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FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

Thursday, 27 May 2021

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THURSDAY, 27 MAY 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.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

National Reconciliation Week


 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, this morning I was proud to host Reconciliation Queensland's breakfast launch of 2021 National Reconciliation Week in the Premiers' and Speakers' halls. This morning's event was joined in a video link with eight regional communities across Queensland in a live-streaming effort. At its heart, reconciliation is about unity, recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the wider community being reconciled as a mark of our progress as a community and as a nation. It is a cause that I wholeheartedly support.

The Parliamentary Service has been a leader among Australian parliamentary jurisdictions in promoting reconciliation over many years. The Queensland Parliamentary Service was the first to employ an Indigenous liaison officer in 2008. The service through the Indigenous liaison officer has promoted First Nations engagement with the parliamentary committee process. I thank our current Indigenous liaison officer, Marjorie Elworthy, for her recent work in this area.

Significant parliamentary spaces such as the Undumbi, Dandiir and committee rooms have been named in honour of Queensland's First Nations people. The service has also hosted and facilitated Indigenous youth parliaments since 2009 and, in recent years, in regional Queensland. The Parliamentary Service advanced its commitment to reconciliation by entering into its first Reconciliation Action Plan last year. I want to stress and emphasise, as I did this morning, the word 'action' in Reconciliation Action Plan. On behalf of the Parliamentary Service I restate our commitment to reconciliation. I commend these efforts and the service's commitment to reconciliation to the House.

REPORT


Auditor-General

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I have to report that I have received from the Auditor-General *Report 18: 2020-21—Education 2020*. I table the report for the information of members.

Tabled paper: Auditor-General Report 18: 2020-21—Education 2020 [[722](#)].


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 Hills International College in the electorate of Logan; student leaders in the electorate of Springwood; and Mudgeeraba Creek State School in the electorate of Mudgeeraba.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS


Coronavirus, Update

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.33 am): In terms of our daily COVID update, today I can confirm that we have no cases of community transfer in Queensland. We have two new cases, both are overseas acquired and in hotel quarantine. We have 13 active cases. In the past 24 hours we had 9,221 tests—another great result for Queensland—and 6,265 vaccines have been given in the past 24 hours, which now takes our total vaccine numbers to 204,872.

Coronavirus, Victoria

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.33 am): An outbreak in Melbourne continues to unfold. More than 70 exposure venues have been identified and, as of yesterday, 18 cases were confirmed but we expect to hear of more in the morning. I am advised that the Victorian government will make an announcement about latest cases and their next steps today. We will wait to hear that advice from Melbourne before making any changes to our own restrictions, but our strong advice remains that Queenslanders should reconsider travel to Melbourne. The local government area of Whittlesea has already been deemed a hotspot with restrictions on travel from that area, but restrictions can change quickly with little notice. Just as we have since the beginning of this pandemic, we will help Victoria and Victorians in any way we can.


State of Origin

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.35 am): Mr Speaker, Queensland is ready. With concerns about another outbreak in Victoria, we will ensure that Queensland is ready to host the State of Origin opener in 13 days. We are putting our hand up as I know other states are as well. We live in Rugby League heartland. Queensland is the ideal place to kick off this year's State of Origin. I can confirm that we are in discussions with the NRL. Suncorp Stadium or Queensland Country Bank Stadium in Townsville are ready to host a game on 9 June. However, it would be wonderful to see a State of Origin in Townsville.

Mr Harper: Hear, hear!

Ms PALASZCZUK: I hear that the members for Thuringowa and Townsville are pretty excited about it. Thanks to the way we responded to the pandemic, Queensland became the home of Australian sport in 2020—from the NRL to the Super Netball League to the entire Women's National Basketball League season and the first AFL grand final ever hosted outside Victoria. We have proven that we are able to safely host events that deliver strong benefits to our economy. Securing major sports events that inject millions of dollars into our economy and support local jobs is an important part of our economic recovery plan. I am in regular contact with the NRL about looking at more Rugby League content for Queensland. We will continue to work hard to secure major events and help build our economy. If there is an opportunity to host the extra State of Origin game one, we will take it on.

Screen Industry

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.36 am): Queensland's film and production boom shows no signs of slowing down. Because of our COVID-safe response, our spectacular and diverse locations, our highly skilled crews and our competitive incentives, international and domestic productions are choosing Queensland. In the last 18 months my government attracted nearly 40 international and domestic productions here, injecting more than \$400 million into the economy, creating 5,500 jobs for Queenslanders. This has been critical to our economic recovery. The pipeline of productions means jobs for Queenslanders and benefits for local businesses and our supply chain.

Current productions include: Ron Howard's *Thirteen Lives* on the Gold Coast; in Cloncurry, season six of *Australian Survivor*; in Brisbane, *Joe Exotic* will start filming in July at Screen Queensland studios; in the Whitsundays and Gold Coast, George Clooney—

Government members interjected.

Mr Minnikin: You're misleading parliament!

Ms PALASZCZUK: And the member for Chatsworth is no George Clooney!

Opposition members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Maybe one day.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members!


Ms PALASZCZUK: Back to the script. George Clooney and Julia Roberts will film *Ticket to Paradise* later this year. On the weekend, we announced that *True Spirit*, the story of Jessica Watson's record-breaking solo circumnavigation of the world, will be produced by Netflix in Queensland soon.

Today I can announce that Christoph Waltz, Sam Neill and Miranda Otto, among others, will star in a new feature film *The Portable Door*, a fantasy adventure comedy to be produced by Brisbane based Todd Fellman from Story Bridge Films and the Jim Henson Company—\$15 million to the state economy and 200 jobs.

Far North Queensland is increasingly recognised as an attractive destination for local and international films and television productions. *Dive Club*, which was filmed in the Far North, premieres on Network 10 this week, then rolls out worldwide on Netflix. Soon, Matchbox Pictures will film there the TV series *Irreverent*.

We have a plan to attract more to the region and have committed \$6.8 million to build a state-of-the-art film studio in Cairns. We need someone to drive that to harness and champion the region to help attract productions, create jobs and maximise opportunities, and I know just the person for that job. Today I can announce that I have appointed the Speaker and member for Mulgrave the Far North Queensland screen champion to continue to build on the region's vibrant screen sector. Mr Speaker, you are a tireless and passionate advocate for your region and I wish you well in this new role.

European Masterpieces Exhibition

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.39 am): In more good news for Queensland, it does not matter—

Ms Simpson interjected.


Ms PALASZCZUK: Member for Maroochydore, just wait.

Mr SPEAKER: Comments will come through the chair, Premier.

Ms PALASZCZUK: It does not matter whether you are a worker, a tourist or even an art lover, Queensland is the place to be. One of the most exciting collections of artworks to ever grace our shores has arrived in Brisbane and curators are finalising the exhibits for the *European Masterpieces* from the Metropolitan Museum of Art. This exhibition will open in a few short weeks and anticipation is building for what will be a real blockbuster. Works of art spanning 500 years covering forms such as portraiture, still life, landscape and figure studies from one of the finest collections of European painting in the world, the majority of which rarely leave permanent display in New York, will be accessible right on our doorstep. Queensland's reputation as an arts and culture destination is growing, and this is no accident. Since 2016 our government has committed more than \$20 million to support QAGOMA to present exclusive exhibitions like this one in Queensland.

The *European Masterpieces* exhibition has been secured through our blockbuster exhibition fund. It is the only show the Met is touring in 2021 and it is coming to Brisbane. That is such a coup. Interactive displays and truly innovative design space will bring these works to life. At a time when we cannot visit New York ourselves, for four months visitors from all over Australia will flock to Brisbane to see a little bit of New York City at South Bank. Some 65 paintings have made their way to Brisbane. The exhibition will begin in the 1420s with *The Crucifixion* by Fra Angelico and conclude in 1919, at the height of early 20th century post-impressionism, with one of Monet's late *Water Lilies*. There will also be works by Rembrandt, Turner, Van Gogh, Titian, Raphael, Goya, Cézanne and Vermeer. There is something for everyone. Exhibitions of this stature attract visitors and events and I am so pleased that this will be happening right here in Queensland.


Queensland Day

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.42 am): Next Sunday we celebrate Queensland Day. On 6 June 1859, 162 years ago, Queensland separated from New South Wales to become an independent colony. It is when Queensland's story began.

Queensland Day is a great opportunity to reflect on what it means to be a Queenslander and to live in our wonderful state. The way Queenslanders stood firm and united in the face of the global pandemic over the past year makes me prouder than ever to be a Queenslander. To help celebrate Queensland Day this year, my government supports community events right across the state. Landmarks, buildings and bridges will also be lit up maroon. A highlight will be the Queensland Greats Awards in Brisbane on 8 June which recognise extraordinary Queenslanders for their contribution to our great state. More than five million people call Queensland home, and growing by the day, and we each have our own unique Queensland story to tell. Queensland Day is a great opportunity to do just that.

Mr SPEAKER: Every day is Queensland Day.

Timber Industry


 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning) (9.43 am): I am pleased to announce today that the Palaszczuk government has granted \$480,000 to Wik Timber Holdings to purchase and install a Gibson sawmill. This grant will allow the Far North Queensland Indigenous logging company to boost its milling of timber and create more than 50 new jobs in the Aurukun and Napranum Aboriginal shires.

Wik Timber is an Indigenous owned company that specialises in harvesting timber on mining leases that would otherwise have to be incinerated. This funding will assist Wik Timber to purchase, transport and install the Gibson sawmill from Mareeba to its Hay Point base near Weipa. The mill will break down the raw logs into green off-saw timber before shipping it to Cairns.

Importantly, the project will support more than 50 jobs in the forestry industry and additional new jobs in the wider community as well as generate sales of up to \$15 million and produce \$100 million worth of dressed timber annually. This government is committed to creating jobs in this region, which includes the Aboriginal shires of Aurukun and Napranum. We are proud to support a company that is creating jobs in the Far North and doing its bit for the environment by eliminating the need to burn timber.

The Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation is considering financing stage 2 of the project, constructing a shed to house the complete mill and an improved port for better access to load barges at Hay Point. Wik Timber has worked in partnership with Rio Tinto to harvest logs from the Amrun mining lease near Weipa. It has been developing a timber harvesting project that will produce up to 125,000 tonnes of timber per annum for export and domestic markets. The break down mill will reduce costs and eliminate the need to use contractors for initial sawing of logs so it can put on more Indigenous workers as its volume increases. Wik Timber will help develop new markets, with major Queensland retailers already indicating their interest in purchasing significant quantities of finished timber, mainly for uses such as decking. It is another local success story for an innovative new business in Far North Queensland and this government is proud to back it all the way.

Kerry Foods


 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Investment) (9.45 am): The Palaszczuk government's drive to attract more company headquarters and jobs to Queensland is paying off. Leading food manufacturer Kerry has just announced the relocation of its Australia-New Zealand headquarters from Sydney to Brisbane, creating 55 new Queensland jobs.

The name Kerry Foods may not be familiar to many Queenslanders, but its tastes and flavours certainly are. In fact, chances are that by the end of today many Queenslanders have eaten something containing a Kerry flavour. Kerry Foods Australia is part of the Irish based Kerry Group, a global leader in taste and nutrition solutions for the food and beverage industry, with a market reach that extends to up to one billion consumers each day. The company employs 26,000 staff worldwide, so its growth in our state is a huge deal and something we are very excited about.

Along with its relocation, Kerry Foods has also established a \$2½ million technology and innovation centre at its site in Murarrie. This will help Kerry develop new products locally and achieve its goal of reaching two billion people globally. In addition to the 55 new jobs and 190 current jobs maintained, this new facility will also create ongoing employment opportunities for graduates from local universities through the Kerry graduate program. This increases Queensland's chances of retaining more workforce talent at home while helping to attract new people to STEM jobs and other associated disciplines.

All of this is a direct result of support provided through the Palaszczuk government's \$150 million Advance Queensland Industry Attraction Fund. Labor is invested in Queensland and invested in Queensland jobs. Having a company like Kerry, with its regional base, established in Queensland takes our state's role as a food producer and processor to the next level and securing major investments like this tells other companies loud and clear that Queensland is the place to be and the place to do business.

Winter Racing Carnival


 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (9.47 am): Because of our state's COVID response, the TAB Queensland Winter Racing Carnival is off and racing and I am looking forward to attending Derby Day this weekend and the Stradbroke Day in two weeks time. Held over 10 weeks at five race clubs, our winter carnival offers record-breaking prize money of almost \$21 million, providing opportunities to boost the livelihoods of jockeys, trainers, strappers and stable staff.

During the winter carnival the Brisbane Racing Club Stradbroke Season will host six weeks of racing. If past performance is anything to go by, we are in for another incredible year. In 2019 the Stradbroke Season generated more than \$9.7 million in economic benefits for the Brisbane economy and \$6.8 million for the broader Queensland economy. Over the Stradbroke Season the Brisbane Racing Club will also employ an additional 860 workers. That is jobs for cleaners, tote workers and hospitality staff. It would not be a carnival without great food and drink. We know that racing patrons will not be holding back this winter carnival and the Brisbane Racing Club is ready for them, having locally sourced almost 7,000 peeled fresh Noosa prawns, 4,250 lamb cutlets, more than 14,000 spring rolls and more than 2,250 kilos of potatoes for hot chips.

The action is not all in Brisbane. Another highlight of this year's winter carnival will be the first Ipswich Cup to be run at the redeveloped Ipswich Turf Club. What a great way to showcase the Palaszczuk government's \$24.8 million investment into this world-class racing and entertainment precinct at Ipswich. On cup day the club will employ an additional 1,000 local staff, including more than 60 chefs and kitchen hands, who will be preparing almost 155,000 canapés—and I hope to consume quite a few of those. In the cold room they will have 60,000 stubbies of beer, 12,000 piccolo bottles of wine—and I hope to consume some of those too—and 75,000 bottles of water—which I will also be consuming. I remind everyone to drink and gamble responsibly. These jobs and business opportunities are being repeated at the Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast turf clubs for their sellout carnival race days.

The best weather in the nation welcomes the best TAB Winter Racing Carnival in Australia, making a huge contribution to Queensland's economic recovery. This is only possible because of everyone's great efforts to keep Queensland safe.

Coronavirus, Victoria; Health Infrastructure

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (9.50 am): Further to the Premier's comments, I remind Queenslanders that as of 1 am this morning everyone coming from Victoria into Queensland will need a border pass. Anyone who has been in Victoria over the past two weeks is asked to please check the website because there are now well over 80 different venue exposure sites. We need to make sure anyone who has travelled to Victoria and is now in Queensland is checking those sites and, if they have been to those sites, following the health advice about quarantining and getting tested.


The Palaszczuk government's record \$21.8 billion health budget is delivering high-quality care throughout the state and a world-leading pandemic response that is saving lives. It is also delivering new and improved infrastructure—more than just bricks and mortar; rather, the state-of-the-art hospitals and healthcare facilities of the future. This financial year we are investing more than \$1.6 billion in 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. This is all part of Queensland's plan for economic recovery, which is delivering crucial health services and infrastructure along with the jobs and economic opportunities that come with them.

This investment is delivering outstanding results. I have seen firsthand some of the great projects already delivered and taking shape, like the brand new \$20 million Blackall Hospital I officially opened in November. This 10-bed facility includes two emergency department bays and two short-stay beds together with the associated general practice to provide coordinated and integrated health care for the community. Last month I visited Thursday Island Hospital with the member for Cook, where a \$46 million redevelopment is underway, and Mossman Hospital, where a \$10.1 million upgrade is

nearing completion. Earlier this year with Minister Scanlon I also turned the first sod on a new \$6.1 million mental health crisis stabilisation facility on the Gold Coast. The Gold Coast Hospital and Health Service will be one of the first health services in the country to introduce this type of facility which will provide support to people experiencing an acute mental health crisis and offer an alternative to the emergency department.

Another exciting project in the pipeline is the Ipswich Health Precinct. We are one step closer with this project following the \$20.65 million purchase of four Ipswich City Council buildings and land close to the Ipswich Hospital. This important purchase will enable the Ipswich Hospital to expand and cater for future demand through a master planned precinct, improving access to top-quality health care closer to home for the rapidly growing West Moreton region. In my own electorate we have committed to delivering an extra \$6 million to progress planning for a major upgrade of the Redcliffe Hospital. Our health infrastructure pipeline is firing on all cylinders and it is Queenslanders who will reap the benefits in the years to come.

Road and Transport Infrastructure

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (9.54 am): Queensland is the place to be. Eighty-eight per cent of net migration in Australia in the next four years is heading our way. A Deloitte Access Economics report has forecast South-East Queensland's population to surpass five million people by 2041. Two-thirds of the region's growth will be in areas like Logan, Moreton Bay, Ipswich, the Redlands and, of course, the Gold and Sunshine coasts. We know that Queensland is the place to be because the Palaszczuk Labor government is rolling out record investments in major infrastructure to keep it that way. That investment is targeting congestion and building better road and transport connections where communities are growing.


In Logan, we partnered with industry to bust congestion at Wembley Road with the Logan Enhancement Project; we are progressing upgrades on the Mount Lindesay Highway; we delivered the M1 upgrade of the Gateway merge; and we are also upgrading the M1 between Eight Mile Plains and Daisy Hill, as anyone who takes that road can see. On the Gold Coast the \$1 billion Varsity Lakes to Tugun M1 upgrade is powering ahead. This year we will start building the light rail to Burleigh. We will also build three new Gold Coast train stations for Cross River Rail and we are expanding key park-and-rides in stations like Varsity Lakes and Coomera.

In Moreton Bay work is underway on the \$164 million Deception Bay interchange upgrade, along with the \$662 million project to build six lanes on the Bruce Highway from the Bribie Island exit to Steve Irwin Way on the way to the Sunshine Coast. There is \$2.1 billion locked in to transform the connection of the Gateway Motorway and the Bruce Highway, including building the new Moreton Connector. Five Bruce Highway upgrades worth more than \$3 billion and supporting more than 2,000 jobs are now underway between Brisbane and Gympie. On the Sunshine Coast, where we have two new fantastic members, the member for Nicklin and the member for Caloundra, work will start later this year on the Beerburum to Beerwah rail duplication and Labor's investment in Bells Creek Arterial Road will give growing communities south of Caloundra better road connections.

Other projects recently completed or underway include out in the Redlands the \$110 million Cleveland Redland Bay Road upgrade; the \$400 million Ipswich Motorway upgrade just completed; the Sumner Road interchange and Everton Park Link Road—cut by the previous government, completed by this government; the Strathpine interchange; the Petrie roundabout upgrade; and also the Centenary Bridge duplication to come. These projects are busting congestion and making our roads safer.

Tomorrow is Fatality Free Friday, a day to focus on safety and our collective responsibility as road users. Labor has a \$1 billion road safety program to make roads safer, educate drivers and reduce trauma, but everyone who uses our roads must play their part in doing so. Tragically, 102 people have lost their lives on Queensland roads this year. Behind that number are profound personal stories of hundreds more Queenslanders mourning the loss of loved ones and learning to live with life-changing injuries. As we head towards the weekend I sincerely urge every Queenslanders to make road safety their No. 1 priority.

Energy Network

 **Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement) (9.57 am): As we have reported to this House, in the past two days Queensland's energy network was put to the test. It was a test that Queenslanders passed with flying colours. Thanks in no small part to the tremendous efforts of the workforce of our publicly

owned energy companies, our energy network was able to respond and recover quickly. That is because of the investments the Palaszczuk government has made to diversify our fleet. We have invested in solar—a 158 per cent increase since 2016 and we have invested in wind farms—like the 400-megawatt MacIntyre Wind Farm and the 157-megawatt Kaban wind farm we announced last week. We have invested in hydro—including the publicly owned Wivenhoe pumped storage—and we have invested in gas at Swanbank E, both of which came online during the outage and provided critical supply. Already renewables make up 20 per cent of Queensland's energy mix. That figure will more than double over the next decade as we deliver on our target of 50 per cent by 2030.

On Tuesday when our traditional generators tripped for safety when frequency dropped to 48.5 hertz, it was renewables that supported the system while our large-scale pumped hydro storage started up, with 5,618 megalitres flowing through Wivenhoe, which kept Queensland's lights on through the night. It was vindication of our plan to boost more storage into Queensland's network. That is exactly what we will keep doing.

Just last week we announced that Genex Kidston's 250 megawatt pumped hydro project had reached financial close with a \$147 million investment to connect it to the network. Earlier in the year the Palaszczuk government announced another 40 megawatts of storage for Queensland. The Premier announced that Energy Queensland would build five grid-scale batteries in regional Queensland. That means reliable energy stored in Townsville, Toowoomba, Hervey Bay, Bundaberg and Yeppoon.

Today I am pleased to announce another big battery blitz for Queensland. Through publicly owned transmission company Powerlink, the Palaszczuk government will supercharge the Darling Downs and the south-west through the connection of the largest battery in Queensland. The \$120 million Wandoan project, in the heart of cattle country, will be the first large-scale battery connected to our network, supporting 23 construction jobs. That battery will have the capacity to power up to 57,000 homes every year and store 150 megawatt hours of energy. A kilometre of underground transmission cable has been installed to safely transfer stored battery power back into the grid. Not to be outdone, I can announce that publicly owned generator Stanwell is also progressing plans for their own battery with the capacity to store another 150 megawatts at Tarong Power Station. That battery will enable continued growth in renewables, provide system stability and support 80 jobs in the construction program.

Our government is powering our economic recovery through investment into our network and is kicking off our big battery blitz. If the last few days have proven anything it is that Queenslanders can rely on this government and the members on this side of the House to ensure their publicly owned assets are working for them.

K'gari, Bushfires



Hon. MT RYAN (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (10.01 am): The bushfires on K'gari last year posed a particular challenge for emergency responders and partner agencies given the nature of the terrain and that that illegally lit fire was on an island, in fact, the world's largest sand island, with important links to thousands of years of culture and tradition for the Butchulla people. The fire impacted nearly 85,000 hectares, which is just over half of the island. Around 30 different water-bombing aircraft dropped more than 13 million litres of water on the fire. Thankfully, there was no loss of life and while there was no significant structural damage there was an impact to the World Heritage listed island's natural habitat.

As with all events of this kind, there was also an impact on the local and broader communities. This government recognises the disruption to the local community, the Butchulla people and the tourists and holiday-makers who visited the island. Firefighters, volunteers, government personnel, traditional owners and the local community worked together to battle the blaze that continued to burn for a number of weeks. I commend them all on their efforts and thank them for their dedication to service and professionalism.

It is important that following any major emergency event like that bushfire we evaluate the response. That is why it was appropriate for the Inspector-General Emergency Management, Alistair Dawson, to examine all of the circumstances surrounding the bushfire. Accordingly, I now table the *K'gari (Fraser Island) bushfire review: Report 1: 2020-21* and the Queensland government's response to the review report.

Tabled paper: Inspector-General Emergency Management: K'gari (Fraser Island) Bushfire Review: Report 1: 2020-21 [[723](#)].

Tabled paper: Inspector-General Emergency Management: K'gari (Fraser Island) Bushfire Review: Report 1: 2020-21, government response [[724](#)].


The report highlights areas of good practice and also proposes lessons that can be learned and applied from the IGEM's expert findings. It is only by constantly analysing and evaluating major emergency incidents that we are able to continue to enhance the already formidable capacity of our combined government agencies' responses. In his report the Inspector General Emergency Management noted that there was no loss of human life and no homes lost. He went on to say—

This is despite unique challenges including widespread mobile phone and internet blackspots, dry and fire receptive vegetation, inaccessible terrain, and narrow sand tracks.

The IGEM acknowledges the commitment and fortitude of fire management and response agencies, rural fire brigades, the Butchulla people and community associations on the island in responding to this highly complex and challenging bushfire event that tested response agencies.

This government has carefully considered the IGEM's report and supports or supports in principle all of the IGEM's recommendations. I commend the IGEM and his office for this body of work. I also commend the Butchulla people, the local community and other key stakeholders who gave generously of their time to contribute to this report.

K'gari, Bushfires

 **Hon. MAJ SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Youth Affairs) (10.04 am): K'gari is a special place to many Queenslanders. It has been the home of the Butchulla people, the traditional owners of the land, for thousands of years. It has become a treasured holiday destination for families who visit to explore the world's largest sand island. That popularity has in turn supported dozens of tourism operators and mum-and-dad businesses that in turn have created jobs for Queenslanders. Therefore, when a fire was illegally lit on the island last year, one can imagine the impact that had on all of Queensland.

We saw a multiagency approach to tackling the bushfire which, fortunately, saw no lives lost and no reports of damage to infrastructure. I especially acknowledge the response of our rangers who faced extreme conditions and worked around the clock to respond to that bushfire. The fire covered nearly 85,000 hectares, which is just over half the island. Thirty water-bombing aircraft dropped more than 13 million litres of water on the fire.


Today we table the Inspector General Emergency Management's review report and the government's response to the K'gari bushfire. The wideranging review consulted with traditional owners, residents, businesses and various agencies. Our response confirms that all 38 of the report's recommendations will be supported or supported in principle. My department will lead the implementation of the recommendations tasked to it and will work with other agencies to implement those where the QPWS has a supporting role. In fact, rangers are already undertaking some of the very important work highlighted in the report. As part of our \$16 million enhanced fire management program, rangers are delivering important outcomes on K'gari in line with recommendations.

To further help implement recommendations, the Palaszczuk government will also provide an additional \$5 million over four years and \$1 million ongoing. That commitment is on top of our annual \$10 million investment for the management of the island with traditional owners. It will boost our rangers' dedicated fire response and management capacity on K'gari and support additional work on fire trails on the island. The Department of Environment and Science has also committed a further \$1.26 million to review K'gari's fire management strategy and acquire plant equipment to improve fire preparation and response capability.

As we implement those reforms it is promising to see K'gari's regrowth. We are seeing new plants emerge from the ashes as bushfire affected areas recover. To date, DES has spent over \$443,000 on post fire recovery works, including carrying out a post bushfire ecological values assessment with Butchulla representatives. We are now getting on with a \$4.8 million investment to look at new tourism opportunities, together with the Butchulla people. Queenslanders are returning to the island in their droves, once again supporting traditional owners, businesses and tourism operators. Camping nights are up more than 38,000 on last financial year, with more than 250,000 nights spent on K'gari in the 2020-21 financial year, proving that K'gari is back.

The Palaszczuk government will continue to support the management of K'gari, together with the Butchulla people, and the jobs and businesses that rely on it. We will advocate for more funding from the federal government for this World Heritage listed area and we will make sure that K'gari remains a special place to Queenslanders.

