorate to the response by the Queensland Law Society on that. Similarly, the Department of Justice and Attorney-General explained—

The QLRC did talk about the fact that affirmative consent can be defined in a lot of different ways. The QLRC found that the elements that already exist in Queensland law provide for a model of affirmative consent. Consent as it is defined in section 348 has a couple of elements. The first one is that the person has to actually consent—their actual state of mind—and then it has to be voluntarily given. That requirement is indicative of an affirmative consent model.

It goes on. Based on these submissions and responses, the committee recommended—

... the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence undertake consultation with key stakeholder groups as a matter of urgency in regards to addressing sexual violence in Queensland, including examining the experience of women in the criminal justice system as a whole and possible future areas for reform such as attitudinal change, prevention, early intervention, service responses and legislative amendments as necessary.

It is there that I want to conclude my contribution. I do not believe that this matter ends with this legislative debate. If anything, I suspect this is only a start. There does need to be further reform. There does need to be society-wide attitudinal change. There does need to be more education, more prevention, better early intervention and better service responses. Yes, we may need further legislative amendments. This is not the end. This is a start and a positive one at that. I support the legislation.

 **Ms BUSH** (Cooper—ALP) (6.16 pm): I rise to speak to the Criminal Code (Consent and Mistake of Fact) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. As a member of the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee, I want to begin by thanking the secretariat for their hard work and also my parliamentary colleagues from all sides. I think we all truly understood the importance and significance of what we were doing and what our task was.

The need to understand and clarify consent has never in our history perhaps been greater. In the time even that I have been a parliamentarian, women across Australia have been traumatised by the ongoing rape culture that exists. Women have also been emboldened by the stories of survivors—people like our 2021 Australian of the Year, Grace Tame—who have spoken with a jarring truth of the experience of women in Australia and within our criminal justice system. Women across our own parliament have spoken. There have been many voices but the same story—a story of abuse, shame, silence and a deep knowing that, even if they report, the odds are stacked against them in relation to securing an offence.

We believe that just 15 per cent of alleged sexual assaults in Queensland are ever reported to police, and less than half of those proceed to trial. I am so proud to now be a part of a government that has led the nation in tackling violence, including sexual violence, against women. We accepted all 140 recommendations of the landmark *Not now, not ever* report, a report that was critical in building the foundations for our latest announcements.

This month, the Palaszczuk government announced the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce, which will look into the experiences of women in the criminal justice system. That is what we have been hearing loud and clear over and over from thousands of women who have said resoundingly that enough is enough.

Let me begin by addressing what this bill achieves. This bill will strengthen the legislation in relation to sexual consent and mistake of fact in Queensland. The bill implements all five of the Queensland Law Reform Commission's recommendations by amending the Criminal Code to make explicit four legal principles currently observed within the case law of Queensland in relation to charges relating to rape and sexual assault. Those principles are: silence alone does not count to consent, which we have acknowledged is critical, particularly in instances of freezing; consent initially given can be withdrawn because circumstances do change; regard may be had to anything the defendant said or did to ascertain consent when considering whether the defendant was mistaken about whether the other person gave consent; and a defendant's voluntary intoxication is not relevant to the reasonableness aspect of the excuse of mistake of fact.

This bill also implements the commission's recommendation to fix an inconsistency in the Criminal Code by clarifying that the definition of consent in section 348 applies to all chapter 32 offences. These amendments to the code are intended to strengthen and clarify the operation of the law, ensuring a consistent and correct application of these important legal principles by judges, juries and legal practitioners.

We made an election commitment to action the recommendations from the QLRC. The QLRC's review has been described as a forensic analysis of the current operation of the relevant laws in Queensland. The recommendations in the commission's report were based on examination of the operation of the laws in Queensland on consent and the excuse of mistake of fact. The transcripts from 135 rape and sexual assault trials during 2018 and 40 appellate decisions between 2000 and 2019 were examined in addition to another 76 trials referred to the commission at its invitation.

It is fair to say that feedback received both by the commission and throughout the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee's hearings was divided, demonstrating the complexity of this issue. The majority of submissions received from the legal fraternity, including the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service, supported the recommendations made in the commission's report. The Queensland Law Society, for example, stated—

We believe that the amendments as drafted strike an appropriate balance in what is a very difficult area.

The government acknowledges the submissions from the women's and sexual assault sector that have voiced their concerns that the bill does not go far enough. I thank these services that work tirelessly to provide support, legal assistance and advocacy to survivors of sexual assault. I want to assure them that our government is committed to improving the experience of women throughout the criminal justice system.

This is a first and important step in the direction of clarifying the law with regard to consent and mistake of fact. We do have an important opportunity now with a skilled and dedicated Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce to look at this issue holistically—from examining the barriers to reporting, which we know are many, through to how survivors will be supported throughout the investigation and prosecution and what I imagine will be an important conversation around what justice in fact looks like for our survivors. It is important to recognise that survivors of crime are in fact heterogenic and their idea of and needs around seeking justice do vary.

Further, to the women who found the strength to put their experiences down in writing, I think it is really important for you to know that we did read every one of your words, we believe you and we truly thank you for your submissions. Legislators have a responsibility to ensure the laws both reflect and keep up with community expectations. In the time that this bill has been considered, a seismic and necessary shift has occurred in Queensland—in fact, nationwide—in relation to how we as people view sexual harassment and assault, and I think it is fair to say how we think it should be responded to. At the heart of this lies the issue of consent.

As we saw through the QLRC report, in the majority of rape cases the question does not come down to whether or not a sexual act occurred but whether there was in fact consent. I recognise that legislation alone will not accomplish the shift that we are crying out for. We as a nation need to change how we view, describe and respond to sexual assault. It is not so much a leap forward but a 180-degree pivot and deep reflection that is required in this country. To underscore that point, the submission from the Queensland Council of Social Services concluded—

Clearly legislative reform as part of a larger suite of reforms—including judicial education—will most likely deliver better outcomes for sexual assault survivors.


Only this week I particularised instances of assault that I had experienced. What followed was a series—hundreds—of comments by members of the public laying the blame at my feet. As long as the blame rests with the victim we will never make real progress. While I wish legislative reform could alter deeply ingrained attitudes, I recognise the importance that social policy and education really does play in this space.