National Reconciliation Week

 **Hon. CD CRAWFORD** (Barron River—ALP) (Minister for Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (10.07 am): Today marks the beginning of National Reconciliation Week 2021. Reconciliation is about recognising a shared past and respecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Australians. This year marks almost 30 years since our country's formal reconciliation process began and 2021 is also the 20th anniversary of Reconciliation Australia. Reconciliation is a journey for all Australians to strengthen and broaden their relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

This year's Reconciliation Week theme is 'More than a word. Reconciliation takes action'. It is about encouraging the reconciliation movement towards braver and more impactful action. It is about encouraging every Australian, every government, every part of society and corporate Australia to play their part in facilitating reconciliation to understand the ancient cultural fabric of the land they now call home; to understand the devastating impacts of colonisation on the two oldest living cultures on the planet and, where possible, to undo those impacts; and to build a nation that collectively values and recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, culture and contribution.


The Palaszczuk government's Queensland Government Reconciliation Action Plan, RAP, outlines the actions we seek to achieve to support greater reconciliation across our state and across government. In September 2020, we saw the Parliamentary Service advance their commitment to reconciliation, from reporting their activities in their annual reports to formalising them as measurable goals in a RAP. I commend you, Mr Speaker, the Clerk and the Parliamentary Service for that work.

This week also commemorates the two significant milestones in our national reconciliation journey: the successful 1967 referendum on 27 May which saw the majority of Australians take decisive action by voting 'yes' to recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the national census, and the 1992 High Court Mabo decision on 3 June which resulted in common law recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's connection to land and waters and the introduction of the Native Title Act.

Right now in Queensland we are witnessing another historic movement: significantly progressing Queensland's Path to Treaty—one of the strongest reconciliation actions in our state's history. Path to Treaty builds upon calls from generations of First Nations people for a treaty and brings us closer to a more inclusive and just future for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders. The Treaty Advancement Committee right now is building on the work already done by the Eminent Panel and the Treaty Working Group and they continue to work extremely hard to progress this.

Path to Treaty is about facing the full history of our state—a story that is more than 60,000 years old and steeped in ancient culture. We must work together to truly reconcile our past with our present—a path that can only be built on a foundation of mutual respect, agreement and truth telling. This evening I will be joined by Reconciliation Australia CEO Karen Mundine, elders, traditional owners and businesses as we launch Reconciliation Week, and I look forward to seeing members of the House there. Reconciliation is everybody's business every day.

Social Isolation and Loneliness

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algerie—ALP) (Minister for Communities and Housing, Minister for Digital Economy and Minister for the Arts) (10.11 am): As Queensland continues to unite and recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, it is important to recognise the effect the pandemic has had on many Queenslanders. We know that for many people the pandemic has been an isolating and lonely experience, particularly for some of the most vulnerable people in our community. In fact, the Australian Bureau of Statistics reported that loneliness was the personal stressor most experienced by Australians during the height of the pandemic, with one in five people experiencing feelings of loneliness and social isolation.

That is why during the 2020 state election the Palaszczuk government committed to examining the issue of social isolation and loneliness in our communities through a parliamentary inquiry. Today I am pleased to announce that we are delivering on that commitment. Today the government will move a motion that the parliamentary Community Support and Services Committee conduct an inquiry into social isolation and loneliness in Queensland. The parliamentary inquiry will consider the drivers and impacts of, and effective responses to, social isolation and loneliness in our communities.

Across the world, we are seeing growing awareness and recognition of the issue of social isolation and loneliness. This is an issue that has a significant impact on the physical and mental health and wellbeing of many people. We know that Queenslanders such as seniors, people with disability

and their carers, people with mental illness and young people can be among the most susceptible to experiencing social isolation and loneliness, but social isolation and loneliness are not just experienced by these particular groups of Queenslanders. This is something that can be experienced by anyone. That is why we are providing opportunities for all Queenslanders to provide input into this parliamentary inquiry. In particular, people who have been impacted by social isolation and loneliness will be encouraged to contribute their stories and experiences. We want everyone to be able to have their say.

This is just one of the actions we are taking as a government to address social isolation and loneliness in our communities. Through the Care Army, our investment in neighbourhood and community centres and various other initiatives, we have been working hard to connect Queenslanders and make sure they are engaged and included in their communities. We have also positioned our frontline housing and homelessness services to work directly with people to help develop tenancy and support connections. These areas go hand in hand with addressing social isolation and loneliness, ensuring that Queenslanders are able to stay digitally connected in their communities and socially connected in their neighbourhoods. This inquiry will further complement our work and aid us in developing and implementing a strategy to further address social isolation and loneliness in Queensland. I encourage all Queenslanders to take part in this inquiry.

SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT



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

That the House, at its rising, do adjourn until 9.30 am on Tuesday, 15 June 2021.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

MOTION

Referral to Community Support and Services Committee



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

That the Community Support and Services Committee inquire into and report to the Legislative Assembly by 6 December 2021 on:


1. The nature and extent of the impact of social isolation and loneliness in Queensland, including but not limited to:
 - (a) identification of and consultation with vulnerable and disadvantaged individuals or groups at significant risk across the life course; and
 - (b) the interplay of COVID-19 with this issue.
2. The causes and drivers of social isolation and loneliness, including those unique to Queensland.
3. The protective factors known to mitigate social isolation and loneliness.
4. The benefits of addressing social isolation and loneliness, examples of successful initiatives undertaken nationally and internationally and how to measure social isolation and loneliness in Queensland to determine if implemented strategies are effective.
5. How current investment by the Queensland government, other levels of government, the non-government, corporate and other sectors may be leveraged to prevent, mitigate and address the drivers and impacts of social isolation and loneliness across Queensland, including:
 - (a) services and programs such as health and mental health, transport, housing, education, employment and training, sport and recreation, community services and facilities, digital inclusion, volunteering, the arts and culture, community development, and planning for accessible, inclusive and connected communities; and
 - (b) targeted support to vulnerable and disadvantaged groups and those most at risk.
6. The role, scope and priorities of a state wide strategy to address social isolation and loneliness, considering interactions with existing Queensland and national strategies.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

STATE DEVELOPMENT AND REGIONAL INDUSTRIES COMMITTEE


Alleged Contempt of Parliament, Referral to Ethics Committee

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (10.16 am): In accordance with standing order 268(1), I rise as the chair of the State Development and Regional Industries Committee to report that a matter involving the potential unauthorised disclosure of confidential committee proceedings in this House on 12 May 2021 by the member for Burleigh has arisen and that the committee has resolved to recommend that the matter be referred to the Ethics Committee for consideration. The matter involves a disclosure of information contained in correspondence from an inquiry stakeholder providing detail of a confidentiality clause contained in an Indigenous land use agreement and a vote of the committee relating to requested access to that agreement. On behalf of the committee, I advise the House of the referral so that standing order 271 can be invoked.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, question time will conclude today at 11.17 am.

Health System

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (10.17 am): My question is to the Minister for Health. Trevor from Caloundra has told the opposition his story. Suffering a serious heart problem, Trevor called for an ambulance. He waited two hours. On arrival at hospital, Trevor was unloaded in the car park in the rain because, he says, there were 17 other ambos ramped. Trevor then waited eight hours until a doctor could see him. Is Trevor's story more proof that Labor is losing control of Queensland Health?

Ms GRACE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order in relation to standing order 115(b)(vi), whether the use of the name is strictly necessary and authentication.

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. You have ruled twice already this week with respect to the use of names. The opposition can authenticate Trevor. He is sitting in the public gallery today. That is as much authentication as the minister should want.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, member. Please resume your seat.

Mr BLEIJIE: He is real and his story is real.

An incident having occurred in the public gallery—

Mr SPEAKER: Please resume your seat, sir.

Ms Grace interjected.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! First of all, members of the public gallery are to remain in their seats, regardless of the reason for their visit. Otherwise I will ask that they be removed from the gallery.

In terms of the points of order that have been raised, we have the matter that has been raised by the Minister for Education and the responding point of order raised by the Manager of Opposition Business. The Manager of Opposition Business is correct that I have ruled on this previously this week. I will take and listen to each question as asked in order to apply the standing orders as I believe is relevant. As to the first part, I am satisfied in terms of context, as I have ruled on previously. Clearly, the second part of the question seems to have also been responded to in terms of authentication.

Mrs D'ATH: I thank the member for his question. I acknowledge the gentleman in the gallery here today. As the opposition know, I am not going to talk about people's individual cases in this chamber and nor am I allowed to talk about individual cases given the issues around people's privacy, but I am more than happy to meet with Trevor after question time and hear about his experience directly. I am more than happy to meet with any individual to discuss the circumstances around their experience.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock! Members to my left, I have previously made myself clear about ministers who are responding to the question asked. In this case, the Minister for Health is being responsive to the question asked. I ask that you hear the response.

Mrs D'ATH: The opposition had individuals here last parliamentary sitting week and I took the opportunity to go down, to introduce myself and to meet with one of the ladies who was still present in the gallery.

Mr Bleijie interjected.

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

Mrs D'ATH: The invitation is there. I will get one of my staff to reach out to Trevor during question time and see whether he would like to meet with me afterwards.

Ms Grace interjected.

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister for Education and member for Kawana, you are both warned under the standing orders for quarrelling across the chamber. I call the Leader of the Opposition for his second question.

Mr Brown interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Capalaba, you are warned under the standing orders. Questions will also be heard in silence.

Comments by Minister for Education

Mr CRISAFULLI: My question is to the Premier. Trevor from Caloundra has written to Minister Grace saying, 'It is outrageous that a minister should get up in parliament and accuse the opposition of making up stories when they bring in hard core facts day in, day out.' Will the Premier order Minister Grace to apologise to Trevor and to Catherine and to Patricia, and everyone else who is suffering because Labor is losing control of Queensland Health?

Ms GRACE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. There are a number of imputations in that question. They know that they are once again twisting the truth. I take offence and I ask that it be withdrawn. You are twisting the truth.

Mr Mickelberg interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Buderim, you are warned under the standing orders. Minister, I remind you that comments will be directed through the chair. I will seek advice from the table. Please remain quiet, members. The minister has taken offence so I ask that the comments related to the minister be withdrawn. If you are able to rephrase that question in a way that it can be asked so that the minister does not take offence then I welcome you to do so, Leader of the Opposition.

Mr CRISAFULLI: I withdraw. My question is to the Premier. Trevor from Caloundra has written to the minister outlining comments he has heard in the public domain. Will the Premier apologise to people like Trevor who are the victims of Labor losing control of Queensland Health?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question. The health minister has indicated that she is more than happy to speak with the gentleman. That is the right course of action to take. Further, I will not be lectured to by the Leader of the Opposition who was part of a cabinet that sacked 14,000 people across Queensland. There has been not one apology. They closed the Barrett centre.

I met personally with those young people and some of those young people are no longer here. Now the Leader of the Opposition wants the former health minister to come back and be the president of their party. This is the same health minister who shut the Barrett Adolescent Centre.

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance under standing order 118(b). I fail to see how the president of the LNP has anything to do with Trevor's story and asking the Premier to apologise for Labor's health crisis.

Mr SPEAKER: Under relevance, Premier, I will ask you to come back to the core of the question asked. I appreciate that you are providing some context in your answer. Can you return to the response?

Ms PALASZCZUK: As I said, the health minister has said that she will meet with the individual concerned. Let me say to those opposite that there are young people who are no longer with us today as a result of the closing of the Barrett centre.

Honourable members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right. They did not even read the report. There was no apology.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Premier, please resume your seat. Member for Nanango, you are warned under the standing orders. Member for Lytton, you are warned under the standing orders. Member for Maryborough, you are also warned under the standing orders. The level of interjection is too high. I need to be able to hear the Premier's response, as does Hansard. Premier, you have one minute 40 remaining if you wish to add anything further.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I will add this: as I said yesterday, there has been a \$7 billion increase in the Health budget since we came to office. There will be a record Health budget this year. It is our government that is growing infrastructure and that restored the frontline services that were savagely decimated under those opposite. I find it absolutely hypocritical for the Leader of the Opposition to come in here when he sat around the cabinet table with Campbell Newman, the member for Kawana, the member for Clayfield and many others and not give one single apology for what the Newman government did over three years.

Tourism Industry; Economy

Ms LUI: My question is to the Premier and Minister for Trade. Will the Premier update the House on the government's initiatives to grow our economy, boost tourism and protect the environment?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Cook for her question. As we know, next month the Treasurer will be handing down a budget for Queensland. That budget will focus on jobs and focus on growing our economy. Not only that, it will focus on a record Health budget which is directly aimed at keeping Queenslanders safe. Let us not forget that other countries around the world at the moment are dealing with an overload of COVID cases and many people are dying. Thankfully, that has not happened in Queensland. I thank all of our health professionals who are working very hard to keep Queenslanders safe.

In relation to the economy in Cairns, the member for Cook and I were in Port Douglas recently where we met with a number of tourism operators. They talked about what more we could do in relation to growing the economy and looking after tourism jobs. We know that the Morrison government savagely cut JobKeeper. Our government has stepped in and looked at supporting the tourism industry. We know those opposite do not support the tourism industry.

We know how important the Great Barrier Reef is to our economy and our state. There are 2,900 individual reefs and 900 islands stretching over 2,000 kilometres from the Torres Strait all the way down. The biodiversity is absolutely incredible. It is one of our greatest natural attractions. We want to see more young people go to the reef and experience everything that the reef has to offer. Whereas in the past they would have perhaps gone to Canberra, we think there is an opportunity for them to go up to the Great Barrier Reef.

Today I am pleased to advise the member for Cook that we have had more than 150 inquiries from schools, tourism providers, marine tourism operators and travel businesses showing great interest and support. This \$1.2 million Great Barrier Reef Education Experience Program will give each student \$150 to visit the reef to experience its natural beauty. Even though it is a small amount of funds, it will give our students a great opportunity but, more than that, it will allow our fantastic fleet of Great Barrier Reef operators to go out there and show students what an amazing place it is.

If you think about it, people from all around the world used to come and see the Great Barrier Reef. Now is a great opportunity for Queenslanders to go and support the reef. While they are doing that, they are supporting our tourism operators and supporting jobs. I say to those opposite: next month there will be a great budget handed down by the Treasurer. I am looking forward to it and I think everybody else in this House should as well.

(Time expired)

Health System, Funding

Mr JANETZKI: My question is to the Minister for Health. Queensland Health's planned budget squeeze targets the local hospital boards with the worst ramping results—Metro North, the worst in the state with nearly 50 per cent of all arrivals ramped, squeezed by \$96 million, followed by the Gold Coast and Metro South. Can the minister guarantee the half a billion dollar budget squeeze will not make the ambulance ramping crisis even worse?

Mrs D'ATH: I thank the member for his question. I have already addressed these questions in question time for the last two days. The budget is yet to be handed down. Those on the opposite side can scrutinise the health budget when the health budget is released.

Manufacturing, Health Technologies

Ms RICHARDS: 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 government's plan to support local manufacturing and safeguard Queenslanders' health? Is the Deputy Premier aware of any alternative approaches?

Dr MILES: I thank the member for Redlands for her question. I know how passionate she is about delivering manufacturing jobs in her part of the world as well as right throughout the state. There is no doubt that Queensland is in an enviable position thanks to our health response, but we would be in a better position if Australia had a greater capability to manufacture different vaccine technologies here at home.

We are left with the federal government begging other countries around the world for them to supply us with vaccines when quite understandably they want to vaccinate their own citizens before sending vaccines here. The fact is that another major city may well go into lockdown today in a way that it would not need to if we had a wider variety of vaccines available.

Mr Dick: Made in Australia.

Dr MILES: Made in Australia, indeed. One of the reasons we do not have a wider variety of vaccine technologies is that we cannot currently make them here.

The Palaszczuk government has a proud history of supporting our biomedical sector. In fact, it is a sector that Labor governments helped build and that now employs 10,000 people across 1,200 companies. Throughout the pandemic we have shown the world how that capability can deliver better health care throughout the world.

Last sitting I hosted a biomedical round table with Professor Ian Frazer and the CEO of Vaxxas, David Hoey. We talked about how we could leverage the success of TRI, Vaxxas and Ellume to deliver more sovereign manufacturing capability here in Queensland. I have written to Commonwealth Minister Porter and asked to work with them to deliver better sovereign vaccine capability in Australia, as well as highlight the vulnerability of putting all of our vaccine manufacturing in one state. The fact is that we would be better off if we had facilities in a variety of states.

I have urged Minister Porter to see the advantages of Queensland and to work with us to deliver that manufacturing capability. UQ is already well advanced with the early stage manufacturing for RNA and DNA technologies. They are forming the National Vaccine Response Alliance based there to look at the future pipeline. The Morrison government should have acted sooner to deliver local vaccine manufacturing, but now we have a chance to catch up and Queensland would be happy to help.

Energy Network

Mr WEIR: My question is to the Minister for Energy. Experts are warning there is still a risk of blackouts across Queensland from load shedding ordered by AEMO. Has the minister sought a briefing about this and can he assure Queenslanders there will not be any more load shedding or blackouts during next week's forecast cold snap?

Mr de BRENNI: I thank the member opposite for the question. Twice this week I have offered the member a briefing about these details, even as late as last night. He said he did not need to know anything more, but I am happy to bring that into question time. If he was worried about outages in Queensland, maybe he would have wanted to know about that last night, but I am happy to talk about it here.

The Australian Energy Market Operator is responsible for providing advice to the entire nation, to citizens, about reserve electricity supplies. As the member would know, the Energy Market Operator considers that on a daily basis. They post notices and they remove notices as they are required. During the height of the crisis on Tuesday we saw a prediction of an LOR3 and the possibility of outages. At that time we did not know the extent of the damage that had been caused at Callide. Those notices were later revoked, and they were revoked because of the excellent work of the energy system here in Queensland—everybody from our publicly owned Powerlink through to our publicly owned generators and the cooperation that we have with our important renewable energy operator, CleanCo, as you heard earlier, Mr Speaker, which started up Swanbank E, our gas-fired power station, and had Wivenhoe pump storage operating.

I can confirm that the Australian Energy Market Operator spoke directly with me and described the response of our publicly owned generators as exemplary. All of those generators continue to generate at full capacity. I gave a commitment on national television yesterday morning that there would not be load shedding here in Queensland. I also gave a commitment that we would restore the generation at Callide as soon as we possibly can. I have also given a commitment to the workforce that we would support them through that process. Of course those workers are incredibly shaken.

It is a miracle that there were no fatalities there on Tuesday. I want to pay tribute again to the firefighting crew on site who made that very quick decision, that important decision, to save the lives of their fellow colleagues. They did that because they put Queenslanders first, just as we put Queenslanders first. They did not put profits first. We know what would have happened in a privatised power plant if the LNP were in office: profits would have been first and lives would have been lost.

Mr Hart interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Burleigh!

Mr de BRENNI: Not only did we keep the power on; we kept Queenslanders safe.

Mr Hart interjected.

Mr de BRENNI: That is our commitment to Queenslanders, and we will deliver on that.

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

Budget

Mr POWER: My question is to the Treasurer and Minister for Investment. Will the Treasurer update the House on the Palaszczuk government's priorities for this year's budget and how these compare with other plans for the Queensland economy?

Mr DICK: I thank the member for Logan for his question because, in representing one of the fastest growing electorates in Queensland, he understands the importance of funding a growing state. The budget I will deliver in less than three weeks time will be the next stage of our government's delivery on our economic recovery plan for Queensland—and it is a plan that is delivering the fastest economic growth in the country.

The budget will invest in infrastructure. The budget will invest in skills and training. It will safeguard the health of Queenslanders with record health spending. In accordance with our economic recovery plan, endorsed by the people of Queensland a little over seven months ago, it will support manufacturing, renewables, growing our regions and small business. It will protect our precious environment. Queenslanders know this because this is the record of the Palaszczuk Labor government. They are just as clear on what they would get from those opposite. We only have to look back to the horror budget of Campbell Newman in 2012 and the LNP—

Mr Minnikin: How did Andrew Fraser's budget go?

Mr DICK: I take the interjection from the member for Chatsworth, who supported every single cut in that budget. The LNP has the gall to come into this House and talk about health cuts. Queenslanders know that Labor does not cut health jobs, does not cut health spending and does not cut health services, but they know what the LNP does: 4,400 health workers went out the door as soon as they got their hands on the budget, including 1,800 nurses and midwives. They proudly stated they would cut the infrastructure budget to save money. They shamefully conflated government debt with commercial debt—something no other government, Labor or LNP, ever does—to justify their massive program of cuts. The whole time, every step of the way, cut by cut, there was the member for Broadwater sitting at the right hand of his mentor and idol, Campbell Newman, which is why the member for Broadwater has appointed his mentor and idol a trustee of the LNP, bringing him back to the LNP.

Did the LNP learn from their mistakes? No, they did not. Look at the drivel and dross they served up in their costings for the election. There was no funding to deliver their centrepiece, the fake Bradfield scheme and the Bruce Highway hoax. They claim to deliver frontline services growth. That would have meant—aided and abetted and supported by the member for Broadwater as a shadow minister—3,500 fewer nurses and midwives, 3,000 fewer teachers, 340 fewer teacher aides and 1,600 fewer police. That would have happened under the LNP if they had formed government. We will deliver for the front line in Queensland. We will deliver a record budget and we will continue to deliver for—

(Time expired)

Biagini, Mr P

Mr BLEIJIE: My question is to the Premier. Peter Biagini of the Transport Workers Union is a member of the Labor Party faction led by the Premier and Treasurer. He has campaigned with multiple Labor candidates and MPs and arranged for over \$140,000 of donations to the Labor Party. Given that Peter Biagini has stood down from his position amidst allegations of financial irregularities, why has the government not moved to strip him of his powerful right-of-entry permit immediately?

Mrs D'ATH: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I question whether the question the member for Kawana has put to the Premier is within her area of responsibility and whether those decisions are within her control.

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Mr Speaker, with respect to this point of order, you have previously ruled that the Premier is responsible for whole-of-government—

Ms Palaszczuk: I'm not responsible for the federal government.

Mr BLEIJIE: Workplace health and safety legislation is Queensland, by the way. It is a state government—

Mr SPEAKER: I take your point. The point that has been made by the Manager of Opposition Business is that it relates to Queensland workplace health and safety, so under that very narrow question feel free to answer, Premier. With regard to the first part of the question, it is bordering on asking questions about political party matters as opposed to government matters, so I will allow you to answer the question as you see fit.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I am advised by the industrial relations minister that the permits are issued by the federal government.

Women, Education and Jobs

Ms McMILLAN: My question is of the Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing. Will the minister update the House on the Palaszczuk government's continued work to provide Queensland's young women with an education that prepares them for the jobs of the future, and is the minister aware of any alternative approaches?

Ms GRACE: It is a great question. I thank the member for Mansfield for the question. As the former principal of a wonderful school, she knows how great it is when young girls get involved in STEM. That is what we are encouraging because they are the jobs of the future. We know that the number of jobs in the science, technology, engineering and maths fields are growing at more than twice the rate of other industries and occupations. If we have learned anything through COVID-19, it is that science and technology are more critical than ever.

Our \$81.3 million investment over four years in STEM is all about generating enthusiasm in young girls to take up and engage in STEM subjects. Last week, 55 year 10 girls and nine teachers from state schools across Queensland visited Brisbane for the annual STEM Girl Power Camp. The camp has proven to be a huge success, growing from just 22 girls in 2016 during its inaugural year. These 55 young girls came from right across the state, including: Weipa, Atherton, Mount Isa, Townsville, Blackwater, Rockhampton, Monto, Gladstone, Proserpine, Murgon, Chinchilla and Charleville as well as the south-east corner. Over the weeks students networked with similar minded peers and met with female role models in diverse STEM careers.

The biggest experience was on Sunday morning, when I was able to enter the Cross River Rail tunnel to watch Merle in situ building the greatest engineering feat this state has seen for a while. We were underneath the middle of the Brisbane River. These young girls had the experience of going to the centre in the city and speaking directly with the female engineers who are working on that fantastic project. They met one of the engineers, Sharon Hosseni, who came to Brisbane as a refugee from Afghanistan in 2005. Sharon has been working at the Roma Street site for a year now on the wonderful Cross River Rail project. The girls were able to meet her and hear firsthand about her experience. They were incredibly passionate to learn about this great project we are building here in Queensland. This is a fantastic project, an unbelievable engineering feat. These young girls were able to absorb all of the energy and passion that is going into this great \$5.4 billion engineering feat—what we call in Queensland Cross River Rail.

Age of Criminal Responsibility

Mr LAST: My question is to the Premier. Reports say the Labor Party is seeking to lift the age of criminal responsibility at its upcoming convention. Will the Premier rule out any move by the Queensland government to lift the age of criminal responsibility from 10?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I think a similar question was asked of the Attorney-General previously. Let me say very clearly that it is not government policy in relation to any lifting of the age of criminal responsibility. I do know that the Committee of Attorneys-General are discussing various matters in relation to that, and that is where the decision-making should lie.

Small Business

Mr HEALY: My question is of the Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development. Will the minister update the House on how the Palaszczuk government is helping Queensland's small businesses grow, and is the minister aware of any alternative approaches?

Ms FARMER: I thank the member for his question. I want to acknowledge his great support for small businesses in Cairns. We co-hosted a wonderful small business roadshow earlier in the year, and I know how excited the member was when the Premier announced the Work in Paradise initiative last week. To see the results of that have been amazing. I also know how hard the member for Cairns has been working to let local small businesses know about the procurement target this government has set of 25 per cent. We said that, of every government dollar spent on procurement, 25 per cent has to go to small- and medium sized enterprises. That has gone so well. I want to really congratulate the minister for procurement for the work that he and his team have done to get that up and running. We funded CCIQ to make sure that information was going out to small businesses across the state.

Mr Speaker, I know that every member on this side of the House is going to be thrilled when I tell you that we have just checked in on how we are going with that target. The minister was able to tell me this week that in fact we have not only reached our target in the last six months of last year; we have exceeded the target. We have smashed it! We are spending 28.3 per cent of every government procurement dollar on small and medium sized businesses. That is \$2.67 billion going back into the pockets of Queensland businesses, 28 per cent of every dollar of government expenditure on procurement. That is absolutely fantastic, and there are some areas that are going particularly well—building, construction, maintenance, transport, communications and technology.

I just cannot help but compare this with the LNP's track record on procurement. The one we know the best in terms of how much they like to support Queensland businesses is the infamous big spend on trains in Mumbai when they were in government. We just wanted them to spend that money in Maryborough but it went to Mumbai. That was over \$4 billion that could have gone to Queensland but it went to Mumbai.

One would think when they got to the election they would have been thinking about what to do, but this is what they did instead. They could have set a target as well but, no, they did not do that. Instead they said they would consider purchasing from a Queensland small business for goods or services under \$250,000. We know they do not like setting targets because we know about the targets for women, for instance. They are just not big on targets, so they certainly did not want to set targets for small business. What was going to happen to the businesses over \$250,000? Maybe they would do it; maybe not. We back small businesses on this side and we are so proud of our target.

(Time expired)

Macropod Industry

Mr MILLAR: My question is to the Premier. What steps has the Premier and Minister for Trade taken to protect Queensland's macropod industry and counteract the US based campaign 'Kangaroos are not shoes', where the United States Congress is considering a law to ban the use of kangaroo leather products by Nike, adidas and other US based global brands?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for the question. I am happy to look at that question in more detail. I think some of those aspects would be around federal trade, but I am happy to look into it for the member. I thank him for the question.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I will wait for silence, members.

Mr Millar interjected.

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

Stimulus Projects

Ms PUGH: My question is to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. Will the minister update the House on the Palaszczuk government's delivery of stimulus projects and is the minister aware of any alternative approaches?

Mr BAILEY: I thank the member for the question. She has been a fierce advocate for road upgrades in her area. The Sumners Road interchange was cut by those opposite and built by this government because of the advocacy of the member for Mount Ommaney and we finished it six months

early. That was fantastic. We will be looking forward to doing the Centenary Bridge duplication as well—fully funded. That is coming and construction will start on that later this year. We had four stimulus packages—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr BAILEY: Mr Speaker, it is pretty clear from their interjections that those opposite do not want to hear about infrastructure and jobs. Last year, as part of our economic plan for recovery, we saw four stimulus programs by this government, some with joint funding, to get jobs going right across Queensland. There are 93 of these projects underway—nearly a century of them—and 10 have already been completed. I have been very happy to get around to some of the regional areas out at Roma, Barcaldine and Longreach with the mayors there looking at all of the jobs and the widening that is happening under our stimulus projects. We are spending 50 per cent more on road and rail infrastructure now compared to when we came into office—50 per cent. There was an \$18.1 billion QTRIP under the LNP after all their cuts, and there is \$26.9 billion flowing through from this government.

Mr O'Connor interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Bonney.

Mr BAILEY: What we see is that this side builds and that side cuts. That is our respective DNA and that is very clear.

Mr Minnikin interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Chatsworth.

Mr BAILEY: What we see is not just the jobs and the projects. What we saw from those opposite was the costings debacle leading up to the last election. They kept their costings secret right up until two days before because we know what it was about. They raided funding from the Sunshine Coast, they raided funding from regional roads, and they kept it secret until the Thursday before the election. Look at what they were cutting: Beenleigh Redland Bay Road, cut; the Ridgewood Road signalisation at Caloundra, cut; the Lawrie Street upgrade in Rockhampton was going to be cut by those opposite as part of their election platform; the D'Aguilar Highway in Glass House, cut; Steve Irwin Way, cut; Hervey Range Road in North Queensland, cut.

That is what the LNP took to the election. What did they cut it for? What did they fund? A puny little second M1 version, six kilometres long, not even half the length of the second M1 being done by this government. We saw the Bruce Highway hoax. They were going to duplicate it all. When it came down to the costings, instead of the gold bullion they were offering there were a few little copper coins—one- and two-cent pieces. That is all they offered. We build, they cut.

(Time expired)

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Theodore, member for Bonney and member for Chatsworth, you are all warned under the standing orders.

Townsville, Youth Crime

Mr DAMETTO: My question is to the Premier and Minister for Trade. Townsville's recidivist youth offenders have become increasingly brazen and violent. Residents have lost confidence in her ministers' ability to bring crime under control. Will the Premier take ownership of this issue and tell the good people of Townsville what she will do as the leader of Queensland to personally intervene and put a stop to this problem?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Hinchinbrook for that question. It is a very important question because I know that there is concern in Townsville that people do want to feel safe in their homes. They want to feel safe in their community. I know the members of my government want exactly the same thing. The member for Hinchinbrook knows that is why we passed new laws just recently that have come into effect. Already we are starting to see the results of that—targeting that particular 10 per cent who are committing a lot of those crimes.

Police advise that, in the first 25 days since the new laws targeting the hardcore recidivist offenders were put in place, they have arrested more than 50 juvenile offenders and half of those were held in custody. The member is aware too that Assistant Commissioner Cheryl Scanlon has been appointed. She is a very senior respected police officer who will be monitoring the implementation of

those laws and making sure the communities and the police are responding as needed. I really want to thank her for the work she has been doing. She is assisted there by Deputy Commissioner Paul Taylor who is also based in Townsville.

We said yesterday that we have more graduates coming into Townsville, which is good to see, and there are also more people going through the police academy that is based in Townsville. There is a lot of work going in there. I hope we see that as these laws come into effect more and more people will be responding. We also have the On Country training happening which is going extremely well. We would like to see that expanded over the coming months and years as well. I thank the member for the question. It is a very important question.

Whilst I am on my feet, I will address the question the member for Kawana asked me earlier. There were some aspects of the question that relate to both the Commonwealth and the state. The Minister for Industrial Relations will respond to the member in relation to that particular question.

Keppel Electorate, Community Safety

Ms LAUGA: My question is to the Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services. Will the minister update the House on the measures that the Palaszczuk government has taken to protect my community of Keppel and is the minister aware of any alternative approaches to public safety management in Queensland?

Mr RYAN: I thank the member. We have a very proud history and record when it comes to investing in community safety. We have had the biggest investment in policing in 30 years, with over 2,025 personnel. That means for the member for Keppel's policing region, which is the Central Queensland policing region, there are a minimum of 150 extra police officers on the ground keeping that community safe. We are also committed to expanding the firefighting service with an extra 357 firefighters, more trucks and more equipment for our firefighters. We are also expanding correctional capacity. Just around the corner from the member for Keppel's electorate is the Capricornia Correctional Centre. It is undergoing an expansion and hundreds more custodial officers will work as a result of that expansion.

Every budget we see our commitment to community safety and the people of Queensland and every budget we see our community safety and policing commitment grow. It is record after record after record. Those opposite have a very poor record when it comes to keeping the community safe and investing in community safety and the Police Service, and the cuts of the LNP know no jurisdictional boundary. Their record of cuts after cuts is in black and white in the federal budget under the heading 'public order and safety'.

Given their rhetoric one would think that every year in the forward estimates there would be an increase in the public order and safety budget, but no. If we use this year as a baseline, next year there will be \$60 million less; the year after, \$638 million less; the year after, over \$800 million less; the year after, almost \$800 million less. Over the forward estimates the federal LNP will rip \$2.2 billion out of public order and safety. One would think that their funding of the Police Service, their funding of community safety, would match their rhetoric, but it does not. In real terms—this is in black and white—it says there will be a 17.1 per cent decrease over the forward estimates.

Their commitment to community safety also extends to cuts in the space of the Bureau of Meteorology. When it comes to Queensland it is not just a cut; it is a net export of community safety jobs. Let's have a look at what they have done to the Bureau of Meteorology. The staffing at the field station in Weipa—where do honourable members think they have sent the staff? Lord Howe Island! The staff in Mount Isa have been sent to Melbourne. The staff from Charleville have gone to Adelaide. In Longreach the staff have gone to Melbourne. In Townsville—this is controversial—the staff have gone to Cairns. In Rockhampton, they are planning to send the staff to Adelaide. In Rockhampton they are going to close the office; they are automating it and they are redeploying staff. There are going to be redundancies there.

(Time expired)

Child Protection, Indigenous Children

Dr MacMAHON: My question is for the Minister for Children and Youth Justice. Yesterday on National Sorry Day I was sent a distressing video of an Indigenous child being forcibly removed from their family in Cherbourg. If sorry truly means you do not do it again, why has the government let the rate of Indigenous children entering the child protection system jump by 20 per cent since 2014?

Ms LINARD: I thank the member for the question. As those opposite know, I cannot comment on individual cases and I will not refer to that particular case that the member has raised. What I can say is that this is a concern for the government. It is a concern. We do not want to see this overrepresentation in our system. Evidence shows that the investment we are making is making a difference. Our investment in the family support system is reducing the risk of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children entering our system. We are focused on that. We know we still have a way to go and we will continue that focus.

I can provide the House with some of the stats around our progress to date, and that is that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children make up just eight per cent of Queensland's children but 43 per cent of all children in out-of-home care. We do acknowledge that is a figure that we are not happy with; that is a figure that we do not want in Queensland. It is something that we will continue to look at. Let me make clear that the vast majority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people live in safety in their homes and in their communities. That is not always represented; that is not always what is portrayed, but that is absolutely the truth. More needs to be done to address that overrepresentation, as I mentioned.

Something that we are very proud of as a government is the investment we are making in family wellbeing services. I think they are fabulous services and I saw them when we were in Longreach. I thank the Premier for taking our cabinet there to hold its meeting. I met with our family wellbeing officer in Longreach and what an incredible impact she is making working with the community there. That early intervention focus we have is about keeping children with their families. It is about providing them with the supports to stay together and, if they need help, to intervene early rather than bringing them into the tertiary system. An amount of \$41 million has been allocated to that service and also 33 family wellbeing services across the state. Early evidence suggests they are successful in reducing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families coming back into contact with the child protection system by more than two-thirds. That is a significant achievement.

An additional investment of \$6.3 million in family wellbeing services over two years will deliver an additional 31 Indigenous youth and family workers aimed at providing that early intervention, diversion and reconnection with family to prevent children from entering the system. That is only one aspect of our commitment. Our Way strategy, developed in partnership with Family Matters Queensland, outlines the framework for transformational change to reduce the rate of overrepresentation over a generation. The second action plan, Changing Tracks, continues our long-term commitment to work together to set the foundations for change across the child protection system. We will continue to work with our stakeholders. We are having very frank conversations about how we can ensure their voices are being heard and they are given a more frontline role in the decisions that are being made in the system.

Women and Girls, Sport

Mrs MULLEN: My question is of the Minister for Tourism Industry Development and Innovation and Minister for Sport. Will the minister update the House on how the Palaszczuk government's investment in the new AFLW complex in Springfield Central will deliver for the greater community and help young girls and women to realise their sporting ambitions, and is the minister aware of any alternative approaches?

Mr HINCHLIFFE: I want to thank the member for Jordan for the question. Indeed, I want to place on record my great appreciation for the hard work the member has put into ensuring the local community will access the Lions AFLW complex now under construction at Springfield Central. The member for Jordan has been very adamant throughout the process that the meeting rooms, the auditorium, the events lawn and the childcare centre at the Brisbane Lions Brighton Homes Arena should be shared with the community. It is a win for the local community and a win for women's Australian Rules football.

The Palaszczuk government is investing \$18 million in the \$70 million AFLW arena because we know it is important to the Ipswich region's economic recovery plan. During construction, the arena will create 187 building jobs and, once operational, will deliver almost \$48 million in economic benefit to the region.

It is also part of the government's support for women's AFL, which is growing at a cracking pace. Of the 280,000 AFL players lining up on ovals across Queensland this season, 42 per cent are girls or young women. That is the highest level of female participation in the sport across the whole of the country. The number of females playing AFL is up 331 per cent compared to seven years ago. We know that when girls have positive elite role models, female friendly change rooms and good ovals on game day, the sky is the limit, so we want to encourage that.

Queensland women also dominate Rugby League football. The Broncos are the triple NRLW premiers. On 25 June the Women's State of Origin returns to the Sunshine Coast Stadium. For the first time both teams are coached by women and each member of the 32-player maroons training squad has a paid contract. Isn't that a great step forward for the recognition of these great athletes?

I do hope that when I am there on 25 June enjoying the Women's State of Origin match that the Prime Minister might also join us in the spectator stands at the Sunshine Coast Stadium for that State of Origin match. It might be an opportunity for him and indeed the LNP member for Fisher, and the local LNP member for Kawana. They might get a better appreciation for why the federal government needs to chip in its \$20 million for the stadium upgrade and to support sport—community sport and elite sport—like this Women's State of Origin. That will help make sure we do not lose the opportunity of the philanthropic contribution being made for this proposal. Unfortunately, without the \$20 million commitment from the federal government and matching the state's commitment, there is a risk of losing—

(Time expired)

Small Business

Mr MICKELBERG: I have a question to the small business minister. Small Business Commissioner Maree Adshead has said her appeals to the state government for better information and financial support for small businesses identified as COVID exposure venues have been unsuccessful. Why does the government continue to ignore the cries for help from businesses like the Gin Gin Bakery that feel abandoned in their time of need?

Ms FARMER: I thank the member for his question. I see that there was a story in today's paper about some businesses that had been affected as exposure sites. I know that my department and certainly the Small Business Commissioner have been in touch with a number of those businesses at the relevant time.

It goes without saying that we on this side of the House know that small business has been particularly affected by COVID. Certainly, those businesses that are exposure sites have additional issues and challenges. That is why on the couple of occasions a lockdown has occurred I have immediately convened meetings of peak small business bodies. In fact, I really want to thank the Chief Health Officer because I have specifically convened those meetings so that the Chief Health Officer can speak to those peak bodies directly and hear from them what their businesses are going through and about any really specific issues. We know that there are many different ways in which exposure sites can be affected. We cannot necessarily predict all of those ways. We work very closely with the Minister for Health. Every single issue that is raised by small business at the time is dealt with immediately. There are thousands of different ways, even in a 24-hour period, in which small businesses can be affected.

I thank all of those peak bodies like CCIQ, the Small Business Commissioner and the Restaurant and Catering Industry Association of Australia Inc. I cannot speak highly enough of the public health officials on the ground in terms of the way they do their jobs to not only protect citizens but also support small businesses and other organisations as much as possible. I know that we continue to work on those.

It is very clear that the Queensland government backs small business. We supported small business through COVID with almost \$200 million in COVID adaptation grants and almost a billion dollars in interest-free loans. We supported them in so many different ways. We just announced the \$140 million Big Plans for Small Business package. We are rolling out those grants as we speak.

It is a bit unbelievable that the member opposite had to read the paper to hear about what small businesses are doing. Out of the 17 roadshows we conducted—the member was very welcome to come and hear what small businesses were saying—he came to only two. If he had come to more, he would have been able to hear about the range of issues that small businesses are experiencing. We back small business; members opposite need to get on board.

(Time expired)

Mr Mickelberg interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Buderim, you are on a warning already. You can leave the chamber for one hour under standing order 235A.

Whereupon the honourable member for Buderim withdrew from the chamber at 11.12 am.

Agriculture Industry

Mr O'ROURKE: My question is to the Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities. Will the minister update the House on the Palaszczuk government's approach to assisting farmers get their first start in the industry or make their properties more sustainable?

Mr FURNER: I thank the member for Rockhampton for that question. I thank him and the member for Keppel for hosting the Beef Australia board on Tuesday night in your dining room, Mr Speaker. This is a typical example of what the Palaszczuk government does in terms of supporting not only Queensland farmers but also the Queensland beef industry—the best beef in the nation. It is on the record of the last sitting week that at least one opposition member was at Beef 2021. We know that the member for Gympie was there because he was shouting and interjecting on the Premier when she was on her feet talking about beef in Queensland.

Returning to the question, the Primary Industry Productivity Enhancement Scheme is a great scheme which demonstrates our support and which has been funded through QRIDA for many years. It is a scheme that provides First Start Loans and sustainability loans for primary producers in Queensland. That is what the Palaszczuk government has done historically since coming to power. We have supported our primary producers because we as a Labor government understand what primary industries in Queensland require.

The \$100 million PIPES allocation for the 2020-21 financial year will be reached by 30 June. That is why we are focusing on the future of PIPES and the future of Queensland farmers. This demand demonstrates the confidence farmers have in Queensland agriculture as well as the confidence and support of the Palaszczuk government. Let us reflect on what the Newman government did in its short period in government: \$60 million caps were all it could bring itself to do in terms of supporting Queensland farmers. Clearly, that was not enough. That is why the Palaszczuk government lifted the caps to \$100 million.

Even with that increased cap, Queensland farmers could not get enough of the PIPES program. We are backing our farmers through the good times and the bad and offering concrete assistance to meet their real needs. I am pleased to announce today that we are lifting the cap to \$120 million from the start of the new financial year. That is what Labor governments do. The Palaszczuk government supports Queensland farmers through and through, every day of the week. Everywhere I travel, everywhere this cabinet travels right throughout Queensland, we support farmers. We are lucky if we see any one of those opposite anywhere in our regions. They are missing in action. It is no wonder the 'door Nats' are dying in the regions, because they are no longer part of the LNP. What happened to the once-proud Nationals they used to be? That is why you will not see them in the regions anytime we are out there.

(Time expired)

Family Responsibilities Commission

Mr LANGBROEK: My question is to the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships. Queensland government funding for the Family Responsibilities Commission ends next month. Will Labor match the ongoing federal government funding commitment to maintain the Family Responsibilities Commission, given it has achieved success, instead of pursuing a model that Indigenous communities do not want and have no detail about?

Mr CRAWFORD: We are currently working with stakeholders around the FRC. That includes the federal government. The FRC is jointly funded by the state and federal governments, through Ken Wyatt's office. We are also working with the FRC and Cape York Partnership about ongoing funding. There is no plan to cease funding to the FRC.

Callide Dam

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: My question is to the Minister for Water. With reference to Callide Dam near Biloela, would the minister confirm that the Labor government is severely reducing the capacity of Callide Dam by ripping off the gates in the same way it crippled Paradise Dam by lowering the dam wall?

Mr BUTCHER: It is a pleasure to talk about Callide Dam. It was a pleasure for me to go and have a look at that dam. I will table a picture that I took at the dam.

Tabled paper: Photograph, dated 8 April 2021, depicting dam [\[725\]](#).


Mr SPEAKER: Please put the picture down.

Mr BUTCHER: How are we going to reduce the water level when there is no water? There is no water near the dam walls. This dam at Callide has had issues in the past with vibration. Maintenance work needs to be done so that if that dam does fill up in the wet season the safety of the people of the Biloela community is assured. Once again, the member for Nanango is having a go at those Queenslanders she should be supporting. We need to concentrate on fixing these gates in Biloela. Those opposite should not come into parliament and carry on like pork chops, because the race is on between the member for Callide and the member for Nanango over who is the new candidate for the seat of Flynn.


Mr SPEAKER: The period for question time has expired.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Further Answer to Question, Biagini, Mr P


 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (11.18 am): I wish to clarify in respect of the question to which the Premier responded in relation to right-of-entry permits. They are right-of-entry permits under the federal industrial relations system. If someone is stood down in the state, they cannot use any of the permits while they are stood down. Recent Federal Court decisions say that, without an active right-of-entry permit under the federal system, people cannot use state permits. The Premier was referring to the need to apply to the federal Fair Work Commission, which issues those permits—not to the state ones issued by the QICA that are rendered invalid if someone is stood down.

Further Answer to Question, Macropod Industry

 **Hon. ML FURNER** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities) (11.19 am): I rise to make a ministerial statement with regard to a question to the Premier from the member for Gregory. In the years 2009 to 2020, the United States has accounted for just 1.6 per cent of kangaroo exports, or macropods, from Queensland. While not a large export industry, the kangaroo industry is an important employer and driver of economic activity in rural and regional areas. The Queensland government supports the sustainable and humane harvest of macropods. While not a large export industry for Queensland, it would be disappointing to see exports banned because of misinformation. The Commonwealth government has ultimate responsibility for the oversight of export of native animals and the Queensland Palaszczuk government has always supported this area, and one example of that is through RED grants for Western Game in Longreach.

MOTION

Suspension of Standing Orders

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (11.19 am): by leave, without notice: I move—

That standing order 87 be suspended to enable the question that clause 143 of the Debt Reduction and Savings Bill 2021, as read, be agreed to.

I am advised that the purpose of the motion is purely procedural and addresses a drafting concern that has been raised and has been identified by the Clerk and has been agreed to by OQPC as necessary to address the issue.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.


Motion agreed to.

DEBT REDUCTION AND SAVINGS BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from 26 May (see p. 1678), on motion of Mr Dick—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Ms BOYD** (Pine Rivers—ALP) (11.20 am), continuing: It is wonderful to resume my contribution from last evening when I was reflecting upon how many non-government members were not on the speaking list. There is a bit of delight as I look at the speaking list now and see the opposition members for Toowoomba South, Theodore and Lockyer have been added to the speaking list—

Mrs Frecklington: That's because we've all spoken.

Ms BOYD:—but I cannot help but wonder where the member for Broadwater is in this debate.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Nanango, you are on a warning. You can leave the chamber for one hour under standing order 253A.


Whereupon the honourable member for Nanango withdrew from the chamber at 11.21 am.

Ms BOYD: In my contribution last night I was also reflecting on a *Brisbane Times* article of 7 October 2014 regarding the contribution from the member for Clayfield when he was indeed the short-lived treasurer of Queensland. I want to particularly reflect on this section of the article when in 2010, as shadow Treasurer, Mr Nicholls, the member for Clayfield, told state parliament claims from the then Labor government that the state would still own assets on a 99-year lease were a 'furphy'. Mr Nicholls said—

As anyone would know if they had observed the privatisation of assets, a 99-year lease is as good as giving away the farm ...

He said that on 23 March 2010. I reflect also that the LNP opposition in Queensland has no economic plan whatsoever because it cannot find efficiencies rather than cut and it cannot cut workers rather than make savings. This is entirely contrary to its ideology.

In my contribution I want to also give credit to local Brendale business owners Jada Woodward and Craig Goss. They are the owners of the Method Tattoo Coffee Bar. I met with them in their business in Brendale on 28 April and it was there that they expressed to me some concerns. They made a late submission to the committee, and I thank the committee for accepting that late submission, where they detailed their worry around the measures contained within the bill in relation to tattoo inks. They source theirs from the United States. I want to credit the committee and the Minister for Health for the withdrawal of those provisions contained within the bill. This is demonstrative of how as a Labor government we listen and we respond. We certainly listened to the tattoo industry around its concerns in relation to tattoo inks. That is a credit to not only this government but also the robust way our committee system works. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr JANETZKI** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (11.24 am): Over the last couple of days I thought that I might have missed out on the opportunity to speak to the Debt Reduction and Savings Bill given my absence from the House, but it was so pleasing to see the additional 17 speakers added to the speaking list as the government said, 'You know what? We're going to have to filibuster. We're going to have to blather on. We're going to have to go back through the dim, dark ages to try and drag out this debate', so those opposite added speakers. We know how little is on the *Notice Paper*. We know the threadbare agenda that this government has, at the very least—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Pause the clock. I am struggling to see the relevance of this contribution so far. I would bring you back to the long title of the bill.

Mr JANETZKI: I am coming to that, Mr Deputy Speaker; it is all context. So it is pleasing that I am able to make a contribution to the debate in relation to this bill. There are a couple of key topics that I want to explore at more length later, including the AAA credit rating and a range of other tricky accounting issues, but I did want to start off by the making the point that the member for Kawana has already made—that is, that a bill that has remarkably taken 264 pages in content has not achieved anything that its title seems to suggest, not in any way, shape or form. What it does is continues this government's history of a lack of transparency and its choosing of dodgy accounting over real economic solutions on every single occasion. I am going to start—

Mr Bailey: Your costings were dodgy.

Mr JANETZKI: I take the interjection from the member for Miller because he is talking about costings. As I recall it, when we saw the budget from the Treasurer in December we had only envisaged \$4 billion worth of borrowings and what the budget delivered in December was seven times the amount of foreshadowed borrowings announced prior to the election—a \$28 billion broken promise, and the member for Miller must know that that is the truth. There was a \$28 billion broken promise in borrowings from the time of the election to post the budget in December.

The bill sets out to achieve a number of things. It seeks to create a separate legal entity out of the titles office and place that asset with the Queensland Future (Debt Retirement) Fund, applies indexation to fees and charges in the general government sector, repeals the Building Queensland Act, amends the National Injury Insurance Scheme, amends the Public Safety Business Agency, repeals the Queensland Productivity Commission and related amendments, and amends the Financial Accountability Act.

The one thing that this bill does not actually address is any of the economic challenges that Queensland faces—slack wage growth, the rental crisis, housing affordability or the collapse in private investment. Labor has condemned our future generations to the millstone of debt with no plan to grow. This inactivity can best be seen by the fact that revenue has grown by 16 per cent over the last five years whilst expenses have grown by 28 per cent in that same period, with debt increasing by around \$50 billion.

Labor cannot manage the economy, as demonstrated last year during the election when it promised a \$4 billion increase in debt, which, as I have already stated, ended up being \$28 billion. Labor has lost Queensland's AAA credit rating, and I will come to that again shortly. This condemned Queensland to billions of dollars more in interest expenses over the years. That is money that has been taken from hospitals, schools and police.

The current crisis we are seeing in our hospitals can be directly traced back to that moment. And now we have this bill which, *prima facie*, sounds as though the government has a plan to address debt and save money, but the bill and Labor's plan are as superficial and facile as anything else produced by this Labor government over the last three decades. The debt grows and grows, but not on borrowings to build assets that would drive Queensland's economic future, just on borrowings to keep the lights on. The title also suggests that there may be savings. The Treasurer in his first reading speech promised \$3 billion in savings over four years. Savings against what, you might ask? Well, we do not really know. It might be on a forecast that lives somewhere on someone else's computer.

One of the fiscal principles of former treasurer Jackie Trad was to keep expense growth in line with population growth. The Queensland population grows around 1.2 per cent per annum on average. Expenses have grown at around 5.6 per cent per annum. That is a fiscal principle that lasted very little time. What does this bill really achieve? From what we heard at the public hearings, \$3 million in savings, but what is a few more zeros between Labor's comrades.

As I have stated, the history of economic management by the Labor Party since 2009 has been one of abject failure. In the Treasurer's second reading contribution he made some comments about the credit rating of Queensland. I want to note for the record that the Treasurer stated—

... in the last decade the only material change to Queensland's credit rating occurred when the member for Clayfield was the Treasurer in the LNP Newman government and Queensland was put on a negative outlook.

The Treasurer gets pretty cute with the facts, but this is extraordinarily cute. He used the words 'in the last decade'. It was in 2009 that the Labor government oversaw the downgrading of Queensland's credit rating. It might not be within the decade that the Treasurer very cutely noted in his second reading contribution, but it is misleading for him to leave out the true facts. The true facts are that he was in cabinet when this Labor government oversaw the downgrading of Queensland's credit rating. This was a state that went bust in the middle of a boom.