That is why I want to again congratulate the hard work and advocacy of our Premier and Attorney-General in putting together the task force that will deliver what Queensland needs and deserves—a holistic, deep dive into the experiences of women interacting as victims within the criminal justice system within this state. I am optimistic about the review announced by the education minister around whether we go far enough into consent in our schools. I think that is vitally important.

We know the data as reported. That being that one in five Queensland women have experienced sexual violence since the age of 15. One in four women have experienced violence at the hands of their partner. We know that women and girls are disproportionately affected by sexual assault. It still remains one of our most underreported crimes. This week I have had numerous women and men disclose to me instances of sexual violence, including being pressured by siblings to perform oral sex on their friends, feeling pressured into sleeping with a team leader at work while employed on a casual contract and women been prostituted by their partners against their will. Many of these people have never reported these crimes and have lived with the shame ever since. I absolutely believe our first focus needs to be on creating an environment where it is safe for victims to seek help and to ultimately report the crimes. We need an honest insight into what is happening for girls and women, with a focus on our minority groups and those who are particularly vulnerable, including our sex workers and those living with disability.

The review will be conducted by the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce headed by former president of the Queensland Court of Appeal, Margaret McMurdo. It is due to report on how to best legislate against coercive control by October and to deliver recommendations to government on how to best improve women's experiences in the criminal justice system within 12 months. Once we have these recommendations we will truly be in a position to advance women's rights and interests here in Queensland.

It has been said a number of times in this House already this week: the standard you walk past is the standard you accept. The Palaszczuk Labor government is choosing to not walk past this issue but to instead stand with the survivors in developing a new framework for addressing sexual violence in Queensland, commencing with this bill. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms BOLTON** (Noosa—Ind) (6.26 pm): As MPs we seek legislation that makes it better for the people the legislation is intended to serve. The assessment of the Criminal Code (Consent and Mistake of Fact) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020 prompted me to ask: does this piece of legislation do anything tangible for the people we serve? I am basically going to speak to clause 8 and the amendments to section 348 of the Criminal Code.

Legal Aid Queensland, existing to give legal help to financially disadvantaged people, does not consider these amendments are required, with the criminal law practice of Legal Aid having no issue with how the current provisions operate. However, the Queensland Law Society accepts the Queensland Law Reform Commission's position that there should be some amendments to the Criminal Code to clarify, reinforce and update the current operation of the law. Rape & Domestic Violence Services Australia said the bill fails to go beyond a negligible tinkering with the legislation concerning consent and the excuse of mistake of fact in Queensland.

Sexual offences continue to be highly under-reported throughout Australia and the rates of conviction for adult sexual offences continue to lag behind rates of conviction for most other serious offences. Many of these reports do not result in prosecution or are withdrawn at some stage in the proceedings. According to QCOSS, Queensland at 27 per cent of cases withdrawn is the second highest in Australia. Tasmania is the lowest at nine per cent.

Given that witnesses at the public hearing stated that the low reporting rates are attributable to the experience of the actual process itself, including multiple court hearings over what can be many years, we have much to do and the task force is a welcome addition. Questions were also put to attendees on whether the enactment of this legislation would in any way assist victims of sexual assault or prevent attacks happening. No-one could confirm that the bill would achieve either of these two vitally important issues. However, it was pointed out that that was outside the scope of the bill. It should have been the focus.

These amendments may well assist judges to provide properly informed directions to a jury about this area of law. However, as I pointed out in my statement of reservation, law entities do not agree on whether these amendments are even needed—which increases the confusion that we saw. The Queensland Law Reform Commission noted that the community is ‘the ultimate user of a law’, and effective communication of legislative rights and obligations is a key component of access to justice.

Questioning at the public hearing regarding how these changes could be communicated effectively through education, especially with our children, revealed that there was no concise answer. However, witnesses responded that translating laws into education is a consistent issue. Of relevance is the example of the Tasmanian affirmative model and the question on notice taken as to its effectiveness. It was felt that a lack of education contributed to a reluctance of courts to adopt this model which could have effected greater change, leading to understandable concerns.

The minister has said that further consultation with stakeholders in response to submissions will be undertaken as a matter of urgency, and our committee in its recommendations has reiterated that this must be undertaken. This gives reassurance that this bill may, at the very least, provide the mechanism in which the many issues within the submissions can be addressed.

With resources spent and the QLRC recommending this technical change, I do not oppose the bill, nor the last-minute amendments regarding the Legal Profession Act 2007, and I welcome the changes to online gaming. However, in my statement of reservation I have outlined what I do oppose, and that is that changes sought by our sexual assault survivors and frontline organisations were not included and prioritised. May their efforts through this bill be the catalyst for change and promptly delivered as a follow-up.

In closing, I thank my fellow Legal Affairs and Safety Committee members and chair for his patience. To our secretariat, the minister, departmental staff and all submitters: you took what was confusing—and it was confusing and difficult to grapple with—and made it less so. To witnesses at the public hearing: your attendance was deeply appreciated and your concerns I trust you have felt have been listened to and will be enacted on. The job you do is one of the toughest and your frustration is palpable and understandable.

This year is very much about responsibility, accountability and consequences. As MPs, we have a responsibility to ensure that legislation is in place that makes a difference with tangible, understandable outcomes for you and for those you are working so hard for. We can and must do better.



Hon. G GRACE (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (6.31 pm): It gives me great pleasure to rise to support this bill. The Criminal Code (Consent and Mistake of Fact) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020 includes amendments to the Wagering Act, the Interactive Gambling Act and the Racing Integrity Act to codify the national consumer protection framework, and I will say a few words about that.

We have had an extraordinary few weeks when it comes to highlighting the attitudes and actions—deplorable actions—occurring in our workplaces, in our parliaments and in areas of society that I think any normal person would categorise as completely unacceptable. It is good that here we are discussing mistake-of-fact and consent enhancements to our Criminal Code and that we are introducing a bill that was an election commitment. I congratulate the current Attorney-General and the former attorney-general who worked hard with the Queensland Law Reform Commission review to codify existing case law and to implement the recommendations made by the Queensland Law Reform Commission.

One of the primary reasons I wanted to speak is that I want to thank all of those constituents who have come to see me about these issues—and there have been many. I want to thank them in particular and I want to put on record that their contribution, the discussion they had with me and the frankness in which they opened up was very much appreciated. I very much respected their views and their position. As the local member, I thank them from the bottom of my heart that they came forward and felt comfortable to raise these issues with me.