At the height of commodity prices and coal royalties throughout Queensland's history, the Labor government, in which the Premier was a member of cabinet and the Treasurer was a member of cabinet, oversaw the downgrading of the credit rating. For the Treasurer to come in and deny the facts is misleading. We know how much it actually played on the Treasurer's mind, because if members recall, after the 2012 state election there was a whole range of Labor ministers that had disappeared, but if there was one person that was more disappointed than any of the Liberal National MPs at the time of the 2012 election it must have been the Treasurer, the erstwhile member for Greenslopes, because at a time in 2012 when ex-premier Bligh, the former member for Sandgate—

Mr BAILEY: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. It has been some minutes since the member has addressed the bill. It is a fascinating historical bit of fiction, but he is not addressing the bill.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): There is no point of order. The member is being broadly relevant to the bill.

Mr JANETZKI: The member for Miller might not have been here at the time, but it would be timely for the House to recall what the Treasurer, the erstwhile member for Greenslopes, had to say. At the time, ex-premier Bligh was not saying anything; the former treasurer, Andrew Fraser, was not saying

anything; the now member for Sandgate was not commenting; Kate Jones, the member for Ashgrove at the time, was not commenting on the economic performance of the Labor government during those last three years of the Bligh era; but the now Treasurer decided to make a few comments.

Incidentally, they were comments about the AAA credit rating, the very AAA credit rating that he denied in his second reading contribution was ever downgraded under Labor—or he failed to acknowledge that it was downgraded under the Labor government. I will quote the Treasurer from a *Brisbane Times* article of 30 July 2012—

I do think Labor fell into the error, or seriously miscalculated and under-estimated the desire for Queenslanders to hold onto the AAA credit rating ...

In his second reading contribution, however, he left out Labor's overseeing of the downgrading of the credit rating in Queensland. We have to understand what is driving the Treasurer in this sleight of hand that we are seeing in this bill when it comes to the Titles Registry. He does not want to be seen as the Treasurer who is overseeing a potential further downgrade to the credit rating of Queensland. He knows the damage it did to the Bligh government and he will do anything, including a sleight of hand, to make sure that it does not happen again. When the Treasurer starts talking about the Titles Registry we know what is driving that decision.

As stated by the Queensland Auditor-General in his report into state finances in 2020, the defined benefit fund is now technically insolvent from an accounting perspective. Now we can draw a straight line from the loss of the AAA credit rating, the raid on workers' entitlements and the hiding of the debt in the government owned corporations to this very bill. The Debt Retirement Fund was planned to be ring fenced and held against the value of the debt. It would not repay any debt, merely offset it. This would then reduce the debt-to-revenue ratio which would, in turn, hold off any further credit rating downgrade. The cash assets that were held there could be invested to make a return and, at best, pay down a slight amount of the annual interest repayment expense.

The initial plan for this Debt Retirement Fund was to take a further \$3 billion from workers' superannuation funds. However, as I stated earlier, there are no more assets to move because the fund is technically insolvent on an accounting basis. Last year, the government owned corporations wrote down over \$1 billion in assets, including some assets that were not even installed or ready for use. In total, there is about \$4 billion less on the balance sheet than when the fund was first discussed.

That brings us to the establishment of Registry Co which the government has stated will be worth at least \$4.1 billion, a somewhat coincidental figure. This would then be placed into the Debt Retirement Fund in place of the entitlements raid. I wish to focus on the amount—at least \$4.1 billion—just for a moment because that is an interesting valuation to say the least. We have two very recent comparison points for that value from other states in the Commonwealth. In 2017 New South Wales privatised its titles registry at a value of \$2.6 billion and in 2018 Victoria raised \$2.85 billion when it privatised its titles office. The deals were both done with First State Super. New South Wales was on a 35-year lease and Victoria was on a 40-year lease.

I will go on the record and state that I do not believe in privatising the titles office. The Torrens system underpins our land transfer process and nothing should be done to compromise that. In my professional life I have worked in both the UK and Australian legal systems and I know firsthand how lucky we are to have the Torrens system in place. However, as demonstrated by the New South Wales and Victoria process there is obviously value in the titles office as an entity. There is no question about that. The valuation here in Queensland simply does not stack up from an arm's length transaction perspective. Given the fact that New South Wales and Victoria were valued over decades it would suggest that the terminal value rate or earnings multiple applied to the Queensland Titles Registry is either too low or too high respectively.

In the instance of Queensland, the government is not proposing to sell the registry to a third party, they are simply creating the asset and then selling it back to themselves at a prima facie inflated value. When the Deputy Under Treasurer was asked at the public briefing as to how the value was derived, the response was a vague 'done independently based on revenue'. We do know the basic theory of how valuations are derived. What we were seeking was the actual detail of the valuation and questions remain about that. How much revenue does it make? What is the cost base? How much does the government pay to CITEC to run the titles search platform on its behalf? If the market is willing to pay 50 per cent less for bigger titles offices, why would they pay this much for Queensland's?

Again, the Queensland government lacks transparency. The Titles Registry does not make money for the government; it collects fees on behalf of the Queensland people and for the benefit of the Queensland people. They have a right to know how this valuation was calculated. Based on all

available evidence there is a strong chance that the valuation is overstated. The implication of that is the valuation will have to be written down to something more reasonable at some stage in the future and, on the back of that, a potential breach of a debt-to-revenue covenant. Then where will we be? We will need to create another asset out of another government department and capitalise that.

Eventually we will run out of departments and accounting trickery. At least moving superannuation funds into this fund involved actual assets that could be invested and a return made. That would at least have helped to pay down some of the extra billions in wasted interest expenses that all Queenslanders have had to bear over the years. We call for transparency on this valuation to ensure that certainty is provided that this is not just dodgy accounting that will ultimately expose Queenslanders to higher interest costs in the future.

I now turn to the abolition of the Queensland Productivity Commission and Building Queensland. The effective abolition of those two agencies proves, once and for all, that Labor have no commitment to transparency beyond election cycles—in this case, two election cycles. Both agencies started with apparently noble intentions. However, one succeeded and one failed. Let us start with the failure. Building Queensland was introduced with great fanfare by the Palaszczuk government in 2015. The act established a body to provide governance on infrastructure projects along with associated business cases, but what has it achieved? Its existence has not stopped the government from committing to significant infrastructure investments without a business case—the Gabba redevelopment; prevented cost blowouts—for instance, the southern Queensland correction facilities; or led to the development of credible project business cases—Cross River Rail.

The success has been the Queensland Productivity Commission and the former treasurer, the member for Mulgrave, should be congratulated for establishing that strong, independent policy voice for Queensland. The Queensland Productivity Commission was established to review complex economic and regulatory issues and propose policy reforms to government. Over time it has been starved of purpose and now it is to be removed. Six matters were investigated in 2017 alone but only five since then. Only one matter was referred in 2020. The Queensland Productivity Commissioner has reviewed important matters such as electricity prices, service delivery in remote Indigenous communities and, most recently, improving regulation. In 2020 the Queensland Productivity Commission released a report demonstrating that productivity had declined under Labor since 2015.

Even more recently, in March of this year the commission provided a regulatory blueprint for the way forward out of COVID-19. It outlined that countries with more efficient regulatory regimes are more likely to experience smaller economic contractions and faster recoveries. This is because efficient regulatory regimes allow resources to be rapidly reallocated to respond to the crisis or to be redeployed to newly productive opportunities, limiting the economic and social costs of a crisis. The commission estimated that Queensland business expenditure to comply with state regulation could be in the order of \$3.5 billion and \$7 billion each and every year, that is, \$7,000 to \$15,200 per business every year. That totals approximately one to two per cent of Queensland gross state product. By improving state regulation there is a chance to improve public sector productivity and potentially free up resources to support the delivery of public services. Relevantly, as reported by the commission, gross spending on administering and enforcing regulation in Queensland is likely to be in the order of \$2.6 billion to \$3.1 billion per year.

The report also made reference to the growth in regulatory burdens. The last count of Queensland regulation in 2013 identified over 72,000 pages of legislation and 265,000 separate regulatory requirements. Since then more than 300 new acts have been passed and over 1,600 subordination regulations made. Between 2018 and 2020, 107 acts were passed and only 12 repealed. The commission argued that regulation needs to be reviewed regularly to ensure its continued relevance and effectiveness. In fact, 11 per cent of all Queensland acts have not been amended in the past 20 years.

The real reason the commission is disappearing into the bureaucracy is because it has consistently and independently pointed out what the Labor government is doing wrong. It has consistently and independently pointed out what could be done better and what reforms could be made. When the Treasurer complains about slow wage growth and the commission offers up ideas on how to increase wages or boost the Queensland economy, it is ignored because the government does not like the message. When the commission issues a report entitled 'Building economic resilience' that may, for example, highlight how labour participation can be improved after an economic shock such as a pandemic—again, Queensland has an underperforming participation rate—the recommendations will be ignored.

Given that the Treasurer and the government are so totally out of ideas, one would think that they would be looking anywhere for help but they are simply rolling the Productivity Commission into the bureaucracy to shut down their independent voice. The government may be out of ideas or busy dismissing them but they are full of blame: Canberra, COVID, CommSec, commentators; it does not matter. This also speaks to the attitude of the Labor Party to transparency and its lack of belief in any independent thought.

I turn briefly to the printing of public notices. The bill removes the need for governments to publish public notices in print newspapers. It is proposed that public notices be published on the social media page of the relevant government department. To justify the proposal, the Treasurer has stated several locations that no longer have a newspaper in print. I note that the Treasurer said that News Corp, for example, made the decision to cease the publication of daily newspapers in Mackay, Rockhampton, Gladstone, Bundaberg and on the Fraser Coast. However, all the locations listed by the Treasurer have locally printed independent newspapers. Those newspapers rely on varying sources of revenue to stay afloat and the publication of public notices forms part of that revenue base. The Country Press Association also raised issues in relation to a loss of transparency in relation to the change.

As someone who grew up in rural Queensland, I can tell the House that independent newspapers, in many cases printed by independent proprietors, are small businesses comprised—

Mr McDonald: They're the social fabric.

Mr JANETZKI: I take the interjection from the member for Lockyer who knows this all too well from his electorate. They are a part of the social fabric of our society. In the electorate of the member for Lockyer they may have three newspapers but I know that in the electorates of the members for Condamine, Nanango and others they have many more independent newspapers. For the government to so flippantly dismiss the importance of government notices in local newspapers is wrong. It is no surprise that a Labor government would take a shot at News Corp without getting to the bottom of the real story, which is that local newspapers are run by local people. They are local businesses run by and for local community members who want to hear their stories told right across regional and rural Queensland. It is short-sighted for government notices not to be published in print newspapers. That is another reason they are seen as out of touch with the regions.

I want to comment briefly on the amendments relating to the tattooing industry, which I saw on Facebook were being withdrawn by the health minister. Over the past five or six years the government has had serious form in relation to how they manage the regulatory and legislative processes. We have seen bills pulled. We have seen bills substantially amended and, in fact, nearly rewritten as in the case of a racing bill that I recall from many years ago. We have seen amendments made at the last minute that have not gone through processes. We have seen optional preferential voting discarded without any reference to a parliamentary committee, oversight from cabinet or public consultation and this is another example of that.

The tattooing industry, which is comprised of many small business owners, said that there was a lack of consultation. It makes you wonder how the government is actually running their consultation processes when it comes to drafting legislation because, time and again, we see changes and withdrawals made at the last minute and amendments introduced without any consultation or reference to industry. We see that again here with the tattooing industry. My hope is that the government will go away, consult and get these amendments right.

I want to return briefly to the economic argument. This bill was an opportunity for the Treasurer to lay out his marker. We have heard a little bit over the last couple of days that all will be revealed in the budget in the next couple of weeks, but we have been waiting six years now for an economic vision and we are still to see anything from this government. To see this, we only need go through some of the economic indicators. We saw again today in the media reference to the lack of spending on infrastructure. We know that 12 per cent of the Queensland budget goes to infrastructure. In other states like New South Wales and Victoria it is 20 per cent. I am looking forward to seeing the Treasurer ramp up those numbers to invest more in infrastructure that will deliver economic productivity right across our great state of Queensland so that we can start to see some income-producing assets that deliver prosperity in the longer term.


I turn to a couple of other measures that I hope the budget, in a couple of weeks time, starts to address. We have the most bankruptcies in Queensland. Across the nation, 4½ thousand people went bankrupt in 2020. We know we have some of the lowest levels of private sector investment. Post COVID, it will be up to the private sector to pick up the slack and make sure our economic future is sound. The Labor government will not be doing what it needs to do; it will be up to the private sector. When I see sluggish private sector wage growth, when I see sluggish private capital expenditure in

Queensland, it worries me that, without a plan from this state government in this particular bill and a worrying budget in the next couple of weeks, it will be up to the private sector to pick up the slack and make sure that Queensland's economic future is a positive one. We know this because that is what the private sector is looking for.

One of the things that concerns me most about this bill, the Debt Reduction and Savings Bill, was that no major economic development body actually made a submission. What does it say when the CCIQ, the Property Council, Advance Cairns, the Toowoomba and Surat Basin Enterprise and economic development boards from across the state are not even interested in making a submission to this bill? What does that say about this government's performance and the expectations of the private sector that it will improve anytime soon? I put it to the House that there is no expectation that this government knows what to do to improve productivity or knows what to do to improve our infrastructure spend. We know that it is out of its depth when it comes to health. We know that across the board this government is lacking in ideas, and what we need more than anything else is ideas. We need to unleash the productive capacity of the private sector because this state depends on it.

This bill has fallen so far short of the mark that the CCIQ, the Property Council and UDIA have not even made a submission. When you marry that up with the private sector investment numbers on capital expenditure and with sluggish private sector wage growth, it tells you that the private sector has no confidence whatsoever that this government will in any way, shape or form deliver a productive agenda and will deliver a budget that works for all Queenslanders.

What we have is a pointless, misleading, terrible bill that takes us nowhere. It is simply preoccupied with the Treasurer making sure that he does not oversee a credit rating downgrade. The bill is not visionary, and my fear for Queensland is that the budget in three weeks time will not have the vision we so desperately require. When you roll up the Productivity Commission and when you have a private sector that is so disengaged with the process and what the government is proposing to do, we have problems in Queensland. It is past playing a small target. It is time for the Treasurer to find productivity measures in Queensland and do it fast because our state depends on it.

 **Ms BUSH** (Cooper—ALP) (11.54 am): I could not disagree more with the statements from the member for Toowoomba South. I rise to speak in support of the bill, a bill that recommends sensible savings while protecting vital Public Service jobs and assets and ensuring our frontline services are sustainable and are focused on the needs of the public.

Following the years of 2012 to 2015, Queenslanders are now sensitive to the detail in any debt reduction strategy, as they should be, so it is important that they have the answers to the following questions: what will the savings be? Will jobs be lost? Will the quality of our public services be compromised? I will answer those questions now.

Firstly, the bill provides for \$3 million in direct savings which arise from savings in board costs, office accommodation and other ancillary costs. Members opposite have scoffed at \$3 million, but that money reprioritised could build additional classrooms for burgeoning schools or it could support a stimulus package for businesses impacted by COVID. Importantly, the \$3 million in direct savings is only one part of the government's broader \$3 billion savings and debt reduction agenda. This savings agenda achieved \$367 million in savings last year and targets \$750 million this financial year to get to \$3 billion in total over the four years.

Secondly, these savings will be achieved without cutting frontline services, sacking public servants or selling Queensland assets. As part of the government's COVID-19 Fiscal and Economic Review and the implementation of its savings and debt plan, the government announced that it had identified opportunities for the structural reform of statutory bodies and agencies where their functions could be integrated within existing government departments. This bill implements those structural and economic reform priorities by integrating the staff, assets, resources and liabilities, and functions of some identified statutory bodies into existing government departments, finding efficiencies and strengthening the capabilities and services of our Public Service.

Building Queensland will move into State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning. This will enhance that department's infrastructure advice and assurance capability. It will also streamline processes, reduce administrative costs and provide more coordinated infrastructure advice and assurance to government.

The productivity and regulatory review functions of the Queensland Productivity Commission will be integrated into Treasury through the establishment of the Office of Productivity and Red Tape Reduction. This integration will enhance Treasury's economic policy capability and enable greater integration of the government's economic strategy, driving greater productivity and economic growth to promote economic recovery.

Additionally, the bill will change the governance structure of the National Injury Insurance Scheme to drive greater efficiencies and provide stronger alignment of the governance of motor accident personal injury schemes.

The bill will also repeal the Public Safety Business Agency Act so that machinery-of-government changes can reintegrate the PSBA into public safety entities. The PSBA was established to provide support services and hold infrastructure fleet and communication technology assets for public safety entities; namely, the Queensland Police Service, Queensland Fire and Emergency Services and the Office of the Inspector-General Emergency Management.

Although the PSBA was established to reduce waste and duplication, it has resulted in more complex business and service delivery arrangements, leading to inefficiencies and greater risks and costs to the PSBA and the agencies it services. The reintegration of the PSBA into public safety entities will promote the ability of these agencies to efficiently deliver services to the community.

Thirdly, not only can we guarantee that the quality of our public services will not be compromised; they will in fact be strengthened through the initiatives in this bill as we redirect savings into both our frontline services and core support roles like research and development in health, and student wellbeing packages in schools.

The Palaszczuk Labor government is investing more in our core and critical services than ever before. Our frontline public servants have gone above and beyond to protect Queensland through what is arguably one of our greatest challenges in modern history. From the contact tracers, COVID ward nursing staff, members of the Queensland Police Service and State Emergency Service volunteers who have worked on the borders to the teachers who delivered lessons remotely, these public servants deserve our unreserved respect and protection. That is why we have continued to strengthen the front line, announcing within the 2020-21 budget an additional 5,800 nurses and midwives, 1,500 doctors, 475 paramedics and 1,700 allied health professionals. We remain committed to delivering over 2,000 extra police personnel by 2025. Our government will always back our frontline workers.

We are committed to ensuring our health system will be even stronger once we are past COVID-19, with a record investment of \$21.8 billion this financial year, including the delivery of seven new, innovative satellite hospitals across South-East Queensland ensuring healthcare services and employment that is closer to home for tens of thousands of Queenslanders. Queensland's workforce participation rate continues to lead the country—a sign of confidence in our economic future. This government remains committed to ensuring that jobs will be there for people.

We are going to hear—and we have heard a bit already this week—from those opposite that the savings do not go far enough. It really is a diversion—a diversion from having us take a trip down memory lane and remembering what the LNP government did to Queenslanders when they were in government. I was in the Public Service at that time—I remember it well—under Campbell Newman and those opposite. As I walk around the electorate and go about my roles and functions, people often approach me to talk about those times. Do members know the four words they use over and over? They say, 'Never let them forget.'

Let us not forget what an LNP government looks like for Queensland. We know that when they were last in government they: sacked 14,000 government workers, despite telling workers they had nothing to fear—including 4,400 health workers' jobs, including 1,800 nurses and midwives; slashed \$288 million in employment programs, including Skilling Queenslanders for Work; axed \$368 million in grants to the department of communities to support our vulnerable Queenslanders in need of assistance; cut \$120 million in funding to community groups from Queensland Health; cut \$60 million from local government grants and subsidies; and shut seven schools.

The sheer volume of these cuts is eye-watering, but it is not just the scale of it that is heartbreaking but where they made the cuts that really tells the story of who those opposite really are. The cuts affected our most vulnerable and those needing help, people who were unwell, people who needed training to get into work and those renting and living in precarious housing who missed out when the tenants advisory service was closed.

The stories that came from that period—stories that even this week people are continuing to share with me—fill me with anger. Stories like that of Anne—not her real name, such is the hesitancy of people to talk about this—who shared with me how she came back to work early from major surgery because she was scared she could not compete for the few jobs left in her team if she were away from the workplace for a few extra days, such was her anxiety. Anne should have been able to take paid medical leave. She should have been able to recover. Instead, she rushed back to work, into an

environment that was suddenly very uncertain and stressful. Anne experienced complications from her surgery. Despite this, she continued to attend not one but several interviews in an attempt to secure any job she could in that agency.

There are stories like that of Mel—also not her real name—who still suffers anxiety when she speaks about what she witnessed working within a department at the time. In Mel's words—


It was terrifying, absolutely soul shattering to see my colleagues' names struck off a list. It was literally a spreadsheet of staff and teams and we had to just cross off names to get our staff numbers down.

This is what hasty reductions look like—stricken names on a page. This was the cavalier approach that was supported and encouraged by the LNP in government.

It really was worse than that. I recall going to a barbecue during that time, as a public servant myself, and speaking to a small group about what was going on in the Public Service—the job cuts. I mentioned the fear that people were living with and the uncertainty. I mentioned how people were suffering psychological distress and that families were separating. I mentioned that we had started to hear about suicides. One of the women turned to me and said something that stopped me. She said, 'Good'.

The approach the LNP took in targeting the Public Service in the way they did invoked a blood-lust in some people in society. Public servants who were once proud of their skills and abilities and who were proud of their commitment to the public were suddenly made to feel ashamed of their vocation. Imagine being made to feel ashamed of what one does to earn a living. Imagine a political party that turns society against itself. Imagine invoking a sense of self-hatred amongst an entire cohort of workers because of one's own ideological views. I can only think of one other party that perhaps might do that.

The Palaszczuk Labor government has restored certainty and integrity to the Public Service. Queenslanders have not forgotten that either. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr WALKER** (Mundingburra—ALP) (12.04 pm): I rise in the House today to voice my support for the Debt Reduction and Savings Bill 2021. I support this bill because it is all about protecting Queensland from the LNP agenda to cut, sack and sell. When I was elected my community was still hurting because of the LNP's cuts. They told me that they loved the way the Premier kept them safe during the world pandemic. They wanted to see good frontline services.

Labor makes sensible, prudent savings in a way that does not hurt Queenslanders. The savings that this bill supports will ensure our frontline services are sustainable and focused on the needs of the public—the people of Queensland. This is unlike the LNP Newman government and those opposite that we remember well. They were part of the problem—cut, sack and sell. I remember when the Newman government and the former member for Mundingburra and now member for Broadwater were going hard selling assets across Townsville and the state.

It is important to have a plan to address debt and make prudent savings. That is why I support the Debt Reduction and Savings Bill 2021. I witnessed firsthand asset sales and the closure of Queensland state schools in my area as a Townsville city councillor. I saw the Major Creek State School closed and sold by the LNP Newman government. I witnessed the Stuart State School closed by the LNP Newman government. I was there with the teachers and families at the public meetings prior to its closure. Families and young people were crying, begging for their school to stay open.

Mr Mander interjected.

Mr WALKER: Listen carefully. This was a school with a 123-year history that was providing a fantastic education to the young people of the local community and, furthermore, a school that hosted a very important program for young people with Delta dogs. I will never forget teachers losing their jobs. It was a very sad time for all concerned. There was no apology from the LNP for the hurt they caused those families. They also sold the beautiful West End State School on Ingham Road, Townsville. They even tried to sell the North Queensland Police Academy.

That is why I support the Debt Reduction and Savings Bill 2021. We need to keep assets in public hands. We need to invest in more jobs and grow the Queensland economy, not cut, sack and sell. COVID-19 threw some very serious challenges at our state and our communities. It pushed the great people of our state to their limits, but, finally, we are starting to see a light at the end of the tunnel of these challenging times. That has only been achieved by the strong leadership of our Premier, the former minister for health, the current Minister for Health and our Chief Medical Officer.

The next challenge facing this place and everyone in it is how we best place our economy in a position where we can continue to create jobs, build infrastructure, invest in health and education, support the regions and continue to prosper. That is why I support the Debt Reduction and Savings Bill 2021.

I heard the member for Clayfield talk about debt. He failed to talk about his role in the Newman government when he cut services, sacked vital public servants and sold important assets. It is no secret we have some challenging times ahead with increased interstate migration, an ageing community and more demands on our healthcare and education systems, but I can say that this bill goes a long way to ensuring that we are able to tackle these challenges head-on.

Labor makes sensible, prudent savings in a way that does not hurt Queenslanders. The savings that this bill supports will ensure our frontline services are sustainable and focused on the needs of Queenslanders. What do we hear from those opposite? Labor does not understand the economy or Labor does not understand fiscal responsibility. What does the member for Toowoomba South call the federal government's trillion debt? Crickets; they are quiet now. Those opposite are all about cut, sack and sell. That is the Queensland LNP's response to being fiscally responsible.

Yesterday I spoke about a \$1.4 million investment in a paediatric cardiology service for the Townsville University Hospital and a further \$1.6 million investment for a paediatric emergency services department at the same hospital. That is a \$3 million investment in our young people who need very important health services. Those opposite keep saying that a \$3 million saving is a pittance. I say that it is money that can be better spent on providing important services for Queenslanders.


The LNP need to support this bill as it has the potential to save lives by providing more important services with the savings made. Those opposite say cut, sack and sell is a good thing. Tell that to the 398 hospital and health workers, which included 156 nurses and midwives from the Townsville Hospital and Health Service, who lost their jobs under the previous LNP government. Our community does not forget the devastating cut, sack and sell agenda that devastated our state. We have heard not one apology from the LNP for their poor performance—crickets, nothing. Fair shake of the sauce bottle! It is awfully convenient when the Morrison government has plunged Australia's debt beyond a trillion dollars, but we will not hear any criticism from those opposite about that, will we? Crickets, nothing.

My community of Mundingburra already know what it is like to be left in the dark by the LNP. I am not referring to the Leader of the Opposition scrambling to the safe seat on the Gold Coast either; I am referring to the \$196 million that was promised to the people of Townsville by the Liberal federal member for Herbert, Phil Thompson, who has failed our community. The money promised is not even in the federal budget—\$196 million gone. It is not in the federal budget. He has also failed the older community members left in hospital beds waiting for the federal government to supply more aged-care beds. There has been nothing said by Mr Phil Thompson on the federal budget—nothing. There is nothing for water security, nothing for Lansdown Eco-Industrial Precinct, no funding to fight crime, nothing for jobs growth—just crickets.

The Debt Reduction and Savings Bill provides a fee unit model that will reduce costs for Parliamentary Counsel as they go through the annual fee unit indexation. This is in stark contrast to those opposite who previously increased fees and charges by 3.5 per cent every year regardless of inflation. That hit the back pocket of many Queenslanders—still crickets. The member for Kawana needs to listen for a change. Labor has brought the fees and charges down. It started at 2.25 per cent, down to 1.8 per cent and now at 1.7 per cent—the lowest indexation rate in more than a decade. Nothing is said about that by those opposite.

We have continued to adapt with the times as people right across the state, including in my hometown of Townsville, continue to access their news online. With that, I welcome the move to place notices online where they can be accessed more broadly. The day of governments solely placing notices in the newspaper are over. I am also pleased, however, that the bill provides an exception so that in regional communities, where newspapers still operate, notices can still be made in the newspaper.

As I said, I support the Debt Reduction and Savings Bill. I commend the committee members, the Treasurer, the Premier and all the staff who have worked so hard to deliver what I believe is an excellent outcome for our state. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (12.13 pm): I rise to make a contribution on the Debt Reduction and Savings Bill 2021 and to add to what the member for South Brisbane has already said in her contribution. We will not oppose this bill overall, despite the fact that it ultimately does achieve very little in the way of savings. It is pretty extraordinary to see a piece of legislation this large that will achieve only \$3 million in identified savings.

It is almost comical hearing members trying to come up with examples of what \$3 million could achieve in their electorates. Not only will \$3 million be spread across all electorates in the state; but \$3 million in an electorate does not do a great deal. I look at the investment in a new school proposed for Maiwar. I obviously welcome that investment with open arms, but this amount that we will be saving is something like one-22nd of the amount that would need to be spent on that school.

To describe the bill as unambitious or bland is maybe even a little generous. There is an irony in the fact that we have spent about 2½ days worth of government business in here—and all the expense that comes along with parliament sitting, all of us occupying this space and all of the staff who go along with that—for a saving of \$3 million.

That said, we will not oppose the bill overall, but there is one particular part of this bill that we absolutely cannot support—and that is the abolition of the Queensland Productivity Commission. The member for South Brisbane suggested in her contribution—and I completely agree—that we need more independent scrutiny here in Queensland, not less.

If we look at the functions of the Productivity Commission, it does really important work, despite, as the member for Toowoomba South identified, a pretty sharp decline in the amount of work that they have been doing over the last few years. Undertaking inquiries, providing advice to the minister and conducting independent research and analysis to assist in policy setting is vitally important work.

I will be the first to make the case that we cannot make government decisions and set policy purely on the basis of productivity or economic development. Indeed, a lot of the measures of economic success that we use are misleading or even warped to the extent that they drive bad policy. Using GDP or GSP even as a standalone indicator of success drives some really warped outcomes, particularly in a state like Queensland. When we look at things like natural disasters, the billions of dollars in the cost of recovery all appear on the positive side of the balance sheet as a GDP measure. These kinds of economic assessments cannot be viewed as the be-all and end-all in policy setting.

The QPC does genuinely important work but, most importantly, it is independent. While the minister will initiate those inquiries or the research and analysis and can provide directions to the QPC on a range of matters, ministerial direction cannot be given about the content of the Productivity Commission's advice or reports. That is a vitally important point. When we consider the changes being proposed, we need to be really honest about the fact that that kind of independent analysis will not come from Treasury.

Anything that is coming from within the Treasurer's own department will be put through all the necessary political filters so that it says what they want on the other side. I know that from my experience as a public servant previously. Anyone else who has any experience working in the Executive knows that that is the case. I will turn to an example from the Productivity Commission's work.

I think probably most of us in here would remember the final report that the Productivity Commission released following its inquiry into imprisonment and recidivism. There were some really important findings in that report. It was an incredibly detailed report and made valuable recommendations around the expanded use of restitution and restorative justice, improved use of remand, improved rehabilitation and reintegration, targeting of prevention and early intervention, expanded diversionary options—the list goes on. They were really useful recommendations.

The ones that I was particularly interested in at the time, and the sorts of recommendations that will not in any universe come out of any kind of Treasury analysis, looked at proposed reform of drug laws here in Queensland. The QPC recommended—

The Queensland Government should adopt a more effective approach for managing the supply and use of illicit drugs. This approach should aim to:

- ...
- establish effective regulatory approaches to manage drug use and supply

The next recommendation states—

Under an overarching policy of legalised and regulated supply and possession, the Queensland Government should:

- For lower harm drugs, introduce a staged approach to reform:

These are really bold recommendations. I am going to step through them. They are—

- Stage 1: Decriminalise the use and possession of lower harm drugs
- Stage 2: Expand health support and drug treatment services to reduce drug harm
- Stage 3: Design a regulatory framework for the supply of cannabis and MDMA
- Stage 4: Legalise use and regulated supply of cannabis and MDMA
- Stage 5: Subject to evaluation of evidence, extend reform to other lower harm drugs.


Can anyone here imagine Treasury making recommendations like that based on the detailed analysis that QPC is positioned to do based on all of the expert evidence that feeds into their inquiries? It is just not going to happen. They also included in this review other research that showed clear popular support for the decriminalisation of cannabis. More than 75 per cent of the population sees this as a reform that should be taken. More than 50 per cent of the surveyed population said that similar reform was warranted for MDMA. Following these recommendations would have allowed the state government to take \$4.3 billion out of the black market. If you want to talk about debt reduction and saving measures, how about what could be done with \$4.3 billion?

I make these observations with all the respect in the world for the public servants to whom these responsibilities will be transferred. I know they will do their best. I know that, while it is often difficult to give frank and fearless advice, that is the duty of public servants and I am sure they conduct themselves towards that end. But there is no doubt that any kind of research like this would be stymied on its way through the minister's office.

I want to speak very briefly on the opposition amendments because I cannot just let them sit. It is just farcical to introduce amendments that propose to simply change the name of the bill. It is a joke and a bad joke at that. If they want to be taken seriously as a real political force here, honestly they can do a little better than that.

Given a lot of the discussion here I will take the lead of government members as well. I cannot miss this opportunity to address the Dorothy Dixers I can serve myself. Looking at debt reduction and savings, am I aware of any alternative approaches? Yes, we are well aware of the approach that the LNP took to savings and debt reduction, and again I refer to my time in the Public Service in the office of climate change through the Newman years. It did not exist as the office of climate change for very long. It disappeared almost overnight. I got to share this story with the member for Glass House recently, because he at that point, as the minister for the environment, was the one responsible for disbanding not only the department of environment and resource management broadly but specifically the office of climate change. I suppose in some respects I have the member for Glass House to thank for the opportunity to leave the Public Service under Newman, to move on to work in the community legal sector for a number of years following that, and ultimately to be elected to this place and share those stories of the Public Service.

I do not pretend we could expect any better from the opposition in terms of their approach to debt reduction and savings, but we ultimately need to be more ambitious. We need to look more seriously at where we can raise more revenue from big mining, big gas, big banks and big developers in Queensland. We have said this time and again. Until we start looking to those most wealthy of industries in this most wealthy of states, Queenslanders are going to feel underdone and we are going to continue to look to underwhelming approaches like this \$3 million in however many pages of legislation.

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (12.23 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Debt Reduction and Savings Bill 2021, and in particular the benefits it will deliver in relation to state debt. First, I would like to address a few of the comments made previously in this debate. Listening to the Greens tut-tutting about debt is pretty amusing when you think about it. They always have fantastic plans for spending money on just about everything, but they never have a practical plan or a credible plan about how to raise that revenue. The notion that the actual party name is related to their belief that money grows on trees is probably pretty accurate. To those opposite who want to have a debate on economic credibility, I am happy to do that at any time.

When the economic vandals of the LNP had their hands on Treasury for three years we saw the unemployment rate skyrocket to more than seven per cent; we saw economic growth plunge to 0.7 per cent; we saw public servants sacked in large numbers after they were assured by the former premier Newman when he was opposition leader that they would be safe; we saw infrastructure fall off a cliff; and we saw the economy absolutely vandalised by the LNP. When you look at this government, we have been a very responsible government in terms of investing in infrastructure and jobs. We are investing 50 per cent more in infrastructure than when we came into office. QTRIP is at \$26.9 billion; it was only just over \$18 billion under the LNP.

It is this government that is the government of economic responsibility, and that has been evident during the government's management of the health crisis and the economy during the COVID pandemic last year. It was this government that had the foresight to understand we needed to be hardline about managing the spread of COVID. We did not hesitate to shut the borders if we needed to do that.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hart): Minister, can I draw you back to the long title of the bill, please.

Mr BAILEY: Certainly, Mr Deputy Speaker. I am talking about the economic credibility that has been an intrinsic part of this debate. The fact is that we would be looking at greater issues of debt if we had mismanaged the pandemic. That is a fact.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister, I have not seen the pandemic in the bill. Can I draw you back to the long title of the bill, please.

Mr BAILEY: Mr Deputy Speaker, I think you have a conflict of interest on this. You have been very clear—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister, that would be a reflection on the chair. I would ask you to withdraw that.

Mr BAILEY: I withdraw. I am certainly happy to support this bill. It provides a mechanism for the Queensland Titles Registry to be contributed to the first Queensland Future Fund, the Debt Retirement Fund. The Debt Retirement Fund will be structured so that credit agencies recognise the value of contributions to the fund as a debt offset when assessing Queensland's debt burden. Investments in the Debt Retirement Fund will improve Queensland's debt-to-revenue ratio by approximately nine per cent when taken into account by rating agencies when assessing Queensland's debt burden.

This is responsible economic policy. That is what this government is about. In recent months we have consistently seen the jobless rate come down. We have seen the stimulus funding get out right across the economy, with 93 stimulus projects either finished or underway and 10 completed. We are seeing jobs, investment and confidence because we managed the economy because we managed the health crisis. That is an important part of why this is a further contribution to competent economic policy. Not deep cuts, not breaking election promises, not being ideologues, but cutting your cloth to the circumstances—that is what this government is about.

The contribution of the Titles Registry to the Debt Retirement Fund would not be possible without this Debt Reduction and Savings Bill 2021, which provides the mechanism for the transfer of functions, assets, liabilities and employees from the Titles Registry to a new entity registration, Registry Co. As Registry Co will be contributed to a trust managed by QIC, the state will still own Registry Co through the Queensland Future Fund—Debt Retirement Fund—structure while also realising the value of Registry Co as an offset to state debt.

We have heard a fair bit in this debate about the issue of debt, so let's have a look at how Queensland's performance compares to other states' in relation to debt. General government sector net debt for the current financial year is \$25.6 billion in Queensland and \$53.2 billion in New South Wales, more than double our state. When you look at the projection for 2023-24 it is virtually double in New South Wales compared to Queensland. When you look at general government sector gross debt, we have a figure of \$61.3 billion; New South Wales, \$98 billion; and Victoria, \$95 billion. When you project that forward to 2023, in terms of gross debt we see New South Wales at \$157 billion. We do not hear those opposite lecturing us about the debt in New South Wales, which is considerably more not just in raw numbers, but per capita it is much worse.

They can lecture us all they like after they vandalised our economy for three years, but the fact is that this is a government of economic competency in terms of our management of infrastructure, jobs and managing the greatest threat to the economy we have seen in my lifetime: the COVID-19 pandemic. We have seen other economies devastated all around the world, let alone the thousands of deaths we have seen in countries that were unable to manage the crisis. We have managed that. We have been world-leading, and that has put us in a position of strong economic performance relative to other states. That is what this government is about; we will always be about that.

I have another couple of figures here. Non-financial public sector debt for Queensland is \$102.2 billion, and New South Wales is much higher at \$128.3 billion. If you project that forward, the gap is \$60 billion between New South Wales and Queensland—much lower when you take it to 2023-24.

I am happy to back this bill in and happy to have a debate about economic competency with those opposite any day of the week because it is this government that has handled the crisis, the economy and debt appropriately. This is part of our overall economic plan for recovery. It is something that we took to the election and we were very clear about it. We took it to the election. We shared it with people. We did not leave it until the last two days and hide it before election day and then for the entrails


to be incredibly embarrassing, like the member for Everton's costings. We took a fully funded plan to the election and we are continuing to manage the economy well. The contribution of the Titles Registry to the Debt Retirement Fund is very much a core part of our measured and responsible plan to invest today to pay down state debt into the future.

When it comes to the economy, our performance means that the big infrastructure projects out there are creating jobs right across Queensland. I have been very happy to visit them. A lot of them are modest when you go out to regional areas. Sealing or widening a regional road is not as glamorous as a big M1 upgrade perhaps, in terms of scale and those sorts of things, but it is really important to those communities. I have been to Barcaldine, Longreach and Roma and met with the mayors and the local workers and they really appreciate a job. When we came to office, I had a long line of mayors who were complaining about the cuts to those local road projects in regional Queensland. That has not happened under this government because we are investing in people and investing in jobs. We will continue to do that.

I look forward to the budget from the Treasurer in future weeks. It will be another step forward in economic competency by this government managing this situation going forward. We are not out of the pandemic yet, and I think the outbreak in Victoria is a sobering reminder that we are not there yet. We need to continue to manage the health threat. It is not just a threat to the wellbeing and health of our people; it is a threat to our economy if we do not control it and it is therefore a threat to debt and every other aspect of the economy.

We will continue under the strong leadership of the Premier and the fantastic and continued health leadership of the Chief Health Officer, Jeannette Young. We all owe a debt of gratitude to her for her advice from the very beginning. We were the first state to declare a health emergency on 29 January last year. We led the way across the country as a state that was serious about dealing with it. We will continue to do that. We will continue to be the responsible economic managers. I look forward to working with my colleagues, the Premier and the Deputy Premier who have been incredible in terms of understanding the threats to Queensland compared to other jurisdictions. The United States declared a health emergency on 13 March; we declared it on 29 January. Those opposite were still undermining that less than a year ago. The member for Broadwater was very clear in his comments. We will continue to—

(Time expired)

 **Mr MELLISH** (Aspley—ALP) (12.33 pm): I rise to speak on the Debt Reduction and Savings Bill and I congratulate the Treasurer for presenting this bill. The bill aims to increase the efficiency of government by reducing the number of statutory authorities, improving the way fees and charges are set and reducing the cost of government advertising. Perhaps most importantly, this bill allows us to protect assets from potential future privatisation and also allows for proper recognition of our assets by ratings agencies.

The Debt Reduction and Savings Bill provides the mechanism for the Queensland Titles Registry to contribute to the Debt Retirement Fund. The Debt Retirement Fund will allow credit rating agencies to recognise the value of contributions to the fund as a debt offset when assessing Queensland's balance sheet. Inclusion of these investments in the Debt Retirement Fund will improve our debt-to-revenue ratio by approximately nine per cent when taken into account by ratings agencies. The state will now own the registry through the Queensland Future Fund structure, whilst also realising the value of Registry Co as an offset.

I move onto other measures in the bill. Governments have to move with the times, and the reality is that people in our communities increasingly get their news online. It is not good enough for government to just put a notice in the local paper and hope someone reads it. Notices need to be put where people are, and people are online now. As everyone in here knows, we have lost a lot of daily and weekly newspapers in many regional and urban communities in recent times. I was very sad to see the *Northside Chronicle* and later the *Bayside Star* go by the wayside in our part of the north side. I feel for the great local journalists and newspaper staff who are no longer working in the industry and I thank them for their services. Close to the end of those papers, some staff were doing four jobs at once and I will miss their coverage of local community issues in particular. I am pleased that the bill provides an exemption so that, in regional communities where newspapers still operate, notices can still be made in the local newspaper.

I return to the Titles Registry and the lack of support from those opposite for this bill. It is no wonder the LNP want to complain about putting the Titles Registry in the Future Fund, because it means it cannot be sold off at a later date. The Titles Registry will be secured in public ownership and they will

not be able to sell it, and those opposite hate this idea. By getting the asset on our balance sheet offsetting debt, it completely removes the arguments for privatisation. The LNP will not be able to write a dodgy report or commission of inquiry that recommends it be sold, and they will not be able to waste money on privatisation consultant fees.

Alternative to that, we are rolling out great projects to keep locals in jobs all across the state, particularly on the north side of Brisbane. I could go through a list of great local projects we have delivered and are delivering as a result of our economic management, but I will give just one example that is relevant to the bill. The Northside Indoor Sports Centre opened last October and we had the Parliamentary Friends of Basketball there on Monday night. This used to be the old SDS warehouse that employed dozens of locals in Zillmere. They were well-paid, permanent jobs but it was closed down, in addition to the QFleet workshop in Zillmere where some 50 staff were sacked. With the shutting down of this warehouse and the workshop, these local jobs left the area.

This big shed sat vacant and the plan was that it was to be sold off. When I came in, I committed to seeing what we could do to turn this into something more useful. We got a commitment to turn it into sporting infrastructure and we opened that in October last year. There was an extra shed on the site, and before October we opened that as the Jabiru Community College. That is a fantastic facility. We assisted with funding and coordinating to get them on the site there, and it is for kids who might otherwise slip through the cracks of mainstream high school education.

Mr Hinchliffe: Hear, hear! It's a great school.

Mr MELLISH: I will take that interjection from the member for Sandgate. It is a great school and it is a fantastic addition to the heart of Zillmere. We are bringing jobs back and we are bringing life back to the area and rejuvenating it.

This contrasts with the approach of those opposite to debt reduction. When they were last in government, we saw a whole lot of money spent on getting the failed former treasurer Peter Costello to do a Commission of Audit. That was not the first Commission of Audit they had done. In the mid-1990s when they had a term then, there was a Commission of Audit at that time too and they could have copied and pasted a lot of the recommendations. I will go onto some of these recommendations. There were things in there like—

To get better value for money in delivering front-line services. 'Business as usual' is not a sustainable option.

That is pretty typical speak when you read that sort of thing. It went on to say—

The reduction in debt required ... cannot be achieved without releasing capital currently tied up in Government Owned Corporation businesses.

The Leader of the Opposition made similar comments recently that we have got to stop gold plating the network. We hear this running down of our GOCs, talking them down. It is basically because they want to sell them off.

Even in the most recent Commission of Audit, it referenced the 1996 Commission of Audit and actually mentioned the billions of dollars that were forgone in not selling them earlier. The only thing preventing the sale of these assets and others in Queensland is the fact that those opposite have not managed to string two terms together since before the internet was invented. When we go into the Commission of Audit a bit further, it has a lot of LNP speak, I suppose. It talks about greater workforce flexibility, removing restrictive workplace practices—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hart): Member for Aspley, can I draw you back to the long title of the bill please.

Mr MELLISH: Thank you for your guidance, Mr Deputy Speaker. When we are talking about the bill, it is a broad-ranging bill. I will turn to a few of the public briefings, where the Deputy Under Treasurer said—

While the bill is estimated to deliver modest direct savings, the measures and initiatives within signal the intent to continually reform and improve the management of public finances and the optimal structures for the functions the government undertakes.

In terms of the functions of government, it is a pretty clear choice between what we want to do and what those opposite want to do. When they were last in power, the LNP had the Commission of Audit and wanted to sell off a lot of electricity assets. They also wanted to sell off Queensland Investment Corporation. I note that Queensland Investment Corporation last year had a dividend of \$44 million to the government and the year before that it was \$59 million. These are dividends that the government would not have achieved had we not kept them in government hands.

When the LNP were in power we saw things like 1 William Street, which is not even owned by the government, as the sole infrastructure commitment. When we look at their commitments in the last election they were microscopic amounts of funding for the fake Bradfield Scheme and Bruce Highway; money which just did not eventuate. The LNP do not like to bring up their past record of the Commission of Audit. The fact is when they came to power last time they had all sorts of plans. The fact they did not get two terms is the only thing that really prevented them from carrying out those plans. Coming to their motives regarding this bill, we do not have to scratch the surface—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hart): Member for Aspley, I draw you back to the long title of the bill.

Mr MELLISH: I thank you again for your guidance, Mr Deputy Speaker. The purpose of debt reduction and debt management is achieving balanced budgets, balancing the spending against the incoming. When the LNP was last in power we saw no budget surpluses, commitments delayed and promises broken in terms of getting the budget back in black. We see federally they are inching towards a trillion dollars in debt. They had the coffee mugs and the T-shirts. They had the 'Back in Black' campaign well underway. The forecast surplus never actually eventuated. It would be great to see it. If anybody has a 'Back in Black' mug I would love to have one in the office. I think it would be a great souvenir of yet another broken LNP promise.


If we look at their real motivations we see it is not really about reducing debt. We can see that from the amendments they have foreshadowed they will move during consideration in detail. It is about changing the title. It is one page; I have printed out their entire amendments.

Mr Crandon: Did you just say the bill is not really about reducing debt? I am sure that is what you just said.

Mr MELLISH: Referring to the opposition amendments, they say it is not really about reducing debt.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Coomera, you have had a good run. I am going to warn you under the standing orders now.

Mr MELLISH: The fact that they are objecting at the moment to the bill's title and playing with words in a few clauses shows that the LNP are not about reducing debt; they are about sacking people who work in Pineapple Street in Zillmere so they can get a pat on the back from their mates in Eagle Street. They talk a big game, as we see in Canberra, but it is about getting rid of things from government control, reducing the size of government, getting a pat on the back from their mates for privatising various things such as not wanting government to function properly and not wanting services to be delivered. It is about reducing the welfare state, as they like to call it. It is disappointing that their contribution to this debate really is one page and only attempts to change the title of the bill. It is very disappointing. I am very happy to support this bill.

 **Ms RICHARDS** (Redlands—ALP) (12.42 pm): I rise in support of the Debt Reduction and Savings Bill 2021. This bill is important for Redlanders; it is important for all Queenslanders. They know that when it comes to the incredible challenges that COVID-19 has presented it is our Palaszczuk government that has kept them safe and kept us on track in economic recovery. Our strong health response is seeing us economically bounce back better and faster than any other jurisdiction. We are a government that knows it is important to invest in our health system, to invest in our frontline services, to invest in education, to invest in our small businesses and, importantly, to invest in vital infrastructure.

Reflecting on reducing debt and creating savings, I think we need to look back and consider what historical approaches have looked like, what has worked and what has not worked. We know that sacking 14,000 Queenslanders during the LNP Newman era was something that did not work. It did not work in my area. Across the state 4,400 health workers were sacked. In our Metro South health region that equated to 925 hospital jobs and nearly 300 workers. I could not imagine what COVID would have been like if it had occurred under the Newman reign from 2012 to 2015.

Our economic plan, which is underpinned by this Debt Reduction and Savings Bill, focuses on delivering for Queenslanders. Again, reflecting on my area back in the LNP Newman era, we saw the Wynnum Hospital closed during that time with no consideration given to investing important money back into the Redland Hospital, which we are seeing now has a \$50 million car park and a \$62 million ICU master plan for expansion all underway. It was crazy that they would actually close a hospital that was providing important palliative care services to our community. When we reflect back and consider what we might do to create savings or reduce debt, I do not think we could put a price on what the closure of the Barrett centre did for Queenslanders. It was absolutely shameful. To close down such an important mental health facility in the endeavour of saving money is simply beyond belief.

A government member: No words.

Ms RICHARDS: There are no words. We heard during the contribution of the members for Keppel and Hervey Bay about the 'box man'. I think a lot of us know the stories of the 'box men' that were around all of the government departments, particularly in Public Works, one of our most important departments in terms of investment in projects. The Newman government absolutely decimated Public Works: the director-general, the assistant deputy director-general, the executive director—they lost an enormous knowledge bank, and there is nothing smart about losing knowledge. Little was delivered in infrastructure during that time.

The business I was in at that time was certainly affected by this really chaotic approach to debt reduction. We had a project in our office that had all three levels of government support; it had federal, state and local government funding. It was the Cairns entertainment precinct. It was a \$155 million project. Millions had been spent to get that project ready for the appointment of the managing contractor. I think we were 48 hours off the managing contractor being signed up to deliver that. There were architectural fees, engineering fees, community consultation fees, town planning fees—and I could go on with the list of what had been invested to get that project to that point.

That project was shelved by the then minister, the now Leader of the Opposition, David Crisafulli. He pulled the pin on the state funding. Everybody in this room knows how important it is to have three levels of government working together to make sure that we can deliver for all Queenslanders. It was so disappointing to see that project shelved, particularly in Cairns, a struggling regional economy. This project was going to invest in that community. The knock-on effect did not go only as far as the investment in that project for that local community. It resulted in contracts being cancelled not only in my firm but in a number of other firms that were involved, which resulted in us having to let go of workers, and nobody ever wants to be in that position. Those opposite talk about being strategic in how they invest in infrastructure, but that was something we did not see back in those days.

The other two really important projects for my area are the Alexandra Hills TAFE and the Redlands research centre. If honourable members talk to Barry from the TAFE he will tell them about the day when the 'box man' came in and rounded up all of the staff. They brought that centre to its knees. They were getting ready to sell that baby off. I can say right now that is exactly what their plan was.

In contrast, our government is investing in that space. We are investing in hydrogen. It is all part of our economic plan for recovery. As I said, this bill underpins that economic recovery, and investing in important facilities like the TAFE and the Redlands research centre is what drives economies and what helps economies flourish. Our alternative approach, as the member for Maiwar said, was very different to that of the Campbell Newman LNP government.


The other important thing that our Palaszczuk government is all about is investing in Queenslanders, investing in services and investing in our people. Skilling Queenslanders for Work is another one of those amazing programs that was cancelled under the LNP government. It beggars belief that you would cancel a project that helps get people into jobs. Its proven track record is incredible. Some \$288 million was slashed. It was just insane. I know from talking to organisations that deliver really important services, particularly in domestic and family violence, that there was no certainty given around funding agreements. They did not know if they would have the doors open from one day to the next. Again, it represents a stark contrast.

Our economic recovery is about supporting Queenslanders, about investing in our young people's future, about supporting TAFE and free apprenticeships, about partnering with businesses, particularly small businesses, and about using the money that we save to invest in programs such as regional jobs committees. They are doing an incredible job with my chamber of commerce to make sure we are positioned to have the best economic future in the Redlands.

Our Palaszczuk government is about doing business better, doing business smarter and making sure that Queenslanders' money is working hard for them. It is taking prudent action. It is pursuing sensible savings that mean we have more money for services and are able to invest more for all Queenslanders.

We took our economic recovery plan to the people of Queensland in October. They resoundingly backed in our economic response, which was totally underpinned by our health response, to ensure that Queensland creates jobs and that we continue to bounce back better than anywhere else in this country—in fact, anywhere else in the world. Ensuring every dollar counts and working together, working more efficiently and more effectively and working smarter is what this bill delivers for all Queenslanders.