It is because of these issues and all of the issues that we have heard about in the media—some deplorable actions—that we need to ensure that we deliver for the public and that we get this right. Whatever we do we have to get it right. I know that the current Attorney-General and the former attorney-general have an incredible ability to sift through the complicated issues that emerge in this area, streamline them and break them down to simple facts. I think the Queensland Law Reform Commission also does an excellent job in this space.

The four principles that the QLRC recommended will now be enshrined in our Criminal Code. That is a first step but it is a great first step. Let us not underestimate what we are doing here. Queensland is unique to other states such as Tasmania and Victoria in that we have a Criminal Code. The Criminal Code under which we operate in this state is different. We cannot just pick something up from another state and introduce it into Queensland. We have to be sure that we cross the t's and dot the i's and that we explore these issues fully to see how they are operating in the other states before deciding whether it is something we would incorporate here. I know that the current Attorney-General will definitely play a key role in that.

I will not go through the four main principles that we are enshrining, but we understand that this is obviously a first step. I commend the Premier and the Attorney-General in announcing the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce, which will examine women's experiences and the criminal justice system in a holistic way, not applying band-aids but looking at it in a holistic way. I know that the task force will make recommendations in this area.

Hand in hand with that, we need to do what others in this House have spoken about—that is, we need to ensure that we get our house in order. That house is either a parliamentary house including federally, our homes, our workplaces, our sporting grounds, our schools—whatever the circumstances are. All of those areas—all of those houses—need to be put in order. I know that education, as I have spoken about many times in this House over recent days, has an important role to play but we cannot do it alone. We also need families and society to contribute to this momentum that has been occurring not only in Queensland but all around Australia. We need to say no to sexual violence, no to sexism and no to any form of violence against women. We need to be firm.

As I said in the debate on the motion, this is a warning shot to perpetrators in that when you ask what has changed and when you ask what is going to happen, the answer is: we will no longer be silent. I urge all women to be brave and to have the courage to call out current and even past offences that have occurred against them. I urge women to be brave and to come forward. They are not standing alone. We are standing with them, so we urge them to do so. To the perpetrators, this is a warning. Whether you are a past perpetrator or you intend to be a future perpetrator, beware because this movement will not remain silent. I commend the amendments in relation to everything we are doing today. I look forward to a report on future steps that we can take.

In November 2018, the Queensland government committed to the National Consumer Protection Framework for Online Wagering. The framework contains 10 consumer protection measures including a ban on inducements to open an online wagering account or to refer a friend to open an account. These amendments bring Queensland into line with every state in Australia. Incentives will be banned. They will not be able to be given. We want to make sure that if Queenslanders are wagering—we know that Queenslanders and Australians love wagering—they do it on the basis of a lack of inducements and incentives.

The bill specifically prohibits the offering of an inducement to a person or an inducement to a customer not to close an account or open an account. It prohibits direct marketing being sent to customers without their express consent. It basically brings us in line with the rest of Australia, and I certainly support that. Importantly, the prohibition on inducements to open an account or refer a friend to open an account apply whether the wagering provider is licensed in Queensland or in another jurisdiction. Basically, we are now coming to terms on a level playing field with the rest of Australia because we want to minimise gambling related harm. I commend the minister for bringing forward these Wagering Act amendments as well.

There are a number of bookkeepers and online gaming providers to whom this bill will specifically apply, but as I said this government is committed to reducing the risk of harm. I did want to ensure—and I thank the Attorney-General for bringing this back—that we are in line with other states and that we are not putting our gaming providers in this state at a disadvantage; for example, where other states cannot do this but they can do it here, so it makes the level playing field not level at all.

I certainly support the changes to the Wagering Act and I thank the minister for bringing them forward. As racing minister, I know the industry will be very happy. The Racing Integrity Act will be amended so we can regulate this in line with the new changes, and I know that the Racing Integrity Commission looks forward to making sure we implement this now. I think the important thing is that we will have a lot of happy level playing field providers in this area who will now be on the same path as the rest of Australia.

These are important amendments. Changes to the mistake-of-fact defence are an incredible step forward. We may not have addressed everything, but I think there is a real essence and we owe it to the public to get this right. We owe it to our daughters, we owe it to our children and we owe it to society as a whole. We have the ability to send the very clear message that, if we take further steps, we are doing it on an holistic basis. We have fully researched it all. I commend the bill to the House.



Mrs FRECKLINGTON (Nanango—LNP) (6.41 pm): Madam Deputy Speaker—

Each and every one of us has an obligation to each other to not follow the ways of the past and to take our future on a new path. Those are the very strong words of Mason Black. This House has heard much about Mason Black, the school captain of Brisbane Boys' College. Those are his words.

I rise to contribute to the Criminal Code (Consent and Mistake of Fact) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020. As the House has already heard, the objective of this bill is to implement the five recommendations of the Queensland Law Reform Commission by clarifying aspects of the Criminal Code in relation to consent and mistake of fact. It is imperative to say, but it does not need to be said, that rape—in fact, any form of sexual violence—is an horrific offence and one that no member of society should accept or condone. For the victim it means a lifetime of agony and memories.

Reportedly, fewer than 10 per cent of rape cases make it to court. That means that many people are not held to account for their actions. But when they do get to court complainants are subjected to the agony of trial, which is a demeaning process that results in much second-guessing for the victim. The long-awaited Law Reform Commission report explicitly sets out the following legal principles as stated by the Attorney-General—

... silence alone does not amount to consent; consent initially given can be withdrawn; regard may be had to anything the defendant said or did to ascertain consent when considering whether the defendant was mistaken about whether the other person gave consent; and that a defendant's voluntary self-intoxication is not relevant to the reasonableness aspect of the excuse of mistake of fact.

The bill will address an inconsistency in the Criminal Code by clarifying that the definition of consent applies to all offences in chapter 32 of the Criminal Code, which include rape, attempted rape, assault with the intent to commit rape and sexual assault. To clarify why this is so important, the current defence used by many offenders is the mistake-of-fact excuse. This, quite frankly, is a loophole.

The law is full of loopholes. As a former lawyer myself, as are many of us in this House, including the Attorney-General and the shadow Attorney-General, we know that the law is full of loopholes. This is one loophole that needs to be changed. The mistake-of-fact defence allows a defendant to argue that they honestly and reasonably believed the other person consented to sex or the action. Quite frankly, no means no. Too many have been able to sail through this hole in our law, leaving victims to rightfully ask why the law has not been on their side.

In light of the current focus on the issue of sexual harassment, sexual assault and sexual violence it is timely that this bill is finally before the parliament, but it should have been before the parliament before this. It should have been before the last parliament. That is why I say the Law Reform Commission report was long-awaited, but when it was handed down no action was immediately taken. I am on record in this House many times talking about the need for this change, so I am pleased to contribute in a small way to this debate—but I have been on the record for years calling for this change.

As the LNP members who have spoken before me have stated, the LNP opposition supports this bill. I acknowledge the extensive consultation undertaken by the Law Reform Commission and I thank those who made submissions to the committee. In many cases this would not have been an easy process, and we all here thank you. While there is general community support for the proposals in this bill, I note that the Queensland Sexual Assault Network felt the bill missed an opportunity 'to broadly assess the operation and practical application of current legislation that would improve the safety of women, encourage them to report to police and engage with the criminal justice system'.

The Women's Legal Service has been calling for a change to these laws for a long time, noting that Queensland's current laws are inadequate and leave many women unprotected. The Women's Legal Service believes that a complete review of the system including laws, courts, police, community sectors and attitudes is needed. In their submission they state—

This bill as is, is a missed opportunity to draft legislation in a way that provides a clear and unequivocal benchmark for the whole community about acceptable norms for the community to expect in consensual sexual relationships.

They also note very concerning statistics, and I know they have been read out in this House, so I will not go through them. I would also note just briefly that I do agree with the committee's recommendation that the impact of these laws must be examined in the context of youth offenders as

well. I would like to acknowledge the words of the shadow Attorney-General, the member for Clayfield, who said that we are 'open to further legislative changes ... strongly supported by the evidence and that deliver a better system and outcomes than that which it seeks to replace. That must be the key to changes to this system'.

More work is needed to ensure that survivors of sexual assault can more easily make a complaint and endure the stress of a trial. This is an important start today in this House. We know it will go a long way towards closing the loophole that so many people have been able to jump through. We will continue to call for more societal change and more education. Because there are no better words, in my mind, I must conclude with the words of Mason Black, who said—

How can it be that even with all of our money and laws, every day women around our country continue to be abused, raped, psychologically vilified and denied basic human rights that most males take for granted? If we are so smart and so enlightened on this issue as a society, why is it still happening?

I see in the news today a police commissioner is calling on a sexual consult app as a way to now record consent.

I understand the good intention that he is proposing, but has our society degraded so far that in this day and age that we are living in, women have to have an app to say no?

What you really need is a basic acceptance and respect, and that boys is on all of us.

Boys, if a woman wants to say no, and she says no, we have to listen, understand and accept this.



Hon. DE FARMER (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development) (6.49 pm): I rise in support of the Criminal Code (Consent and Mistake of Fact) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020. In the last term I had the great privilege of being the minister for women and minister for the prevention of domestic and family violence. One of the unforgettable experiences of my term was travelling around the state in the development of our sexual violence prevention strategy. We spoke to service providers, police, people from health and other agencies, and so many other organisations that support victims and survivors. We spoke about how we all do in supporting victims of sexual violence and what we need to do to do better.

Importantly, we heard from survivors—brave and courageous people—about their experiences and about how and whether the system supported them. Because we were asking, because the support was around them and because these women had obviously chosen to come for that purpose, we received many one-on-one confidences from women about their experiences of sexual assault. A number of them had never before been shared, even after 20 or 25 years.

After travelling around Queensland hearing these brave people, we finished the consultations with quite a large session in Brisbane. After hearing all of those stories, I walked away from that last forum which was held here in Parliament House and I went back to my office in 1 William Street and closed the door and I cried because the suffering was horrific and the lifelong impacts were enormous. I also cried because I could see that, despite the good work of the many people across the sector involved in supporting victims and survivors, and despite the many reforms we have already put in place in this state, there were so many ways in which the system had let people down and so many ways in which people had fallen through the cracks and the demand was so extreme.

Reintroducing this bill addresses some of those cracks and it was a government election commitment. It codifies the existing case law and the recommendations made by the Queensland Law Reform Commission. The four principles the QLRC recommended be enshrined in the Criminal Code are: silence alone does not amount to consent; consent initially given can be withdrawn; regard may be had to anything the defendant said or did or did not say or did not do to ascertain consent when considering whether the defendant was mistaken about whether the other person gave consent; and that a defendant's voluntary intoxication is not relevant to the reasonableness aspect of the excuse of mistake of fact.

We understand that many survivors and service providers are disappointed with the recommendations made by the QLRC, believing that they do not go far enough in a range of ways but particularly in relation to affirmative consent. I understand that. I know that the Attorney-General has addressed some of these concerns in her speech today. Most particularly, she has placed those concerns in the context of the announcement she made with the Premier earlier this month of the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce, led by Margaret McMurdo AC. In addition to examining legislative options for dealing with coercive control, it will examine women's experiences in the criminal justice system in a holistic fashion and make recommendations to the government.

The QLRC report admits that the issues surrounding the matter of consent and related issues are complex and that legislative amendment is only one way of addressing these issues. That is why it is important that we allow the task force to do its work and that we do not rush amendments to our code that may have detrimental and unintended consequences. I do not think any of us can overstate the importance of this task force. While the QLRC report refers to a specific part in the journey a victim must undertake through the criminal justice system, there is so much else that must be addressed. The terms of reference for the task force in this context alone recognised that it is also its role to consider other things. The terms of reference state—

- actual or perceived barriers which contribute to the low reporting of sexual offences and the high attrition rate throughout the formal legal process of those who do report;
- ...
- the unique barriers faced by girls, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, culturally and linguistically diverse women, incarcerated women, elderly women, women in rural, remote and regional areas and LGBTIQA+ women, when accessing justice as both victims and offenders;
- policing and investigative approaches, including the collection of evidence and specialist training and trauma-informed responses to victims and survivors;
- how best to improve capacity and capability across the criminal justice system to understand and respond to the particular issues experienced by women as victims and offenders including for support and advocacy services ... ;
- ...
- other legislative and policy issues, including in relation to the criminal justice system and the interface between the criminal justice and domestic and family violence and sexual violence systems; and
- any other policy, legislative or cultural reform relevant to the experience of girls and women as they engage with the criminal justice system.