I take this opportunity to thank the Treasurer, the Premier and the Deputy Premier for working together. I thank our Chief Health Officer, Jeannette Young. I do not think there is anywhere else you would rather be living in the world at the moment than Queensland under our Labor Palaszczuk government, which is ensuring that we protect Queenslanders and that their future is bright and prosperous as we continue to recover from the impacts of COVID. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (12.51 pm): I would like to compliment the member for Redlands on her pink jacket. I fear that we may clash after lunch—be warned. I rise to speak in support of the Debt Reduction and Savings Bill 2021. I thank the Treasurer, who has helped steer us through the economic recovery required to counter the disastrous effects of COVID-19. The stimulus packages have cost our government over \$2 billion to date. Every cent was absolutely necessary to help all of those affected.

I wrote this speech on a Virgin flight while travelling here. I gave thought to how we saved that airline with part of the stimulus package. Thank goodness we did. If we did not, there would be an airline monopoly in the regions and we would have to pay ridiculous prices. I thank the Treasurer for that. I know that regional Queensland thanks the Treasurer for his efforts to avoid that awful situation. It was a bit of a shame that the Leader of the Opposition did not have the vision or backbone to back the thousands of workers of that airline and to help save Virgin, which is now repaying the people in Queensland in spades.

I support this bill because it is all about protecting Queensland from the LNP agenda to cut, sack and sell. When I was elected, my community was hurting because of the LNP's cuts. They told me that they wanted to see good frontline services restored. We saw that nurses and police were sacked—sorry, made redundant—and many more in Townsville and other areas were impacted by the former LNP government under Campbell Newman and then minister David Crisafulli, now Leader of the Opposition.

I was acting officer in charge of Townsville QAS station. I pick up the term used by the member for Redlands: the 'box man'. Our entire front office was sacked. Our first-aid providers were sacked. I want to put a human face on this. We had a baby capsule fitter, Dennis. He made sure that the capsules the QAS used to hire out kept babies safe. I had been to jobs where parents or grandparents had succumbed. It was disgraceful that that service was cancelled. I recall that in 2014 Dennis came into work and just broke down when telling me that he had lost his job. These cuts affect real people. I will never forget Dennis coming in and sharing that experience. That single job cut made a lot of people angry, including Johnathan Thurston, who had his baby capsules fitted by QAS. He started a petition that was signed by lots of angry mums. The irony is that baby capsules used by the family of the Leader of the Opposition were fitted by Dennis, but as a cabinet minister he made sure that Dennis's job was cut. What price do you put on that? The current Leader of the Opposition sat around the cabinet table and agreed to those cuts.

Labor makes sensible, prudent savings in a way that does not hurt Queenslanders. The savings that this bill supports will ensure our frontline services are sustainable and are focused on the needs of the public. The LNP hate that idea, because when the LNP talk savings they mean cuts, just like when they were in government, when they cut 14,000 public servants—4,000 health workers, 1,800 midwives. The LNP cut the infrastructure spend to record lows. Under the former government, in Townsville we had one-tenth of what we have put into our city. It was less than \$100 million for Blakey's Crossing. We have put a billion dollars into infrastructure in Townsville, with the Queensland Country Bank Stadium—hopefully to host an Origin game—Townsville Port, the Haughton water pipeline and, of course, Riverway Drive.

It is no wonder the LNP complains about putting the Titles Registry in the Future Fund, because it means it cannot sell off the Titles Registry. The Titles Registry will be secured in public ownership. Should the LNP ever again get the opportunity—God help us—to govern in this state, it will not be able to sell it. The LNP hates the idea that Queensland taxpayers will get the full value of the Titles Registry on our balance sheet. By getting that asset onto our balance sheet and offsetting debt, it completely removes the LNP's fake arguments on privatisation.

The good people of Thuringowa certainly do not support privatisation of the state's most strategic assets like our very own Townsville port, which the LNP tried to sell off. The people of Townsville saw straight through the LNP's devious plan. That is why I was elected in 2015. We all know that privatisation is in the LNP's DNA. We know that this is true because in government it tried to sell our electricity assets and ports and wasted \$70 million of taxpayers' money on consultants with its famous Strong Choices. I thought it should more aptly have been named 'Worst Choices'. To try and pull the wool over the

people's eyes, the LNP will say or do anything to justify its agenda to cut, sack and sell. The LNP complain about debt, even as the Morrison government's debt increases beyond a trillion dollars. As the member for Mundingburra said, there is absolute silence and no criticism of that.

The LNP complains about debt even though the New South Wales Liberal government has a higher debt than Queensland, including when measured on a proportional basis. The LNP complains about debt not because it believes debt is a problem but because it wants to use it to justify cutting, sacking and selling. I feel another version of 'Worst Choices' is coming to the people of Queensland again. How many people will the LNP sack next time?

This bill provides \$3 million in direct savings which arise from savings in board costs, office accommodation and other ancillary costs. Some \$3 million may not sound like a great deal of money to the LNP, but it means a lot to my community. That can make a lot of difference when invested, such as in the school upgrades I am getting in my electorate. Importantly, \$3 million in direct savings is only one part of the government's broader \$3 billion savings agenda. It is no wonder the LNP is angry about abolishing statutory bodies, because one of those bodies was set up so that it could do more privatisation. Everyone knows the PSBA was set up so the LNP could sell it off. The LNP is angry that the PSBA is being abolished as it will affect its plans to flog it off should it ever get back into government—God help us. God help Queensland if that ever happens! Privatisation is in their DNA.

Building Queensland and the Productivity Commission have served Queensland well, but now it is time for their work to continue inside government agencies to help support our recovery and save money. The bill provides a fee unit model that will reduce costs for Parliamentary Counsel as it goes through the annual fee unit indexation. Queenslanders will remember how the LNP set up indexation of fees and charges at 3.5 per cent regardless of inflation, meaning fees and charges rose in real terms. Under the LNP government, fees and charges increased by 3.5 per cent each year. Over three years that is a nearly 11 per cent increase in the costs of interacting with government under the LNP, but Labor brought those fees down—first, to 2.25 per cent, then to 1.8 per cent and now to 1.7 per cent, the lowest indexation rate in more than a decade.


Governments have to move with the times. The reality is that people in my community increasingly get their news online. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Harper, adjourned.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.00 pm.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Health System

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (2.00 pm): I have said it before in this House, and I will say it again: we owe it to Queenslanders to get health care right. At the moment those opposite are not getting it right. It is worse than that; those opposite are losing control of Queensland's public hospital system. As a nurse I know. I know what good health care means to honest Queenslanders. When arriving at a hospital, people are often at their most vulnerable. Our amazing doctors, nurses, paramedics and other clinicians across the state know that too. Yesterday in this place we heard the Premier, the Treasurer and the Minister for Health stand up and say that they would deliver a record investment for Queensland Health. I look forward to seeing those details in the budget next month.


The Minister for Health jumped up and down and rattled off a list of numbers about increases to the budgets of HHSs across the state but, as clinicians on the front line will tell you, spending money does not necessarily deliver a meaningful outcome. If you want to talk about meaningful outcomes in health care, let us talk about patients. A meaningful outcome is an ambulance being able to respond quickly when someone in need calls triple 0. A meaningful outcome is the prompt and efficient transfer of care between paramedics and hospital staff. A meaningful outcome is a patient being seen in the clinically recommended time frame when they arrive at their local emergency department. When we talk about health care, these are the outcomes that matter to Queenslanders and right now those things have fallen by the wayside under those opposite. The decline of our public health system is not made up. The impact is real. The human faces that we have seen in recent weeks are not fiction, as those opposite have so ungraciously claimed.

With the health minister so eager to talk about the statistics yesterday, let me remind the House of these numbers: ramping at Logan Hospital is at 53 per cent, Royal Brisbane 51 per cent, Redland Hospital 51 per cent, Redcliffe Hospital 50 per cent, Gold Coast University Hospital 50 per cent,

Sunshine Coast University Hospital 50 per cent, Gladstone Hospital 49 per cent, Ipswich Hospital 49 per cent, Prince Charles Hospital 48 per cent, Nambour Hospital 43 per cent, Robina Hospital 41 per cent, QEII Hospital 41 per cent and Caboolture Hospital 40 per cent. In real terms, that means that when someone shows up at one of these hospitals via ambulance they are more than likely to wait 30 minutes or more before they are seen by a doctor or a nurse. In some cases, for the first time in a generation, they are actually more likely to stay on an ambulance stretcher longer than the clinically recommended time frame, and that is a fact.

If those opposite cannot manage the system properly, then numbers in the budget papers mean nothing. They mean nothing to the patients waiting hours for an ambulance after calling triple 0. They mean nothing to the patients stuck on a hospital ramp and they mean nothing to the patient in an ED corridor waiting for a bed. I say this to those opposite: get your house in order, because you are losing control of our public hospital system.


Nicklin Electorate, National Volunteer Week

 **Mr SKELTON** (Nicklin—ALP) (2.03 pm): I rise to acknowledge that it is Volunteer Week. I want to thank all of the wonderful volunteers in my region. On Saturday the Sunshine Coast is hosting Volunteer of the Year awards and there are many worthy recipients throughout the Sunshine Coast. I personally congratulate the three nominees from my region: Mr Norm Morwood from the Florabunda Bushcare group, members of which give up their weekends to remove invasive weeds and rubbish and plant natives around Petrie Creek, which flows through Nambour; Ms Lorraine Taylor, whose group Street Art Nambour paints murals throughout the town, and I invite everyone to come and have a tour, which is guided if you have the app; and Mr Tony Millroy, who volunteers at our library and archives our region's wonderful history.

I cannot mention all of the great people and organisations throughout my region that deserve awards, but in the week before parliament I had the pleasure of meeting with volunteers from Red Cross, Meals on Wheels, the Yandina Masonic Lodge, the Nambour District Scouts, the Nambour Probus club and the Mapleton Rural Fire Brigade—and I thank Geoff Noble, the captain, for his invitation to see the new appliance. I am proud to be part of a state government that is supplying appliances and equipment to our RFB, and it is all kitted out in Crows Nest too, so it is Queensland as well. I also want to thank the Mapleton Hall trust and the Blackall Range Lions.

It is indeed a privilege being the local MP and interacting with the dedicated people who give their time and work so hard in so many diverse areas. These people enrich our community. Many of these people have already done many years of work and are retired. I cannot say enough about our volunteers and it is a wonderful thing that in our state and in our nation we are first and foremost about helping out our mates. Our society is the better because of our volunteers and the many organisations they represent. I would like to stand here and speak about all of the groups in my region, and I have probably only given the House about five per cent of them and I suspect it is the same for every member. On behalf of myself and the state government, I want to thank all of our volunteers.

Agricultural Colleges

 **Mr MILLAR** (Gregory—LNP) (2.06 pm): I rise to again talk about the closure of the Emerald Agricultural College and the Longreach Pastoral College. Last week saw the sale of the Emerald Agricultural College's beef property Berrigurra for \$32.5 million. I ask members to think about that for a minute because the communities of Emerald and Longreach have been led down the garden path and treated like fools by the Labor government selling these assets that will never be able to be brought back together for the purpose of agricultural skills training. Agriculture is a pillar of Queensland's economy, but building a sustainable workforce is an ongoing and complex challenge. The mission of the Emerald Agricultural College and the Longreach Pastoral College was to turn out graduates who were job ready. For farmers this means someone who has been trained to operate very expensive machinery, someone who is able to climb up into a header and drive the show to completion.

When the LNP came to government in 2012 we found the agricultural colleges in a state of neglect and disarray. In two decades of a Labor government there had been no investment in them—no attempt at educational excellence and innovation. In fact, there had not even been an effort to keep them aligned to the changes in the delivery of secondary and vocational training. Not surprisingly, this had seen enrolments fall. The Dalby Agricultural College had already been sold off by Labor and the Burdekin Agricultural College had been closed and the machinery there was on its way to a clearing sale. The LNP government was determined to fix this. We instituted local boards and invested in

bursaries. We wanted to fix it. We ensured local people were running the campuses and we unleashed local enthusiasm in supporting the education of a skilled agricultural workforce. Not surprisingly, the enrolment numbers turned around.

I should point out that both the Longreach Pastoral College and the Emerald Agricultural College have existed for over 50 years. The alumni are now senior figures in rural industries across Queensland. In addition to their own graduates, the colleges provided an important resource for other students, particularly veterinary students, needing practical tutoring in large animal handling skills, from horsemanship to pregnancy testing of cows. You cannot achieve proficiency in pregnancy testing with just one cow; you need access to a herd. Vets need to know how to examine a horse's teeth or a horse's hoof, so the ag colleges regularly played host to students from these disciplines, including from the University of Queensland.

Queensland had an opportunity to develop a world-class, fully integrated agricultural research and training program at the Longreach Pastoral College and the Emerald Agricultural College, but the only vision Labor had was easy money. Practically from the moment the Labor government won in 2015, it formed an independent committee to work on how to close down Queensland's remaining agricultural campuses. All those who colluded in this around the cabinet table should hang their heads in shame. Our so-called minister for agriculture was so proud of shutting down the campuses that he flew to Longreach on taxpayers' money to get his photo in the *Longreach Leader* closing down our colleges, and that is an absolute shame.

The Cure Starts Now



Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): I call the very colourfully attired member for Thuringowa.

Mr HARPER (Thuringowa—ALP) (2.09 pm): I do not mind being a little brave and donning the pink floral jacket. It is a 'dare to wear' and it is for a very good cause. It is raising money for The Cure Starts Now. The Cure Starts Now was started in Queensland by Townsville dad, Ren Peterson, who lost his daughter Amy, at just seven years of age, to a rare cancer, DIPG, diffuse intrinsic pontine glioma, a brain stem cancer for which there is no cure. He promised Amy he would continue to raise money for medical research in this state to find a cure. I commend him for his great work.

This Sunday, 30 May, I will be taking the Harper truck to participate in the Convoy for The Cure, another fundraising event in Townsville, where about 100 trucks and motorbikes follow a 28-kilometre tour through Townsville, along Riverway Drive, and gather at the end. Every truck is sponsored and raises money. Last year they raised about \$90,000, which is fantastic.

By the time this speech is over this jacket will have raised nearly \$2,000. I thank the following members for their contributions: the Premier, the Treasurer—who said as I walked in 'I have to support it now I have seen it'—the members for Bundamba, Capalaba, Mackay, Kurwongbah, Pumicestone, Bundaberg, Gladstone, Redlands, Algeester, Maryborough, Townsville and Mundingburra. I thank Wendy Bourne for contributing to this cause. I cannot thank you enough. Our city gets right behind this fundraiser and thousands of people come out. I am also very proud to share that Kirwan State High School, which lost their principal—Livo—to brain cancer, does a gala dinner. These are two big events, the Convoy for The Cure and the gala dinner, raising much needed money for research into childhood brain cancer.

This can happen to anyone in any electorate. We should all get behind it. I ask members across the chamber to get behind it. The member for Hinchinbrook has one of his trucks coming from Ingham to join in the Convoy for The Cure, which is fantastic. This is an important charity. At the end of the day it is all about finding a cure. I thank the members of the Queensland Police Service who escorted me into the chamber. On Sunday the QPS will provide an escort for the Convoy for The Cure. I thank them very much for getting behind this and encourage everyone in Townsville to get behind it. The cure starts now.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): It is a good cause and I would probably double my donation if you took the jacket off.

Budget



Dr MacMAHON (South Brisbane—Grn) (2.12 pm): The past year has been tough for so many Queenslanders. The social housing waitlist has grown by 7,000, more than a third of Queensland renters are in housing stress, nearly 300,000 Queenslanders are relying on JobSeeker and, according


to QCOSS, the cuts to JobSeeker is seeing around \$41 million ripped from Queensland's economy each year, money that would be spent on food, rent or transport, and unemployment in Queensland is at 5.9 per cent and underemployment is at 8.5 per cent.

Not everyone has had a tough year. According to Oxfam, the profiteering and monopolies of for-profit pharmaceutical companies has helped nine people become new billionaires since the beginning of the COVID pandemic. The CEO of Glencore, one of Queensland's biggest coal producers, grew his wealth by \$500 million. Harry Triguboff, a Queensland property investor, grew his wealth by \$1.7 billion. Mining corporations exported \$45 billion worth of Queensland resources over the past financial year.

When parliament meets again we will be debating the 2021-22 budget. Myself and the member for Maiwar, Michael Berkman, have written to the Treasurer urging the government to make sure that our economic recovery is paid for by the billionaires and big corporations, not everyday Queenslanders in the form of homelessness, food insecurity and debt. Including a modest bank levy of just 0.05 per cent on the biggest five banks in Queensland would raise \$1.2 billion each year. A 75 per cent developer tax on increases in land value as a consequence of rezoning would bring in around \$1.9 billion per year.

We could raise billions of dollars by unfreezing mining royalties on coal, gas and minerals. With this money we could transform Queensland. We could invest in thousands of new public homes, we could fully fund state schools and deliver free school meals. We could create tens of thousands of good, steady jobs by starting a publicly owned renewables manufacturing industry, building publicly owned renewable energy or new jobs in health, education and child care. These kinds of policies are popular: 72 per cent of Australians think big business and corporations pay too little; 64 per cent of Australians want more public spending on public services and infrastructure funded by more tax from wealthy people and profitable companies. It is time for Queensland Labor to get out of the pockets of big corporate donors and to start taxing the billionaires to ensure that every Queenslanders can live a good life.

Pumicestone Electorate, Roads


 **Ms KING** (Pumicestone—ALP) (2.15 pm): When I was elected I promised to work hard for the people of Pumicestone, keeping them safe and rebuilding our local economy. I keep that promise every single day when it comes to the issues, whether big or small, that Pumicestone people tell me matter most to them. Right now we are working on plenty of big road projects that will get local people home sooner and safer; like the current upgrades to Bribie Island Road at the Old Toorbul Point Road intersection that, after a very wet year, are on track to finish in July; like the new project I championed to dual lane from Hickey Road to King John Creek on Bribie Island Road and recently managed to secure federal funding for; and our \$7 million upgrades to Beachmere Road where we have just seen a huge turnout for community consultation to hear from Beachmere residents what their priorities are to use that \$7 million upgrade funding. These are all projects that will keep Pumicestone people safe, that invest in key community infrastructure and support local jobs.

It is not just the big ticket items that make a big difference to people's lives. In this El Nino year hundreds of people have called, emailed, dropped into my office and contacted me on social media with safety concerns about long grass blocking intersection sightlines on local roads. By far the most commonly raised location is the Bestmann Road and Bribie Island Road roundabout at Ningi, better known as the site of the 7-Eleven. This intersection has repeatedly become a risk to driver safety when the height of the grass obscures the approaches to the roundabout for oncoming vehicles and blocks sightlines. I can today update residents that last week I took Transport and Main Roads officials to inspect the roundabout and see the problem for themselves. They agreed with my assessment of the dangers and have committed to finding a permanent solution that will bypass the roundabout of advocacy from the community and my office to TMR every time it rains and the grass grows long.

At the end of the day, I am here to work hard for the people of Pumicestone on the issues they tell me matter most to them. The LNP here and in Pumicestone may take the view that people getting to work, to school and home again is a little issue, but I disagree. It is that attitude that saw the LNP cut \$13.6 million from intersection improvements on Bribie Island Road the last time they were in government and \$1.6 billion from roads right across Queensland. It is that attitude that saw the Leader of the Opposition announce the very day I was sworn into this place that he would cut the LNP's pledge of \$3 million in support of a new Bribie Island bridge.

I am proud to be part of a Palaszczuk Labor government that cares about investing in our community, that cares about keeping local people safe, whether from COVID-19 or on their local drive to their shops, to their schools or to and from work, and I will always be proud to work hard for that.

Moggill Electorate, The Arts; White, Ms R

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (2.18 pm): As the Liberal National Party's shadow minister for the arts, last year I had the opportunity to attend the metropolitan preview of the Queensland Regional Art Awards *State of Diversity* exhibition which was held by the Flying Arts Alliance. As the Flying Arts Alliance annual signature art prize event, the theme for the awards was State of Diversity—a celebration of Queensland's diversity of ecosystems, wildlife, places and people. I did not envy the judges, Jonathan McBurnie, Peter McKay and Robyn Daw, for having to choose from such a plethora of talent.


I place on record my congratulations to the winning artists, Rose Rigley and Pamela Kusabs, Emma Ward, Dre Adams, Barbara Stephenson, Lillian Whittaker and Madge Bowen, as well as the People's Choice Award winners, Catherine Boreham, and Caitlin Broderick, on their outstanding pieces and for their contributions to Queensland's rich and diverse arts community. I also had the opportunity to participate in the official proceedings for the evening. I extend my thanks to Professor John O'Toole AM, the chair of the Flying Arts Alliance board, and Kerryanne Farrer, the chief executive officer of the Flying Arts Alliance.

As the local state member for Moggill and the Liberal National Party shadow minister for the arts, I was delighted to attend the 2021 Art West Community Gallery Abstract Prize opening night, alongside President Bruce Peebles and patron Colin Williams. I was thrilled to be the major sponsor for the Abstract Prize this year. I would again like to congratulate the successful recipient of the first prize, Perrin Millard, for the piece *Unison*, as judged by western suburbs based abstract expressionist artist Kate Barry. I extend my congratulations to all artists who submitted works as part of the Art West Community Gallery Abstract Prize competition.

As the Liberal National Party shadow minister for the arts I look forward to seeing more of Queensland's artistic talent into the future, especially given that I also recently attended and sponsored the Brookfield Art Show themed prize. Congratulations go to the winner, Mr David Ladley, for his work entitled *Time for a coffee*.

Finally, I take this opportunity to acknowledge the immense contribution of Rosie White to private hospitals and health care in Queensland. In 1989 Rosie first joined the Wesley Hospital as clinical nurse manager of the Intensive Care Unit and for over 31 years Rosie has served UnitingCare hospitals with utmost distinction. I worked with Rosie in my many professional capacities as a former deputy chief medical officer of UnitingCare Health, executive director of medical services at St Andrew's War Memorial Hospital and as deputy director of medical services at the Wesley Hospital. I can attest to Rosie's passionate and dedicated clinical leadership as an executive director of nursing, as a director of clinical services, as an assistant director of nursing and also as a clinical nurse manager. Rosie has done an amazing amount of work for patients here in Queensland. I take this opportunity to wish Rosie, her husband, John, and her children, Harry and Will, all the best for the future given her impending retirement from St Andrew's War Memorial Hospital.

Morayfield Electorate, Education Infrastructure

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (2.21 pm): Part of the Palaszczuk government's plan to rebound after 2020 and the impacts of COVID-19 is to invest in government services infrastructure. In the Morayfield electorate we are seeing significant investment in educational infrastructure. It is quite an impressive investment that will deliver new facilities that will support a world-class education for the young people of the Morayfield state electorate and is supporting economic activity and jobs in the local economy. I thought it was important to update the House about this significant investment.

In the last five years alone, we have seen about \$75 million worth of educational investment in the Morayfield electorate.

Ms Grace: Hear, hear!

Mr RYAN: I take the interjection from the Minister for Education because she is absolutely committed to supporting educational infrastructure right across the state and I know she has a particular interest in the Morayfield state electorate. I thank her for her visits to the Morayfield electorate to inspect and obviously speak to local stakeholders about the importance of those projects.


We see big projects underway. Stage 2 of the Lee Street Special School is well advanced. That project will deliver more classrooms as well as a massive hall project that will be shared with Caboolture State High School. That is a significant project. I had the opportunity to visit the construction site only last month. Gee that hall is big! It is a massive facility that will be well used by those two school communities. It is a great partnership between those two school communities. In addition to the main hall space, there is a program room space as well as other classroom spaces to support specialist teaching programs. It is a very impressive project.

We see progress well underway on the Morayfield State High School project. I know that the Minister for Education is very passionate about that project because she heard from the principal and the students how important it is. It is well advanced. I look forward to sometime this year having the minister cut the official ribbon. It is a very important project.

We are also seeing the delivery of a key commitment of this government around air-conditioning classrooms. That is well on track in the Morayfield state electorate. In fact, it looks like the project will be totally completed in the Morayfield electorate by the end of the year. We already see air conditioning installed at Bellmere State School, Burpengary Meadows State School, Caboolture East State School, Caboolture Special School, Caboolture State High School, Minimbah State School, Morayfield State High School, Tullawong State School and Tullawong State High School.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Before I call the next speaker, I acknowledge in the gallery members of the Baha'i youth community of Moreton Bay. I welcome them to Parliament House.

Cross River Rail, Costs

 **Mr MINNIKIN** (Chatsworth—LNP) (2.24 pm): Last Sunday night I listened with interest to the news on channel 7 and channel 9 and I heard a couple of conflicting things. The channel 9 news made reference to the Cross River Rail project being worth \$5.6 million and said that it was to be operational in 2024. I then flicked channels, as we often do. The channel 7 news mentioned Cross River Rail as having a cost of \$5.4 billion and an opening year of 2025. Just by doing a quick flick between two channels there was a difference of \$200 million.


Government members interjected.

Mr MINNIKIN: Mr Deputy Speaker, aren't you grateful that at least someone in this chamber can do basic mathematics because there was a \$200 million difference in the cost of that project as reported by two different news stations. That begs the question: what is going to be the cost of Cross River Rail? I note something interesting about the language used by the member for Millar, who was described as 'foolish' by the CCC, and it is important. I note that he no longer says that it is a \$5.4 billion project; he now says that the government is 'investing' \$5.4 billion in the project. There is a subtle change in language.

Is the \$5.4 billion just a down payment? No, it is meant to be the capital expenditure cost! We have tried to ask questions on notice about future payments to the public-private partnership so that, on behalf of the taxpayers of Queensland, we can try to work out what the transport minister is clearly incapable of working out. On behalf of the taxpayers of Queensland, we want to know what the signature capex project for the state—in fact, you could argue it is probably the only project of stature—will finally cost. The reality is that two figures and two different years of completion have been reported on two different channels.

We have to ask another question. We had blowouts of up to 20 per cent at the Townsville stadium. We have now had a blowout with stage 3 of light rail. We have a minister who has absolutely no idea of his brief. At the end of the day, I would think he would be able to say clearly what Cross River Rail will cost in total. Forget the add-ons such as grandstand seats at the Gabba. He should be able to say that it will cost this figure and it will be operational on this date. This minister cannot do either.

Rockhampton, Bureau of Meteorology Station

 **Mr O'ROURKE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (2.28 pm): In Rockhampton the federal LNP government is shutting down our Bureau of Meteorology office. I cannot believe that Michelle Landry, the member for Capricornia, has publicly spread a number of blatant falsehoods in an attempt to sell the closure of our local BOM office. The member for Capricornia posted a statement on her Facebook page in which she claimed to be correcting mistruths about the BOM office closure. Unfortunately, she then resorted to putting forward a number of statements that were blatantly false. There were two glaring falsehoods.