I wish to make a few points, though not exhaustively, about why to me these terms of reference are so important. The first is a story from a very brave and amazing young woman from my local community called Sarah who was sexually abused by a family member between the ages of 12 and 15. I have come to know Sarah very well. She is amazing, and I want her to know that. I will not use her surname, but Sarah has given me permission to tell her story, in particular her experiences of the criminal justice system. She wants her story to be told because she wants victims in the future not to go through what she went through. She is so keen to give voice to her experiences through the task force, and I want to thank the Attorney-General for the conversations we have had about this. Here are just a few things that Sarah told me about why the criminal justice system was so difficult for her. Unfortunately, she did not get the outcome she needed but this is some of what happened to her. She wrote—

When presenting to the police to make a complaint about—
the perpetrator—

I had no idea what to expect or what was needed from me. I sat in a very depressing room with a middle-aged male Police Officer asking me very intimate questions.

She was 16 at the time. She continued—

After I answered what I thought was required I left. Then several times after this I was asked more questions by the police to clarify things and try and be more specific. Now I had no issue with this however, the defence prosecutor used this as his argument that I couldn't remember certain things or specifics in my first statement.

She wished someone had explained what they needed and how specific she needed to be. She continued—

When the policer officer was going to arrest—
the perpetrator—

he said they were doing it on said date. Then we didn't hear anything and were very nervous about how—
he—

or his family would react. When we called the Officer he said 'oh sorry we didn't get time, will do it later in the week'. Not only did this put us through unnecessary stress but was unfair to not keep us updated on what happened. Then we didn't hear from the police officer for weeks and when we called for an update he said they did it last week. Not being informed of—

the perpetrator's—

warrant to present to a police station and that outcome was horrible.

They felt so unprepared. She continued—

On my first meeting—

with the prosecutor—

he wasn't allowed to go through any questions or what I could expect in the court room because it could be seen as coaching a witness.

- Having someone outside of the legal system to give the victim some guidance of the way they will try and word questions and make you feel confused ...

She said that would be so helpful. She continued—

With the court system there are a lot of mentions and hearings and no one let us know when they were happening or what they mean.

She wished they had someone to explain that to them. She continued—

When you're in the court room you're protected by a closed court however, getting to and from the court room and courthouse you're on your own. After testifying I left the courtroom, and I was met by a wall of the perpetrator's family all glaring me down and making very inappropriate comments towards me and also in the court room to my supporters.

This young woman went through two trials and she went right through to the end despite this and despite how it has destroyed her and her family. These are some of the reasons why women cannot continue through the criminal justice system and why they do not even get to the actual case, let alone a conviction.

There are so many issues around to choose; there are so many ways in which we can support these people so much better. This is a step, and I want to say that this government, this Attorney-General and this Premier are absolutely committed to doing what needs to be done to make this okay.

I want to thank the previous attorney-general, the current Minister for Health, for the amazing work that she did. It was a privilege to work with her and get to the point we did by the end of last term. This is so important. This is important for all of us. It is important for Sarah and all of those women who really depend on us.

Debate, on motion of Ms Camm, adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

McIntyre, Mrs D



Mr JANETZKI (Toowoomba South—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (7.00 pm): One of the great privileges of being the member for Toowoomba South is that you get to meet some extraordinary people. Toowoomba has double the average number of people aged over 85. That often means that people from across the bush from Southern Queensland and Western Queensland come to retire in Toowoomba. It has been my great privilege over the time I have been the member to get to know some of the grand women of the National Party, whether it be Lady Pearl Logan or Joan Anderson, who conducted Toowoomba South meetings at her residence in Butt Street, Harristown for 40 years. These wonderful women have passed away. Today I want to pay tribute to the 102-year-old Dulcie McIntyre, who was farewelled today in Toowoomba.


Dulcie was the epitome of a pioneering family and a pioneering spirit across the Darling Downs. She was born in Pittsworth and went to Rossvale State School. She left school at 14 to go home to the dairy and work with her family. She dairied and raised animals. She married Clyde, who had two tours of duty, to the Middle East and Papua New Guinea. She was dedicated to community service, whether it be the ladies auxiliary, the CWA or the Ladies Guild at the Methodist Church.

Dulcie was the very epitome of a pioneering woman who did everything for her community. She and Clyde farmed 1,100 acres on a patch of dirt that was once part of Jondaryan Station. They worked hard. They raised their family. More than anything, Dulcie loved the National Party and her contribution to the National Party was legendary. She had a keen interest in politics and rural affairs and she made a significant contribution in a decades-long association. Dulcie was one of those people that you got to know and you had to know because she held significant influence with the membership in Toowoomba South.

It was my privilege to be at her 100th birthday celebration where she showed her keen intellect, her keen sense of humour and a keen interest—still—in political affairs. I should also acknowledge that her grandson, Dan, is chief of staff to the agriculture minister who I know today played a role in the funeral service for Dulcie.

Once again, I want to pay tribute to a legend of the National Party and the Liberal National Party, Dulcie McIntyre. She was loved by everybody and deeply respected by me and by my predecessors John McVeigh and Mike Horan. Vale, Dulcie McIntyre.

Redcliffe Electorate

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (7.03 pm): I certainly live in an amazing community. I want to acknowledge and pay tribute to Lee Duke, who is a war veteran in my community, for organising the Walking off the War Within event last weekend. This event is a remarkable initiative which raises awareness of mental health, mental illness, depression and PTSD in our Defence Force but, more broadly, our emergency services in the broader community. The event was in honour of the late Nathan Shanahan, a returned soldier, firefighter and the mind behind Walking off the War Within. Sadly, he lost his fight with that war.


Mental illness and PTSD is an issue that touches the lives of so many Queenslanders. I was privileged to take part in the event last weekend and show my support to veterans, their families and the entire community. I am advised that between 2001 and 2017 there were 419 suicides from serving, ex-serving and reserve ADF personnel. We know that number has gone up since. These are extremely confronting statistics. I know that the past year has placed unprecedented pressures on families, created anxiety and stress, and impacted people's mental wellbeing. It is a timely reminder for us all to take stock and check in with our friends, our family members and our colleagues and ask them are they okay. A small gesture like this could go a long way.

I want to thank Lee for putting on the event. I want to thank Nathan's dad, John, who came along on Saturday and spoke. I know it was difficult for both of them. Lee actually served with Nathan in the Defence Force. I look forward to joining Lee again next year for a really important cause. I thank everyone who participated in the event. I had many positive and constructive discussions with participants along the walk about the importance of open communication and supporting each other each and every day.

While I am on my feet I want to give a shout-out to Dr Joel Dulhunty from the Redcliffe Hospital. He is spending his holiday doing a 40-day, 2,500-kilometre marathon bike ride from Cairns to Brisbane via Cooktown and Atherton Tablelands. While this sounds like a lot of fun, he is doing it with his wife to raise \$120,000 to fund a senior university researcher at our local hospital. I wish them both well in this. Anyone who wants to support it should go to www.raiseitforredcliffe.com.au.

Finally, I want to give a shout-out to the mighty Redcliffe Dolphins. I see the member for Kurwongbah in the chamber whose son is in the team this year for the Intrust Cup. We wish them all the best. They beat the Cutters in this first game, 30-28. We think they have a great season ahead. My full support is also in for the next NRL bid. We want to see the Dolphins as part of the NRL. We are in for the fight. We believe Redcliffe should absolutely win it.

Sexual Assault


 **Mrs GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (7.06 pm): It has been an emotionally heavy day for me and my speech tonight is no different. Tonight I give a voice to a young woman who has been silenced for six years by her former teachers, by the council of her private school and by the Queensland state Department of Education. Madam Deputy Speaker, I am going to ask you and all the members in this chamber to place yourselves into the shoes of this sexual assault survivor. You're a 13-year-old girl, an attentive student, a high achiever with aspirations to be an astronomer. Walking into your first science class of the year, you are in awe of your teacher, a man who claims he holds the accolade of Young Citizen of the Year. Within weeks you find yourself growing uncomfortable at the attention and sexual comments he is paying you, attention and comments that eventuate into inappropriate touching.

This man proceeded to leverage well-deserved grades for sexual payments. This survivor knew it was wrong and inappropriate for anyone, let alone her teacher, to be pressuring her in such a way and she told him that. Later that night the survivor told her family what happened and that was then told to the school. What is absolutely astounding is that in a meeting between the survivor, the school and the perpetrator, he admitted to his actions and still there were no consequences for him. After six years

of toing and froing with the school to report the inappropriate conduct, this sexual assault survivor took matters into her own hands and called the Department of Education to report him herself only to be told that it was not their problem because she attended a private school.

I ask you, Madam Deputy Speaker, and implore the members in this chamber here today to imagine being that young woman seven years later, still holding on to hope that she will be delivered justice, still holding on to the guilt that, despite trying to report her perpetrator, he may assault another. Given the climate and the community pressure to see an end to sexual violence, the state Labor government must seize this opportunity to pursue workable solutions for women across Queensland. I will be seeking a meeting with the education minister to discuss the specifics of this case and to work through a solution so we can help this young woman.

Mansfield Electorate

 **Ms McMILLAN** (Mansfield—ALP) (7.09 pm): I recently held the first 2021 Mansfield Electorate Youth Advisory Council meeting. Twenty-five new enthusiastic and passionate students met in the world-class science building at Mansfield State High School. Key concepts explored included understandings of leadership; the qualities of influential leaders; and contemporary representations of great leadership. I am proud to share that many of the young leaders identified the Premier of Queensland as an example of a great contemporary leader. I look forward to nurturing and supporting this dynamic group of young leaders throughout 2021.


Despite COVID-19 putting sporting activities on hold last year, Mansfield electorate sporting clubs have started the 2021 season with an incredible swell of new members. Easts Mount Gravatt Junior Rugby League Football Club's season has begun strongly, supporting both junior girls and boys from the age of six years. They have welcomed new local sponsors Hall & Co. Solicitors and have completed much needed renovations during the off-season. The club has appointed a new open women's coach, and the open men's team has competed in three successful preseason games. I am delighted to sponsor the 2021 open women's team and would like to thank committee secretary Shell Muscat for her passion and commitment to our club.

Mount Gravatt Vultures Australian Football Club has undergone a transition to merge the junior and senior clubs. It has a new board, which includes its first female president in Nakari Pratt. I acknowledge club stalwart Kate Guy for her many years of dedication and service. Their junior numbers have grown this year, with record registrations in the Auskick program. The club appreciates the incredible support of AFL Queensland for working to develop this program. I am honoured to sponsor the club's new polo shirts and to provide \$70,000 of Palaszczuk government funding towards the car park upgrade and the new LED scoreboard. The club has also secured new platinum sponsor Southside Toyota for the next two seasons. The Vultures are grateful for the support of this local business.

Finally, the mighty Hawks are rapidly expanding player numbers across all teams, from the four-to seven-year-old girls-only program to the 45 years legends men's teams. In just two years the club has increased its female participation by a massive 359 per cent. It is one of the largest clubs on Brisbane's southside and has strong partnerships to embrace our multicultural community, engaging refugees and our local university students. The Palaszczuk government has also committed \$90,000 for the electrical and lighting upgrades at this club. I thank committee secretary Lisa Mifsud for her tireless commitment to the mighty Hawks.

I congratulate all of our clubs in the Mansfield electorate. I wish them a fantastic 2021 season and particularly encourage our young women to get involved.

Surat Basin, Rail Infrastructure

 **Mr BOYCE** (Callide—LNP) (7.12 pm): I rise to bring to the attention of the House the Surat Basin rail project and the need to build the missing link railway line from Wandoan to Banana and replace the existing rail line from Miles to Wandoan in the Callide electorate. The project is an extension of the inland rail proposal from Brisbane to Melbourne. Should it be built, it would complete the heavy gauge rail link from Brisbane to the Port of Gladstone. The inland rail options clearly show that the Port of Gladstone is a far better choice than the Port of Brisbane. Gladstone's location alone and the reduced freight costs from Singapore to Shanghai are enough reason to progress this as a major project. The Port of Gladstone has the capability to accommodate large, modern container ships, similar to Port Botany near Sydney. The removal of coal trains from Brisbane suburbs would be an added benefit.


The Surat Basin coal link also unlocks the potential for Glencore's New Hope coalmine at Wandoan. Coupled with the Nathan Gorge Dam at Taroom, Australia's largest shovel-ready water infrastructure project with a capacity of 880,000 megalitres, it would allow the expansion of high-value

food production and increase Australia's capacity to produce first-class, clean, fresh food for the state, the nation and the world. The building of the Nathan Gorge Dam would also solve the chronic water shortage problems of the Darling Downs, particularly the Dalby, Toowoomba, Warwick and Stanthorpe regions. With ever-increasing urban expansion and population growth in these inland areas, it is imperative that another viable water storage be built.