There has never been a weather radar in Rockhampton so to say it is being decommissioned is nonsense. Rockhampton has always been covered by weather radars located in Gladstone, Emerald and Mackay. The second falsehood was that the Rockhampton forecast has been coming from Brisbane since the seventies. Both of those statements are incorrect. The Rockhampton office had a radar up until only a few years ago and it employed forecasters who dealt with aviation, marine and public weather forecasts locally until 2012.


I find it incredible, and it is disappointing to see, that history is being rewritten as part of an effort to sell the BOM closure. Either the member for Capricornia has not bothered to understand the situation on the local history or she has deliberately misled our community. Many of our long-term residents know the truth.

The BOM's plan is to service Central Queensland out of Cairns, 1,000 kilometres away. That does not make any sense. There is not even a direct flight between these two areas, so when a local radar breaks down a technician will either need to fly from Cairns to Brisbane and then Brisbane to Rocky, or take the Qantas milk run, stopping along the way at Townsville and Mackay. That is not efficient and will just lead to greater delays.

The problems with the centralisation of services into Cairns were already showing in places like Mackay and Townsville, which had already lost their local offices. Recently, the Mackay radar had been out for more than four days due to equipment problems, and the Gladstone radar was also down for a few days during that time due to maintenance. Can you imagine if that happened when we had a cyclone heading our way?

I call on the BOM to reverse its decision. Michelle Landry should be backing our communities, not Canberra. We want to keep these services and personnel in Central Queensland. If anything, the BOM should be looking to grow its local presence rather than shutting it down.

Coronavirus, Small Business

 **Mr MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (2.31 pm): Across Queensland, family owned bakeries, cafes and gyms that have had the misfortune to be listed as a COVID exposure site have been abandoned by the state government. On 6 May and again last week, I met with Maree Baker at her Gin Gin Bakery. Maree told me her story of a morning phone call from Queensland Health advising that a COVID-positive person had visited her business and that the public would be informed in 30 minutes. Maree explained that she felt afterwards there was no support or guidance from Queensland Health about the cleaning requirements or what to do next. In Maree's words, 'I felt abandoned by Queensland Health, left out to dry. They didn't care. They told us we had a case here and that was it.'


Maree explained to me the emotional anguish of having people abuse her and her staff, along with the misinformed online trolls who said things like, 'You are disgusting. You should be closed down,' simply because her business was open. Such individuals were ignorant of the Queensland Health rules and directions, which the Gin Gin Bakery had complied with, but their misinformed comments still weigh heavily on Maree. Unfortunately, it is an all-too-common story for businesses across the state that are listed as COVID exposure sites.

The comments of some ill-informed people are not the fault of the Minister for Small Business, but the state government can and must do more to help businesses inform their customers that they have complied with COVID rules and are safe to trade. The government could start by listening to the calls of the Small Business Commissioner and create a template that has a big green tick on it and a logo so that business owners can print it out and stick it on the front of their shops to help restore confidence.

Small businesses that are identified as COVID exposure sites should also be able to access specific grants to help them meet cleaning costs and increased staff costs and to make up for lost revenue. Despite having a much larger number of businesses identified as COVID exposure sites, the Victorian government provides grants of up to \$10,000 to help with costs when a small business is listed as a COVID exposure location.

The state government likes to crow about its support to small business, but the facts are that the state government has failed small businesses like the Gin Gin Bakery. It has failed to support small businesses in their time of need, and it is not good enough. These small businesses from across the state are receiving no financial support and inadequate information, with the burden of compliance falling only to the small business. The effect is an emotional and financial toll that is crushing family businesses that are just trying to put food on the table and provide a service to the community. I call on the state government to do more to support these small businesses in their time of need.

Small Business, Grants

 **Mr McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (2.33 pm): Small businesses are the lifeblood of our local community in Bundamba and I am proud to be part of a Labor government that is helping them bounce back better. As part of Queensland Small Business Month, we announced another \$25 million to support our small businesses through three new grants programs. We know that some of our businesses continue to experience tough times, and we also know that they are at different stages of their development. That is why our Business Basics grants of up to \$5,000 each support new and emerging businesses, we have Business Boost grants up to \$15,000 to back our small businesses, and the \$50,000 Business Growth Fund supports the purchase of highly specialised equipment to boost growth.


Small businesses, like ours in Bundamba, employ locals and support local communities. They help our households and they keep money in our local economy. They sponsor our sports teams like the Goodna Eagles, Bundamba Strollers, Ipswich Knights, Western Pride, Western Spirit, Collingwood Park Power, and the mighty Dinmore Bushrats. They back our community groups like Queensland Youth and Families Support Services, The Base, Goodna Neighbourhood House, PACCA and Helen's Haven.

'Support small' is more than just a hashtag or a saying. Across Ipswich we continue to enjoy a busy and successful Small Business Month. Our two-day Ipswich Business Expo starts tomorrow at the Ipswich Showgrounds. Backed by a \$10,000 Queensland small business partnership grant, the expo will showcase local businesses while also providing opportunities for start-ups to access information and advice.

I was proud to join representatives from a number of businesses including Just Cuts Redbank and Big Belly cafe and restaurant from Goodna to mark the start of Small Business Month in Ipswich, hosted by our Minister for Small Business. Some of the team from our local Amaroo Landscape Group attended Queensland Small Business Month celebrations here in the House. Our Black Coffee—Ipswich continues to go from strength to strength. The monthly catch-ups offer business networking opportunities for our local First Nations organisations. Supporters include providers like Wesbro Services, Anglicare, Rural Lifestyle Options Australia and Blue Care; independent artists like the Wurrumay Collective and KJH Artworks; emerging businesses like Amaroo and Tagai Management Consultants; and homegrown foodie success story FigJam and Co.

This sense of spirit and support is all about action, a word at the very heart of Reconciliation Week 2021, which starts today. We all have a role to play. Reconciliation is more than just a word.

Scenic Rim Electorate, Road Infrastructure

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Scenic Rim—LNP) (2.36 pm): There are many roads in the electorate of Scenic Rim that need work on repairs and maintenance. The Mount Lindesay Highway and Cunningham Highway are key examples. I acknowledge the tremendous contribution being made presently by the Australian government, under the stewardship of Scott Buchholz and Scott Morrison, in terms of investment in those roads, but it is a crying shame that we have a \$5.85 billion backlog of roads maintenance on our state road network.

I want to talk today about one bridge in particular, that is, Harper's Crossing on Mount Alford Road just south of Boonah. This is a very dangerous, narrow, single-lane bridge. There is poor visibility on the approach to the give-way sign. The bridge used to have two lanes, but after a particular flood event, for reasons that escape me right now, it was narrowed so it is now a one-lane bridge. There have been a number of accidents there and a number of near misses. Particularly in recent times, the number of very serious near misses on this bridge has come to my attention again. Someone could be killed there one day. It could be a member of my family; it could be a member of your family if you are visiting the Scenic Rim for one of our festivals. A lot of Ingham's trucks go across it also, because there is a significant poultry installation down the road in Mount Alford.


This situation really needs to be addressed. I know that a lot of things need to be addressed, but this bridge was costed for redevelopment, redesign and repair in 2017 at \$2.4 million; I imagine the costs would be similar now. I am calling on the government to please, before someone is killed on this bridge, invest the money and replace it, turn it into a dual-lane bridge and straighten up the approach so that people can actually see what is coming.

I also call on the government again to look at Boonah Rathdowney Road. The state of part of that road is Third World standard, particularly given all the visiting traffic we are having there at this point in time. In terms of Ipswich Boonah Road, I acknowledge that there is significant investment going

on there at the moment—especially from Peak Crossing to Yamanto—of \$7.9 million, \$3.7 million of which is contributed by the federal government. Thank you to Scott Buchholz and Scott Morrison for this investment because we do not know how long we would have been waiting for that road to be addressed if it had not been for federal government funding.

I again call for an overtaking lane to be built on Ipswich Boonah Road between Peak Crossing and Yamanto. There are very few passing opportunities there and an overtaking lane would improve the efficiency and safety of that road no end. There are so many other roads that need fixing that we could talk about. There is a \$5.85 billion deficit so the government should get on with fixing them.

Brusasco, Mr I

 **Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development) (2.40 pm): As politicians we are privileged throughout our careers to meet literally thousands of people who make a difference. Hopefully with each experience we become better people. Sometimes in our jobs we are privileged to meet people who are simply outstanding human beings, whose impact on others is enormous and whose legacy will outlast us all. Ian Brusasco AO, AM was one of those people. Ian sadly passed away last week. His wife, Patsy, and their family lost their beloved. I extend my deepest sympathies to them. Queensland and Australia lost a giant of a man.


Since Ian's passing a lot has been said about his life and the enormous contribution he made across so many sectors and parts of society, and a lot will continue to be said. His contributions were made through WorkCover Queensland, the Gladstone Ports Corporation, the Australian soccer federation, as a BCC councillor—the list goes on. However, it is his contribution as founder of Foodbank that I want to particularly acknowledge today.

Foodbank is based in my electorate. I consider myself part of the Foodbank family. Every single day I feel humbled by what this organisation achieves—that is, to get food to vulnerable families. Ian established Foodbank Queensland with former Brisbane lord mayor Clem Jones AO and solicitor David Muir in 1995 to address critical food relief needs affecting children, families and individuals across the state. Since that time, they have delivered over 155 million kilograms of food and 252 million nutritious meals.

Ian came from a pretty humble background and experienced poverty himself as a child. He often said that Foodbank, of all the organisations with which he was involved, gave him the greatest satisfaction because he felt that it made a real difference. Today I was talking to David Muir, one of the board members, and Bob Muir, the current chair, and asked them for their favourite stories and quotes about Ian. Bob said to me that Ian often told the story of a young child who one day came for food from one of the agency partners of Foodbank. He kept coming back for food. They found out that the food was not actually just for him but for his brothers at home because they were hungry as well. They did not want them to miss out. Bob also said to me that as chair of the board they would often be worried about governance, protocol, logistics and things like that and Ian would always say to them, 'Don't lose sight of what we are here for. That is getting food out to the people who need it.'

Ian, we thank you for the enormous contribution you made. We know you and we think of you. Vale Ian Brusasco.

Infrastructure, Investment; Housing Affordability

 **Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (2.43 pm): Queensland needs proper investment in infrastructure. We in this House agree on that principle but disagree with regard to what is currently happening on the ground in relation to the state's commitment or lack of to fund appropriate and timely infrastructure.

Infrastructure Partnerships Australia's Chief Executive Officer, Adrian Dwyer, quotes figures that show the difference between our state and other states in terms of what the states are doing to get the ball rolling and keep the ball rolling in terms of timely infrastructure spends. The New South Wales and Victoria governments are spending about \$10,300 per capita on infrastructure compared to the Queensland state government which is spending \$6,800 per capita. That is state funding on infrastructure. This has to be called out. We want to see roads and water infrastructure, schools, health facilities and hospitals built in this state. Queensland has not invested in a timely way and is dragging the chain.


I refer to the *South East Queensland Regional Transport Plans* document. It is a big document, but talk about being light on detail. This is why Queensland is failing. We have this bulky document, but when one tries to drill down to the action plans we find it is very light on. It is so high level that they have their heads in the clouds without boots on the ground, without rubber on the road and without concrete going into projects that have a proper pipeline of works. It is a disgrace. This is a big document without the detail that this state needs.

I want to talk about the Olympics and what the plan is for infrastructure. In this respect, we are yet to see more detail from the state. I suspect we will see a few hero projects that have a lot of money spent on them without a proper business case released to the public. We want infrastructure that will have a legacy, that will move people, that will build the economy and that will connect South-East Queensland but also service all of Queensland. It cannot be done in secrecy. It is time those business cases and feasibility studies that have been done are released publicly so we can see that the infrastructure will do the job it needs to do.

I also address the issue of housing affordability. We want to see the barriers to housing affordability addressed. This state government is looking at more costs when it comes to building private rental houses rather than fewer costs. That is going in the wrong direction. We have to remove the barriers so we can have affordable housing with the private investment of mum and dad investors.

(Time expired)

Beef 2021

 **Hon. ML FURNER** (Ferry Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities) (2.46 pm): I am an Aries. I thrive on competition. Unfortunately, from those opposite there is little competition, particularly when it comes to the shadow agriculture minister, the member for Gympie. To be fair to him, to be shadow minister he has to keep pace with me and all the other members of the Palaszczuk government.

In a contribution last sitting week, as usual the member for Gympie delivered a bizarre diatribe. He reflected on Beef Australia 2021. He started with a positive contribution. I concur with his views on that. However, he digressed into the typical LNP language only Neanderthals would understand. That was followed by his typical trait of immature name calling.

Let us not forget that when the Premier was talking about her attendance at Beef Australia, the member for Gympie interjected claiming that he was meeting with real people. For the record, the Premier, the Deputy Premier, the Treasurer, the Minister for Water, other ministers—in fact, nearly half the cabinet were there—assistant ministers and many backbenchers were talking with the Bryce Camms of the world, the Terry Nolans, the David Footes, the Hugh Killens, the Will Wilsons, the Georgie Somersets and the John Berrys. They are the champions of the beef industry—the names that those opposite cannot bring themselves to comment on.

I ask the member for Gympie: are these people not real people? What is the beef with the LNP? Are these people not into beef? These are the people whom those opposite purport to represent.

Mr Mickelberg interjected.

Mr FURNER: Like the member for Buderim, they fail every day.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Order! Pause the clock. Minister, resume your seat. Member for Buderim, you are on a warning.

Mr FURNER: The Premier referred last sitting week to no LNP members being present at Beef Australia. I would like to table for the record a tweet that was on the member for Gympie's—

Tabled paper: Extract, dated 11 May 2021, from the Twitter account of the member for Gympie, Mr Tony Perrett MP, regarding the Premier's attendance at various events [\[726\]](#).

Ms SIMPSON: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The minister is misleading the House. I saw him walking through the food court at Beef Week.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Pause the clock! Resume your seat, member for Maroochydore. I did not call you to take your point of order. That is disrespectful to the chair. What is your point of order?

Ms SIMPSON: The minister is misleading the House and offensive. I ask that he withdraw. There were ample members of the opposition who were at Beef Week.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member for Maroochydore, the tone and the way that was delivered seems to me that it was a frivolous exercise, so I am going to warn you and I am not going to take your point of order.

Mr FURNER: The stakes are high when it comes to those opposite having to indicate that they were even there. On the evidence I have just tabled, a tweet was put up by the member for Gympie—

Mr Millar interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, member for Gregory!

Mr FURNER:—three days after the event had closed. One has to wonder whether they were there or not.

Mr MICKELBERG: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. What is your point of order?

Mr MICKELBERG: The minister is misleading the House. Comments have been made to—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is a not a point of order. If you think someone is misleading the House, there is a process to follow in relation to that. Have you got anything else to add?

Mr MICKELBERG: I will be writing to the Speaker.

Mr Millar interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Gregory, you are on a warning.

Mr FURNER: No wonder the regions are turning their back on the Nationals and those opposite and are turning to Labor. That is why we picked up five regional seats at the last election and the rest of them are in our sights for 2024.


(Time expired)

Mr Millar interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Gregory, you can leave the chamber for one hour under the standing orders. Member for Gregory, if you think it is funny, you can leave for longer. Show some respect for the chair.

Whereupon the honourable member for Gregory withdrew from the chamber at 2.50 pm.

Water Security

 **Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (2.50 pm): I was shocked when I read the *Long term analysis of the role of dams* report commissioned by 13 members of the Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils, known as FNQROC. I now table the report, which cost \$110,000 to produce and took 16 months to complete.

Tabled paper: Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils report, dated March 2021, titled 'Long term analysis of the role of dams' [[727](#)].

These councils are extremely concerned about the lack of water storage infrastructure being constructed which is holding back economic growth and opportunities in regional Queensland. This study is believed to be the first of its kind in Australia, and the findings show that in Queensland current assessment models used for dam infrastructure projects are flawed. That is why only one dam has been built in Queensland in the last 35 years. Dam and water infrastructure business cases are doomed to fail because of a flawed government assessment model.


We build dams to provide water security to meet future population increases and stimulate economic growth. This is very important information that I am going to read out. Studies show that significant dam infrastructure sees population grow at two to three times the rate of other regions that do not have water security, while agricultural production grows at 60 to 80 per cent. However, the report demonstrates that this government is more concerned with insisting that water licence holders foot the bill for water infrastructure when instead we should be supplying more than enough water to meet demands at an affordable cost.

We are constantly hearing the term 'the market dictates the price'. That is absolute rubbish. Large national and international conglomerates are snapping up water licences, driving up prices and holding our farmers to ransom which is forcing many out of business and limiting the growth of agriculture in the regions.

Every single Queenslanders should be deeply concerned by this report. I have stood in this House and delivered numerous speeches and lobbied ministers from both sides of the House for 17 years, in desperation, on the urgency of building water infrastructure for regional communities. We are running out of water. Regional communities cannot be sustained or grow and agricultural opportunities are being wasted because no-one in government has the guts to build what is needed.

The government has recently announced \$3 million in funding to each of three regions in the state to develop an assessment plan—and this is good news. One of the regions is in my electorate. I urge the minister to acknowledge the importance of this report and review the government's assessment model immediately. Otherwise, I fear that I could be standing here in 10 years time delivering the same speech.

Coronavirus, Vaccine Rollout

 **Ms LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (2.53 pm): Can I start by sending big love to our Victorian friends, family and colleagues as they battle a COVID-19 outbreak and go back into lockdown. To my gran, Heather, to my aunts and uncles and cousins who all live in Victoria, and to all Victorians: stay safe, stay strong. Queenslanders are with you.

The truth is though that Victoria should never have been put in this situation because the federal government should have fixed quarantine. The Prime Minister, Scott Morrison, had two big jobs this year: roll out the vaccine and fix quarantine. He has failed both. Whilst the federal government has failed to fix quarantine and the vaccine rollout, people in the Prime Minister's own team are jumping the gun and calling for the international border to reopen. You have to crawl before you can walk, but LNP Senator Matt Canavan is jumping the gun by saying Australians 'cannot stay under the doona forever' and calling for the international border to reopen.

Senator Canavan is again putting the cart before the horse. Australia is nowhere near ready to open the international border. Opening the international border prematurely will put Australians at risk. Before Senator Canavan drags Australians out from 'under the doona', we need millions more Aussies vaccinated and adequate quarantine facilities in place. Australians' safety must be the No. 1 priority. Queenslanders know from experience that if you keep the community as safe as possible the economy can open back up faster. We proved this as the best model only 12 months ago, and now our economic recovery plan is underway.


What is the senator doing to encourage Aussies to get vaccinated and progress better quarantine facilities? Absolutely nothing. Perhaps instead of handing out National Party how-to-vote cards in the New South Wales by-election recently, Senator Canavan could have recorded a new podcast about the importance of getting vaccinated. That would have been at least something to help us all get one step closer to living safely and allowing our national economy to recover.

I am proud that the Palaszczuk government is doing everything it can to make the COVID vaccine rollout easier in Queensland by opening 14 community based vaccination hubs by the end of July. The centres will be established to coincide with increased vaccine supply announced by the federal government. Members of the general public aged 40 to 49 who may want to receive a COVID-19 Pfizer vaccination will be able to register for vaccination.

Our job so far has been to vaccinate the 1a and 1b groups that include our workforce in hotel quarantine, health, police and other emergency services. Queensland Health has sufficient Pfizer stocks to continue that work and open up to the 40- to 49-year-old age group who may want to register to be vaccinated. We do not want an ounce of vaccine to go to waste. The Palaszczuk government will ensure that our vaccine rollout is as accessible as possible, and these community vaccine hubs will further assist Queenslanders, no matter where they are, to get access to the vaccine.

In closing, I would like to publicly thank the Queensland Health staff and the tireless efforts of our public health teams right across the state who are managing the vaccine rollout and for keeping us safe.

Watts, Mr B

 **Mr PURDIE** (Ninderry—LNP) (2.56 pm): On 27 November 1987, a Friday afternoon in late spring, a beautiful 12-year-old girl left her mother at the local shops in Noosa for a short ride home. Sian Kingi could not take the same walking track as her mum because it was too sandy for her bike. It was not a fateful decision, because two evil individuals had taken fate out of the equation. Valmae Beck and Barrie Watts had seen her ride this track before. They had used that reconnaissance to devise Sian's abduction, rape and murder. The sadistic perpetrators were waiting. As she approached, Valmae Beck said to Barrie Watts, 'Here she comes.'

The following events are too horrific for me to retell and they still haunt our community, the detectives who worked the case and, mostly, her parents, who live in my electorate. I have spoken to them all recently. Former police commissioner Bob Atkinson remembers every detail of the investigation and tells it like it was yesterday. Neil Magnussen, the officer in charge of the Sunshine Coast district


CIB at the time, emotionally recalls reluctantly agreeing to Sian's mother's request to be told every detail of the atrocities committed against her daughter. Former detective Earl Seymore cannot talk about it, opting to pen me a letter, in which he says—

The circumstances surrounding Sian's death can only be described as horrific, due to the nature and number of wounds she suffered ... All evidence indicates Sian was subjected to horrific pain and suffering. Other Police and I believe that in the history of crime in Australia, this murder was the worst to have occurred up until that time.

News overnight that Barrie Watts has applied for parole has sent shockwaves through my community, the police and Sian's family. Everyone I have spoken to who has intimate knowledge of the case are adamant Barrie Watts should never be released. All, including Sian's parents, who I spoke to again this morning, have grave concerns for the persons living in any community Barrie Watts may be released into. The sentencing judge said to Watts, 'The vulgar crime shows you to be an evil man void of any sense of morality.' 'The sentence for murder is life in prison and in my view the sentence should mean just that,' the justice said.

Detectives who worked on the case are convinced there are other unsolved matters he is yet to admit to. If Watts is given parole what precedent would this set? How many other child killers will be released while they still represent an unacceptable risk to the community? Will we be having this discussion about Brett Cowan, Daniel Morcombe's killer, in years to come? Bob Atkinson said last night, 'Some offenders lose the right to ever be reintroduced back into society.' Barrie John Watts is one of those offenders. As Justice Kelly said back in 1990, 'The sentence for murder is life imprisonment, and in my view the sentence should mean just that.'

Miller Electorate, Infrastructure Projects

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (2.59 pm): Infrastructure, jobs and better schools—that is what my constituents want, and I am happy to report that fantastic progress is being made on many of those fronts. The Ipswich Motorway upgrade is now complete, including a new cycleway connection from Oxley all the way to Granard Road. For the first time there is an entire new corridor, and people are using and enjoying it. We have air-conditioned local state schools, which has seen local students benefit from the Palaszczuk government's investment. We are also widening local shared pathways. For example, at Tarragindi from the freeway underpass to Sunshine Avenue is complete, and we will do the other half of that to Gerard Street as the next stage.

Koala-proof fencing has been effective along the South East Freeway thanks to Transport and Main Roads working with Toohey Forest Wildlife. The 50-kilometres-per-hour zone is now in place along Ipswich Road at Annerley after years of campaigning by the local community, the local school and local traders. I am pleased to say that the lights at the Tarragindi Tigers' ground are up and running, and their night games are much better as a result thanks to our funding through sports. We also have funding going to the Souths Graceville Hounds for a new clubhouse and upgrade to their second field. Wests cricket received a million dollar upgrade of their facilities, which they were badly in need of. There is funding going to the Souths Rugby League women's team for their change facilities and to Yeronga AFL, where they have a lot of women players on their books who are doing a great job.

We are seeing an upgrade of the Yeronga station as part of the Cross River Rail project, and then we will move on and do Fairfield, Yeerongpilly and then go south to do Rocklea, Salisbury and Moorooka in the neighbouring seat of Toohey. I will be looking to the Brisbane City Council budget for funding for the design of a second Walter Taylor Bridge. We know this is one of the biggest bottlenecks in Brisbane. I have campaigned the city council long and hard for a second bridge and there has been a commitment from the Lord Mayor. I will be keen to see that followed through in the budget.


We will be putting in a permanent home for the Yeronga Community Centre as part of the revitalised old Yeronga TAFE site, which has been delayed somewhat due to the pandemic, but it is certainly happening and will be a great community hub for a group that does so much for the vulnerable people in my community. I want to thank all of the members of the Yeronga Community Centre for all that they do. We are working with Yeronga State School too to ensure that the conversion of the Yeronga Dental Hospital into more classrooms, administration and space will enhance a growing school that is going to see a lot more students come in future years.

DEBT REDUCTION AND SAVINGS BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from p. 1725, on motion of Mr Dick—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Theodore—LNP) (3.03 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the Debt Reduction and Savings Bill 2021. I have been listening with intent to the debate so far. I must say, I find it incredible that we put a bill together to save around \$3 million. We have spent almost three days debating a way to save \$3 million. Surely we could save a lot more than the \$3 million this bill talks about.

I refer to page 8 of the committee report, where those opposite continue to talk about privatisation. I know they find it very, very difficult to grasp that back in 2009 the once revered premier Anna Bligh went to an election not talking about asset sales, not talking about anything like that whatsoever, yet six weeks later proposed selling Queensland assets.

Mr KRAUSE: Queensland Rail not for sale.

Mr BOOTHMAN: I take that interjection. I remember back in 2012 when the member for Ipswich West used to love to say 'Rachel the Rail Wrecker'. Let's examine a bit of history for those opposite. I know it is very troubling to understand and I know they probably need a bit of counselling. It is something they do not want to remember, but it is something they need to grasp. Let's go back to one of their favourite newspapers, the *Sydney Morning Herald*, which stated on 2 June 1999—

Bligh govt to sell five state assets

Premier Anna Bligh announced on Tuesday that Queensland Motorways Limited—
which they like talking about over there—

the Port of Brisbane, Forest Plantations Queensland (FPQ), Queensland Rail's (QR) coal freight business and the Abbot Point Coal Terminal would be put up for sale.

If you listen to those opposite, they make no reference to selling anything. They are innocent of it all. But they have to take responsibility, because in this chamber today there are members opposite who sat around that cabinet table, and those members would have had a fair bit to say when it came to asset sales. As I refer to the report, the interesting thing about privatisation is those members who were in the Bligh government. The Bligh government's attorney-general at the time was none other than the current Treasurer, Cameron Dick. The Bligh government's minister for infrastructure and planning is the current minister for—well, it is Stirling Hinchliffe.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Lui): Member, I ask you to refer to members by their correct titles.

Mr BOOTHMAN: I apologise, Madam Deputy Speaker. The Bligh minister for transport was none other than Anastacia Palaszczuk, the current Premier of this state. We also have the member for Bulimba, the member for McConnel, the member for Morayfield and the member for Mulgrave, who were not around the cabinet table at that time.