It is crucial that transport links are prioritised to realise the potential expansion of the agricultural, mining, resource and energy sectors of Central Queensland. The Port of Gladstone and the Central Queensland region are being developed as a future hydrogen energy hub. It is a no-brainer that the Surat Basin railway needs to be built to connect this future energy production hub to the energy hungry southern states.

If the government is serious about generating wealth-creating jobs and guiding Queensland to a viable economic future, these projects need to be given priority. The ability to look forward and assess the needs and requirements of the future is about having a plan and then putting that plan into motion. There are three essential ingredients to the economic success of Queensland: transport, water and power. Every journey starts with the first step. I urge the government to take the step, build the missing Surat Basin railway line and start Queensland on the journey to prosperity.

Electric Vehicles


 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (7.15 pm): Any responsible government has policies and actions to address climate change. This government is certainly one of those. We have taken a very strong stance with our 50 per cent renewable energy target and our strong vegetation management tree-clearing laws, which were passed despite amendments moved and then subsequently withdrawn by the Greens. Queensland was the first state with an electric vehicle strategy. We also have the longest electric vehicle superhighway in one state anywhere in the world.

We are doing a range of things to support the transition to new technology and to decarbonise our transport sector. We charge less for registration of an electric vehicle and we charge less stamp duty. The reality is that every country—that is, just about every country except us—that has been successful in accelerating the transition to new technology and to decarbonise their transport sector has subsidised the price of electric vehicles. Australia is the outlier. We do not do that, because the federal government has no interest at all in doing that. We have a national electric vehicle policy in name only and, by world standards, we have very expensive prices for new electric vehicles in Australia. Sales have been anaemic, to be kind. We need a greater level of attention from the federal government to ensure we start catching up with the world. At the moment we are laggards across the world, because at the federal level we are anti electric vehicles and uninterested in doing anything. We are an embarrassment on this front.

I have raised this constantly in the media. I raised it at the federal meeting of transport ministers, including with the Deputy Prime Minister. I presented along with a representative from the Australian Capital Territory. We will continue to advocate, from a state point of view, that the federal government needs to get in this space—like every other national government that is effective—and get that price point down by introducing a subsidy. We run the very genuine risk of becoming a dumping ground for combustion engine, old-tech vehicles as other countries move in behind better technology. Even New Zealand is doing better than us. It is a comparative economy. We need to be getting into this space. It is time; it is overdue.

Queensland can only do so much as a state entity. We are obviously doing some things to reduce cost—Hyundai launched its new vehicle because of our leadership on electric vehicles—but it is time the federal government got serious on electric vehicles and climate change and addressed this very important policy area.

Weapons Licensing

 **Mr KATTER** (Traeger—KAP) (7.18 pm): I wish to address the issue of weapons licensing, which continues to be a real problem for a government that keeps trying to impose its values and ideologies in a clumsy way. Uniformed police officers are doing their best to interpret previous decisions and guidelines. Some of those guidelines are absolute nonsense and are not evidence based. CSIRO is saying that long arms are best used on a horse or out in the paddocks. CSIRO seems to be this wonderful authority on what is the best firearm to use. I am talking now about pistols and category H firearms. We had a big problem with that. None of it is evidence based; it is all ideological. Presumably, everyone in the party room loves to have a laugh about how they can attack licensed firearm owners.

These decisions have very real consequences. There are people who need to use these things as tools. Truck drivers and helicopter pilots cannot get category H licences anymore. They are very important for them. When it floods, they have to destroy cattle. When a truck rolls over, they have to destroy cattle. If they take the decision to QCAT, Weapons Licensing wants to appeal. It wants to make a point out of trying to stop it. In most cases people do not even have a weapons licence, so outside of being a uniformed police officer they do not have any real-life experience with how this operates in practice. The focus should always be on community safety in terms of the evidence of where these things are needed. There has again been a shift in weapons licensing and the government will say, 'It's got nothing to do with us. It's all Weapons Licensing. It's their decisions.' Someone has to be responsible. I am sorry, but as the government those opposite are responsible. They need to take some responsibility for it.

It used to be that five years was the limit where a person applying had to reveal anything on their record; now it is indefinite. A traffic offence from 20 years ago is now relevant and is counting against people. For those people who were getting their firearms licence, it is now either held up or they are just not getting it. As I say, a 20-year-old traffic offence can now stop that process. The authorities already have all of that information, but they force people applying into admitting it and they can be forced into a corner. If they forget or just do not put that information in their application, then they are at fault and that can be cause for not getting a licence. Health reasons such as diabetes, cancer and sleep apnoea can all be reasons a person cannot get a licence, yet there is no evidence to back that up. These are all discriminatory. I would challenge anyone to name a more discriminated group than licensed firearm owners, and these laws are not doing anything.

After looking at the evidence, all of this effort the government is putting in is making people like me and farmers write more letters regarding the constraints around us. We are not the problem; it is the illegal gun owners that the government should be focusing on. That fact came through in that productivity report before the election—that is, while uniformed police officers are tied up with this the real problems are not being dealt with, and in that way the government is letting the safety of the community and the people of Queensland down.

Beenleigh, 2032 Olympic Games



Mrs McMAHON (Macalister—ALP) (7.21 pm): There is excitement growing in our sporting communities in Logan. Logan has been one of the participating councils in the SEQ 2032 games bid from the beginning. With Queensland gaining preferred bidder status for the Olympics, you can see the dream in our kids' eyes. I know the Premier has mentioned a number of times that Logan could host the boxing, and she even had the support of professional boxer Jeff Horn in her corner during this announcement, but in Logan the traditional home of boxing has to be Beenleigh. Whether it is our up-and-coming boxers at the Beenleigh PCYC all the way through to our Olympic boxing royalty, the Nicolsons, boxing and Beenleigh go hand in glove.


I know Logan City Council has already put forward the thriving metropolises of Greenbank and Flagstone in its initial planning discussions, but I want to remind Logan City Council that there is a significant part of Logan to the east of the Logan River, and in Beenleigh we are primed and ready for inclusion. Beenleigh sits along the M1, with the significant upgrades to the north of us already underway and funded. Beenleigh sits on the Beenleigh-Gold Coast heavy rail line and is the key interchange between Brisbane and the Gold Coast. The upgrade to the train line is already on the Infrastructure Australia map and station upgrades are a part of it, so public transport to any proposed venue in Beenleigh is sorted. As for hotel stock, being conveniently located between Brisbane and the Gold Coast means that we are within easy travel distance to either of these large accommodation hubs.

In Beenleigh we are ready. We are a township in our own right. We have the services, the infrastructure and the population to support a venue of Olympic proportions. In fact, Beenleigh stands ready, waiting for the investment and the opportunity as our location means that any venue would have the long-lasting legacy for our CBD and businesses and a venue in no danger of becoming the white elephants that we so often see as remnants of Olympic cities. I point to the Logan City Council's own destination management plan which identifies the need for a convention centre styled facility which would host events and draw crowds not only from Logan but also from Brisbane and the Gold Coast.

Beenleigh is a city earmarked for growth. The council's own planning scheme and the various master plans drafted over the last few decades point to this. I urge council not to ignore the eastern part of Logan. There are 33 Olympic sports that Queensland can showcase in 2032 and I challenge it to find

a better fit for boxing in Logan than Beenleigh. Transport planning is the key to any successful major international event on this scale. In Logan when it comes to ease of access and when it comes to boxing and our sporting futures, I am backing Beenleigh and I urge the council to do the same.

Theodore Electorate, John Muntz Bridge

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Theodore—LNP) (7.24 pm): I again rise tonight to speak about an issue that is a major concern for residents who live in the Upper Coomera, Oxenford and Tambourine Mountain regions, an issue that has been going on since April 2017—four years and multiple floods. The riverbank upstream from the state controlled John Muntz Bridge has continued to wash away. We lost a further 10 to 12 metres of riverbank in the recent weather event. This issue has been going on for four years, but the ineptitude of both the department of main roads and the Gold Coast city council in their failure to fix this issue when it originally appeared will now cost taxpayers and ratepayers even more. I estimate that we have lost upwards of 60 metres deep of riverbank. This places serious constraints on the pony club and its fields, as they are continually shrinking. Residents continually fear that a flood event will wipe out the connection road again and leave them stranded. I wrote to the Premier in April 2017 to highlight the issue. In that letter I stated—

I'm writing to you in regard to the land upstream from the John Muntz Bridge (known as the Oxenford Pony Club) and the need to have a holistic approach to resolving the issue of extensive riverbank erosion.


I go on to say—

The Coomera River is trying to create a new river channel through the pony club fields. This has now caused the water flow under the John Muntz Bridge to alter, and it now impacts the structure at an angle, rather than flowing parallel, increasing resistance to the bridge piers.

As you would no doubt know, this is not ideal and simply armouring the bridge's approach on the Upper Coomera side without realigning the river back to its original course will do little to mitigate the problem.

Since April 2017 I have made countless representations to the minister, only to receive political spin. Only at the last state election the Labor government finally came kicking and screaming to agree to allocating funds to fix this necessary issue. If the issue had been first corrected back in 2017, it would have cost far less to the taxpayers and ratepayers of the Gold Coast. I want to thank Councillor Donna Gates for her work on this matter. Since she has taken over the area of Division 3 she has made it a priority to get this done. The LNP at every election since 2017 has made it a priority to fix this riverbank to ensure the safety and the connection of the Tamborine Oxenford Road and the John Muntz Bridge. This issue needs to be fixed during this dry season. We can no longer wait for this issue to be resolved because we are losing more and more riverbank during every single flood event.

Stretton Electorate, Racism

 **Mr PEGG** (Stretton—ALP) (7.27 pm): As I have said many times in the House before, I am very proud to represent the most multicultural electorate in the state and we have magnificent cultural celebrations, harmony and the community coming together. Unfortunately on some occasions we do experience racial and religious vilification and hatred. Last year there were some incidents particularly targeting the Asian community in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. It was wonderful to have representatives of the Chinese community join with the Police Commissioner, the Minister for Police and the Minister for Multicultural Affairs in addressing those issues.

The reality is that there is a minority of perpetrators and most of them tend to come from outside of my electorate, but I am really disappointed to inform the House that there is an incident of religious and racial vilification happening in my electorate that is in fact being perpetrated by someone who lives in my electorate.

In a street in Sunnybank Hills not too far from my office, on public display—and it has been on display for some time—are various stickers and signs. This is on a private residence but is fronting the footpath. This is a summary of some of the statements: 'We will stop the Islamisation of Australia', which is in front of a figurine of a pig; 'Bikini or burqa? Your choice'; the word 'Islamic' crossed out; 'Islamic—it's just not Australian'; 'Our culture, not yours!'; and the words 'Ban Islam' with a skull and crossbones. There is also a statement saying, 'I'm not a racist or a bigot, I just have my own opinions and beliefs and if you don't like it, then leave.' I say to those residents and the people who put up those signs and stickers that you are a racist and you are a bigot. Interestingly, there is a sign near those other signs saying 'Beware of the dogs'. I would suggest that it is not just the dogs that you have to beware of in that particular residence.

I reported the incident to police a month ago and I have been following up on the investigation. Unfortunately, none of these signs and stickers have been removed as yet. I hope that will happen very soon. Quite frankly, if it does not breach the law, we need to change the laws on racial and religious vilification and hatred because, in my view, this very clearly meets that criteria. I say this to those residents who have it on display: maybe you should take it down yourself or, you never know, someone might do the job for you.

The House adjourned at 7.30 pm.

ATTENDANCE

Andrew, Bailey, Bennett, Berkman, Bleijie, Bolton, Boothman, Boyce, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Camm, Crandon, Crawford, Crisafulli, D'Ath, Dametto, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Frecklington, Furner, Gerber, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Hart, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, Janetzki, Katter, Kelly, King A, King S, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Lauga, Leahy, Linard, Lister, Lui, MacMahon, Madden, Mander, McCallum, McDonald, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Mickelberg, Miles, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Mullen, Nicholls, O'Connor, O'Rourke, Palaszcuk, Pease, Pegg, Perrett, Pitt, Powell, Power, Pugh, Purdie, Richards, Robinson, Rowan, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Simpson, Skelton, Smith, Stevens, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Watts, Weir, Whiting