We are talking about debt reduction here. If we think about it, in my electorate residents are concerned about issues that affect them. When we talk about debt reduction, sometimes when we fix issues in electorates when they should have been fixed in the first place it costs far less than it costs now, because those issues escalate. In my case, in the electorate of Theodore we have a riverbank that is potentially going to sever a connection road. If they fixed the John Muntz riverbank at the pony club fields when they should have, it would have cost around \$2 million. We are looking at four times that amount now because we have had wet season after wet season where the riverbank has continued to erode away.

They talk about debt reduction, but now those opposite have blown out the cost of fixing a problem that should have been fixed back in 2017. It would have saved Queensland taxpayers a fortune. When it comes down do it, that road is one of the busiest thoroughfares to Mount Tamborine. When we talk about tourism in this place and we talk about saving jobs, Mount Tamborine is a tourism mecca for the Gold Coast hinterland. When you talk about debt reduction, you are talking about getting funds into state coffers. If you do not have strong business you do not have those funds going in; therefore, if that connection road washes away again it will destroy so many businesses up in Mount Tamborine.

Ms Leahy: Which it will.

Mr BOOTHMAN: I take that interjection. It will again. Spending the money when the issue first arose would have saved the taxpayers in the long run.

It is the same with exit 57 in the Oxenford and Helensvale area. Recently, the state government spent \$25 million on it when we know it is a bandaid solution. Going forward, we are going to have to spend a lot more money on it. Why spend \$25 million when we are going to have to do it again? We are talking about debt reduction here. If we spend the money that is required now, we do not need to spend it in the future—

Ms Leahy: Make a saving in the future.

Mr BOOTHMAN: And therefore we make a saving—I take that interjection.

Mr McDonald: It is sensible.

Mr BOOTHMAN: It is sensible economics, and governments need to stop wasting money. The problem with that interchange is that they have spent \$25 million and it is confusing residents. We have regular accidents there. Residents know that there needs to be flyovers. We need to work with the federal government on this issue. I have written to the minister about this and I have asked questions on notice because in the long run we would be saving money because we would not be wasting money on bandaid fixes.

Mr Krause: But who sold the assets?

Mr BOOTHMAN: I take the interjection and I will get to that in a minute. That issue with exit 57 could be solved with flyovers to get traffic away from that intersection. In the long run, it would save money for the Queensland taxpayer if we did it right the first time.

When it comes to the asset sales in this state, those opposite have to accept the fact that their former premier of this state, Anna Bligh, sold so many assets in her tenure, as did Peter Beattie prior to her. They need to accept that fact. Going forward, they need to accept that fact. We have a good doctor over here in the member for Moggill, and I am sure he could refer them to a good psychologist so they can come out and accept this issue.

Mr McDonald: Accept the truth.


Mr BOOTHMAN: Accept the truth. I have sat in this chamber over the last 2½ days and listened to those opposite who cannot accept that when it comes to privatisation they sold the majority of assets out there.

Mr McDonald: Who sold the assets?

Mr BOOTHMAN: Labor sold the assets. Accept it. Learn from your mistakes and accept it. I will finish with these comments. Residents want meaningful debt reduction and they want the government to do what they really set out to do. We have spent two days wasting the time of this chamber with this bill. It is the only bill on the *Notice Paper* that we can actually debate today, and that is very disappointing. I will keep my contribution to that. This has been a torturous period in Queensland history. They cannot accept that they sold the assets.

Mr Krause: Who sold the assets?

Mr BOOTHMAN: Labor sold the assets.

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Tourism Industry Development and Innovation and Minister for Sport) (3.13 pm): I genuinely now know what the meaning of torturous is. I rise to speak in support of the Debt Reduction and Savings Bill 2021. In particular, I will focus my comments on the benefits it will deliver in relation to state debt, the savings achieved, the repeal of legislative bodies and the changes to the requirements for print advertising.

Before I do, I cannot help but address some matters that were raised by the member for Theodore. The member for Theodore made reference to people who were at a cabinet table when decisions were made. He was not able to understand my position in the parliament and he did not name my position, but he did name me as being one of those people. That is entirely correct, but that is demonstrative of the ability of Labor and the members who were here as part of this government to learn. You do learn from your successes and you do learn from your mistakes. Sorry, I should correct that: some people have an ability to learn from their mistakes and some people have an ability to learn from their successes. Clearly, the LNP in this state have 32 years of a demonstrable inability to learn from their own mistakes. To have someone who has not sat around the cabinet table try to present some sort of lecture about how these things should be regarded is quite astonishing.

The Debt Reduction and Savings Bill provides the mechanism for the Queensland Titles Registry to be included in the first Queensland Future Fund through the Debt Retirement Fund. The Debt Retirement Fund will be structured so that credit agencies recognise the value of contributions to the fund as a debt offset when assessing Queensland's debt burden. The Palaszczuk government has announced a contribution to the Debt Retirement Fund of more than \$5 billion, which was recognised in the COVID-19 Fiscal and Economic Review, which included the Titles Registry.

Inclusion of these investments in the Debt Retirement Fund will improve Queensland's debt-to-revenue ratio by approximately nine per cent when taken into account by rating agencies when assessing Queensland's debt burden. This is a positive example of taking action to address debt and

those opposite criticise these actions—despite the fact we see the Morrison government's debt increases headed well beyond a trillion dollars. Those opposite complain, even as the Morrison government has deficits 10 years into the future with no sign of a surplus. Those opposite complain about debt even though the Liberal government in New South Wales has a higher debt than Queensland, including when measured on a proportional basis. Let us not forget that when the LNP were last in government in this state debt rose under their leadership. They complain about debt not because they believe debt is a problem but because they want to use it to justify cutting, sacking and selling. That is what they do. That is what they are about. That is always their agenda.

I support the bill because it is all about protecting Queensland from those opposite and their agenda to cut, sack and sell. Labor makes sensible, prudent savings in a way that does not hurt Queenslanders. The savings that this bill supports will ensure our frontline services are sustainable and focused on the needs of the public. Savings achieved through the bill include: integration of the Queensland Productivity Commission functions into Queensland Treasury, approximately \$1 million per annum; integration of Building Queensland functions into the Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning, approximately up to \$700,000 per annum; integration of functions of the National Injury Insurance Agency into the Insurance Commissioner, approximately \$600,000 per annum; integration of the Public Safety Business Agency functions within QPS and QFES, at least \$300,000 per annum; and changes allowing for publication requirements to be satisfied by online publications, saving hundreds of thousands of dollars. In total, the bill provides for \$3 million in direct savings.

I have heard on a number of occasions during this debate that those opposite do not think \$3 million sounds like much. It means a lot to people in my community, and it can make a huge difference when invested and invested well. Importantly, \$3 million in direct savings is only one part of the Palaszczuk government's broader \$3 billion savings agenda. Sensible savings do not harm Queensland, unlike the LNP's cuts agenda. Those opposite hate this idea, because when the LNP talk savings what they mean is cuts. There is a difference but they do not get it.

When the member for Kawana said, 'There is not too much debt reduction in this bill and there are very minimal savings,' he knows that that is giving away, that is belling the cat, that he wants to go harder on the cuts. He wants to go much harder on the cuts—like the good old days when he was sitting around a certain table. He wants to get back to that. When we see the member for Kawana moving ridiculous amendments, such as changing the title of the bill, what the member for Kawana and those opposite really give away is that they want to see very hard cuts just like those when they were in government—when they cut 14,000 public servants, including 4,000 health workers including 1,800 midwives and cut the infrastructure spend to record lows. Unlike those opposite, the Palaszczuk government makes sensible savings that do not cut frontline services and do not hurt Queenslanders.

The bill repeals a number of legislative bodies including the Public Safety Business Agency. It will see the reintegration of the PSBA into the Queensland Police Service and the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services. The Minister for Police and Emergency Services delivered a really impressive speech yesterday during this debate highlighting and outlining what an outrage the PSBA was when it was established due to the absolutely transparent agenda of the previous government. It was established based on recommendations of the Keelty report and the Costello audit—and doesn't that send a shudder down the spines of so many Queenslanders? The PSBA was established by the Newman government as a way of outsourcing the ICT, financial, procurement, asset management and human resources services of the Queensland Police Service and the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services. It was an inefficient and expensive notion that the Newman government was so fond of. It was all about creating something that was a step closer to privatisation of public services.


In that regard I want to acknowledge remarks that were made in the House earlier today by the member for Aspley. He gave a really prudent example of the way that privatisation of government services occurred under the Newman government. They do not sell things; what they do is just shut the doors. They shut the doors on the SDS, the state government stores, in Pineapple Street at Zillmere, which was such an important employer in our part of the north side. They shut the doors, boarded up the place and made sure that a range of mates got the deals for the supply contracts. As a consequence there was a wonderful facility being underutilised.

Thanks to the Palaszczuk Labor government working with the community, we have seen that facility be enlivened and reawakened as the new home to the Northside Wizards Basketball and to the Jabiru Community College. There is no starker example of what we could do with simple savings—savings like the \$3 million that will come from this bill that can go back into a project like the redevelopment of the former SDS stores at Zillmere into a community facility that will deliver for the

community for many years to come. That is the sort of example of what can be achieved, and if we make these savings every year we can do that in many places around the community. It is not just about one place on the north side; we can do it over and over again as a result of making these savings and undertaking the debt repair and debt management as a result of the passage of this legislation.

The Debt Reduction and Savings Bill achieves sensible and prudent savings. It reduces debt, which will help the Palaszczuk government's economic recovery from the effects of the pandemic. It does so in a way that does not bring down the sledgehammer of austerity on the Queensland economy just at a time when it is not needed.

What would be the prescription of those opposite? We have heard it in their words in their critique of this legislation. It is clear that they want to go harder and that their version of debt reduction and savings is to cut, sack and sell.

 **Mr McDONALD** (Lockyer—LNP) (3.22 pm): Margaret Thatcher famously said socialists are happy until they run out of other people's money. This very much reflects the economy in Queensland and the Palaszczuk Labor government. With state debt heading over \$100 billion towards \$120 billion, these exorbitant borrowings are utilised just to keep the lights on and, together with the second highest unemployment rate in the nation, Queensland is a glowing example of how not to run an economy. The question now is where to go from here. Queenslanders simply do not have enough money available for this government to take, although I eagerly await the next budget to see their latest creative way of imposing new taxes, levies and fees to try to get more money out of Queenslanders' pockets.

The Debt Reduction and Savings Bill is perhaps one of the most misleading bills ever to come before this House. I look forward to the member for Kawana's amendment that seeks to change the title to the 'debt non-reduction and minimal savings bill'. This bill contains 266 pages and amendments to 18 acts and regulatory instruments across the width of government yet there are hardly any identified savings. In fact, as has been noted by the Assistant Under Treasurer, there are \$3 million worth of savings. When you say \$3 million versus \$3 billion really quickly, Queenslanders might be mistaken. However, the difference between \$3 million and \$3 billion is just on one out of a thousand. If you are doing some homework and you have a thousand questions, this bill is like getting one of those thousand questions right. Queenslanders deserve better.

Before I go any further, I would like to thank the Economics and Governance Committee, the committee secretariat and the 15 submitters to this bill for their contribution to its development. I would like to acknowledge the opposition members of the committee, the members for Mermaid Beach, Coomera and Ninderry, for their wise and considered three-page statement of reservation which has helped to greatly inform the House on this bill. Given the size of the bill and the short time provided us to consider it, their efforts are truly commendable.

The objectives of the bill are numerous. Most notably, it intends to create a separate legal entity out of the titles office and place this asset in the Queensland Future Fund; abolish the Queensland Productivity Commission and Building Queensland; and alter the mandate which currently requires the government to publish public notices in print newspapers. The Queensland Future Fund, first announced in December 2019, was touted as the best means to ensure responsible budget management while still meeting Queensland's needs. This fund was formed with an initial budget of \$5 billion and was further seeded with an additional \$2 billion from an existing debt retirement plan. This bill restructures the funding of this plan by assigning a value to the Queensland Titles Registry and bringing that assigned asset value into the fund.

I must say when the Treasurer spoke before the budget last year about a potential increase in debt of \$4 billion, Queenslanders may have accepted that. However, I asked my four-year-old granddaughter, 'How do you count?' She said, 'One, two, three, four, Poppy Mac.' I said, 'In Labor economics they go, 'One, two, three, 28.' She could not believe it, but that is Labor economics. She still does not believe me.

The restructuring is one of the most obvious failings of this bill. In his introductory speech, the Treasurer noted the presumptive value of the Queensland Titles Registry of \$4.2 billion without providing any explanation for how this figure was reached. In comparison, New South Wales and Victoria have leased their titles offices at values of \$2.6 billion and \$2.85 billion respectively. With no details provided as to why Queensland's valuation is so much higher, we can only question how much thought has truly gone into this restructuring and how much was simply a guess.

Even if we take this highly questionable figure as true, its effect on paying down debt in Queensland will be negligible at best. Those opposite claim a great saving of \$3 billion, but again, as I said, one out of a thousand—that is \$3 million of \$3 billion. What makes it worse is that this \$3 million

is supposed to be a saving, but many of the members opposite proudly spruik about how they could spend—yes, spend—that \$3 million saving in their own electorate. I do not know if this government is heading in the right direction. The truth is that even with this overambitious valuation, not only will the restructure fail to reduce the state's debt in real terms, but it would also be a stretch to suggest it would even cover the annual interest bill on this ever increasing debt.

More worrying than the bill's questionable economic assumptions is its disassembly of some of the few remaining independent bodies which currently provide economic oversight and advice to the government. Established in 2015, the Productivity Commission serves as the state's primary independent economic review body. Established to review complex economic issues and to propose policy reforms to the government, in all fairness to those opposite, the Queensland Productivity Commission is evidence that the Palaszczuk Labor government can at times make some sensible decisions, but more on that in a minute.

The Productivity Commission has reviewed matters such as electricity prices, service delivery in remote communities and regulatory improvements. Its work and success have been widely acclaimed, yet, even after all that success, those opposite see fit to destroy their own creation. Some will argue that the service provided by the commission is going nowhere, as the government has advised its functions will be integrated into Treasury through the establishment of the Office of Productivity and Red Tape Reduction. This argument fails to acknowledge the true purpose of the commission. The Productivity Commission serves as an independent opinion on this government's economic activity. I certainly believe not all those in the Labor ranks would be so welcoming of this smoke and mirrors. I note that our respected Speaker established the Queensland Productivity Commission when he was the treasurer. By integrating its work into the government operated department, that independence is completely lost. AgForce Queensland, representing much of my rural community, shared this concern. In their submission to the bill they stated—


Independence is critical to the success of—
the commission—

which have worked without fear in assessing and providing scrutiny on Queensland's legislation on behalf of Queensland ... The Bill's proposal to abolish and reform these agencies under Treasury will hamper their ability to undertake independent review and provide frank advice to Government ...

AgForce was not the only submitter to raise concerns regarding the bill's elimination of an independent regulatory body. Engineers Australia, Consult Australia and the Australian Sustainable Built Environment Council also opposed the abolition of Building Queensland, another body established by the Palaszczuk government in 2015. Building Queensland provides governance on infrastructure projects. While its effectiveness has been at best questionable up to this point, submitters were rightly concerned over what governance would exist should the body be abolished as proposed by this bill.

In a further attack on transparency, the bill removes the need for governments to publish public notices in printed newspapers. Instead, the bill proposes an alternative arrangement in which public notices would only be posted on social media accounts. Local papers in our communities are vital. I have three in my community: the *Lockyer*, the *Somerset* and the *Lockyer & Somerset Independent*. These papers rely on these advertisements to survive. The government is just pandering to big business. Like many small papers, they rely on public notices, including government issued notices, as a consistent stream of revenue.

Ultimately, the name of this bill is deceptively far from achieving its aim. I appreciate hearing that the member for Kawana will move an amendment to call the bill the 'Debt Non-Reduction and Minimal Savings Bill'. Queenslanders deserve a better government. Queenslanders will not have the wool pulled over their eyes. That is why the LNP will be opposing this bill.

 **Mr BROWN** (Capalaba—ALP) (3.32 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Debt Reduction and Savings Bill 2021. I thank the committee for its report on this bill. I particularly acknowledge the member for Logan for the hard work he puts into every report he produces.

What a day! Today we will see that the Greens are more fiscally responsible than the LNP when it comes to government debt. I did not think I would ever see—when there was a chance to save some money and make smaller government—the Queensland Greens being more responsible than the LNP, but that is what we will see in a few moments. We will see the Queensland Greens vote to support debt reduction in this state and the LNP vote against it. Do members know why? Like their federal counterparts, they are addicted to deficits and debt—up to their eyeballs. Recently, the federal budget indicated there would be over a trillion dollars of debt. Do we hear those opposite talk about that

government debt? No. I fear that, through their actions in relation to this bill, they are taking the same tone as the federal LNP, which continues to deliver deficits 10 years into the future and huge government debt.

What does Queensland see out of this arrangement? I would be a little bit happy to see federal government debt if we were getting our fair share in infrastructure. There will be \$1.6 billion to Queensland over 10 years for infrastructure, but we are spending \$5.4 billion on Cross River Rail alone. It shows who is doing the heavy lifting when it comes to infrastructure in this state.

Let's look at the tactics of those opposite when it comes to this bill. I picture the brains trust opposite saying, 'We have a three-page dissenting report at the back of the report. We're going to vote it down and we're going to rename it with a one-word amendment.' This was their chance to come up with an alternative plan to tackle debt in this state. What did we get? A childish proposed amendment, a three-page dissenting report and an undertaking to vote down the bill. Even the Queensland Greens are more responsible when it comes to this bill before the House.

There is a reason LNP members do not want to outline their plan. We know that they will go back to their Newman government ways of cutting, sacking and selling. We saw it last week in the debate around social housing. Those opposite just want to give away social housing to the private sector. They want to privatise prisons as well. They went to the election wanting to get rid of public prisons. It is in their DNA. They want to privatise everything and cut good public sector workers.


I saw it in my electorate, particularly in the Newman years, with Alexandra Hills TAFE and QTAMA. The LNP absolutely drove that facility into the ground. I remember the 'oncer' who held that seat for that term. He did not come from Capalaba; he moved into the area just to run for the seat, so he did not understand the vital role of the Alexandra Hills TAFE. He said to the parents and the community, 'Don't worry about it. We're going to put a primary school where the TAFE is.' That just got the two primary schools that were so close to the TAFE worried that they would shut down not only one TAFE but also two primary schools. Guess what? The community would get only a primary school in return.

In that time I also saw cuts to health. We have heard about all of the staff cuts—4,400 healthcare workers, including 1,400 nurses. Wynnum Hospital was shut down. The Moreton Bay Nursing Care Unit was shut down. There were massive cuts to our health system on the bayside. Did the LNP build anything extra at Redland Hospital to compensate? Not at all. I experienced it in my former job in relation to the redundancies that were rolled out. I saw radiographers, dentists and pharmacists receiving redundancies only to be re-hired a year later.

An honourable member interjected.

Mr BROWN: They were the lucky ones! They went so hard that they had to re-hire those people. Those people got massive redundancy payouts only to be back in the job a year later.

A week before the 2015 election, the minister for health at the time, Lawrence Springborg, announced—they must have finally realised they had problems with public sector workers—that over the next term he would hire 1,700 additional nurses. They sacked 1,400 nurses but a week before the election they put out a press release to say that they would hire 1,700 nurses! It was ridiculous short-sightedness to pay out all these redundancies only to re-hire nurses into our facilities. They went too hard too fast, and the community knew about it. A press release a week before the 2015 election did not save them. The people had already made up their minds about who they would trust to provide the services Queenslanders need. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (3.38 pm): I rise to add to the debate on the Debt Reduction and Savings Bill. In fact, I was not going to speak on this bill today because it is a farce, and we all know it is a farce. This is a bill about smoke and mirrors. Who would think for a second that the Queensland Labor Party has any intention of reducing the debt in this state, because it does not have a very good history of it, does it? It seems to just blow out debt after debt after debt.

I was interested to note the government moving the Titles Registry into A Debt Retirement Fund. This is all about the government trying to hide the fact that it is fiscally incompetent and has ruined the finances of this state because the ratings agencies were starting to look at it and say, 'Your equity-to-liability ratio is starting to get out of control.' The government had a look at that and said, 'We'll put some money into A Debt Retirement Fund,' and it was caught out when it tried to move money from the defined benefit fund.

Members will remember that the LNP told the government that this would not work because we were in the middle of a COVID situation last year and the share market was turning down and the defined benefit fund had lost ground and the actuaries were telling the government that it could not take

out the sort of money that it wanted to take out, so it had a look around and picked something that it thinks it can capitalise on. Strangely enough, it has put a \$4.1 billion valuation on the Titles Registry—a massive amount more than New South Wales or even Victoria put on theirs.

Normally when you capitalise something—and I realise that most on the other side are not used to looking at spreadsheets or the balance sheets of any sort of company whereas those of us on this side have been running businesses for years and years and years and we know how to do that—it is quite easy to put a valuation on it in that you look to see how much money it earns and you put a multiple on top of that. It is surprising that the government cannot tell us how much money the Titles Registry actually earns. Maybe when the Treasurer gets up in reply he could actually tell us how much in a year the Titles Registry provides back to the government.

The government is going to move this entity into this so-called \$4.1 billion fund so it can change the equity-to-liability ratio and stop any sort of downgrade from happening. However, I think the ratings agencies will be smart enough to see through that—I really do—and I can see a downgrade in rating coming in the future. The government says it is moving the titles office into this fund in order to not only avoid a downgrade in its ratings but also protect it from being sold, because those opposite seem to think that the LNP would sell it.

We all know that the LNP has sold nothing. We were honest with the people of Queensland, unlike the Labor Party in the past. We went to an election and said to the people of Queensland, 'We will lease out some assets.' Anybody who has been in business knows that a lease and a sale are two completely different things. When you sell something, members of the Labor Party, you do not own it anymore. When you lease it to someone, you might not have control of it but you still own it and eventually it comes back to you. There is a big difference between a lease and a sale. Once you sell it it is gone, and of course the Queensland Labor Party sold \$16½ billion worth of assets.

I want to counter some things that the member for Ferny Grove and the member for Kurwongbah said during their contributions—

Mr King interjected.

Mr HART: So-called facts; I take that interjection. The member said that the LNP sold Queensland Motorways. Let us just examine that statement, because Queensland Motorways was sold by the Labor government in 2011 to QIC for \$3 billion.

Mr BAILEY: Mr Deputy Speaker Kelly, I rise to a point of order. The member is not speaking to the bill. He is taking us on a long tour of history, and his own ruling when he was in the chair reflected that.

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Deputy Speaker Kelly, I rise to a point of order. There have been three days of debate with both sides of the House talking about who sold what, who leased what. I think the member is responding to other contributions in the debate, which has been happening for three days now.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): I do not pick the point of order that you are making there, and you might want to give me a chance to rule on the previous point of order. Minister, with regard to your point of order, I just want to clarify that in your statements regarding the time that the member for Burleigh spent as the temporary Speaker you were not reflecting on the chair. If you were, I would ask you to withdraw that.

Mr BAILEY: The matter was dealt with when it was raised. I withdrew it at the time. I could have taken it further and I did not.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, Minister, I am talking about your statements now. While making the point of order you made statements about the member's actions while he was in the chair. I would ask you to withdraw that. It seems like a reflection on the chair to me.

Mr BAILEY: I withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. With regard to your point of order, member for Kawana, there has been broad ranging debate over three days. There have been alternative approaches to management of the budget explored by many members of this House. I am listening carefully to the debate and we are staying somewhere broadly within both the long title of the debate and the topics that have been raised and rebutted.


Mr HART: In direct response to the member for Ferny Grove and the member for Kurwongbah, Queensland Motorways was sold to QIC. In return for the sale to QIC of Queensland Motorways, the Queensland government was given \$3 billion. The Queensland government no longer owns it. It belongs to QIC, so it is impossible for the next LNP government to sell something that we do not own.

We do not own it and we did not in any way benefit. The \$7½ billion that QIC got for Queensland Motorways did not come to the Queensland government, so we did not sell it. Mr Deputy Speaker, I will be writing to the Speaker about the contributions of both of those members.

We have heard that the government is serious about debt reduction and it has managed to save \$3 million, which every Labor member in this place has now spent. If we thought for a second that the Queensland Labor Party was serious about saving money, then it would not be wasting the money that it is wasting on some of the infrastructure programs that have blown out dramatically. To quote the Minister for Transport earlier when he was talking about light rail stage 3, that has blown out by \$330 million. That is a 50 per cent increase from the business case put forward only 18 months ago for light rail stage 3. What are the people of Queensland getting in return for that? They are getting absolutely nothing. There are no more stops, there are no more trains, there is no more scenery, there is no more anything for \$330 million. Instead, those opposite made a grubby deal with the unions. Their best practice industrial conditions that have been put in place have led to a massive blowout that equates to 110 times the savings that this smoke-and-mirrors bill is going to provide back to the government.

In 2015 the government had a brilliant idea to put in place the Productivity Commission and Building Queensland. It said a number of things about both of those entities in terms of how good they would be for the people of Queensland, yet now a few years later it is completely trashing them. I do not normally agree with anything the Greens have to say and I did not agree with most of the speech from the member for Maiwar earlier, but I have to agree when he said that the Productivity Commission and Building Queensland inside Treasury will not give the same independent advice as those bodies did in the past. Therefore, I do not support the moving of either of those entities into Queensland Treasury.

I do not support the capitalisation of the Titles Registry. I ask the minister to tell us how much the Titles Registry earns in a year so that we can get an idea of what sort of multiple he has put on the Titles Registry, whether it is 100 or 200 times, which is completely unacceptable to anybody who knows anything about finance. I might leave it at that because we all want to go home eventually, do we not?

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Investment) (3.49 pm), in reply: I thank those members of the House who have provided their support for this important bill. This bill is designed to reduce the debt burden in Queensland and deliver savings. Simply put, this bill does what it says on the tin. The bill provides the mechanism for the Queensland Titles Registry to be contributed to the first Queensland Future Fund, the Debt Retirement Fund. The bill enables the new Titles Registry operator, owned by state entities, to deliver Titles Registry services by providing the transfer of functions, assets and employees from the Titles Registry to Registry Co. The bill also creates the authority for Registry Co to collect Titles Registry fees and, amongst other things, the right for the state to appoint an administrator in exceptional circumstances to ensure the proper performance of the Titles Registry functions delegated to the operator.

The bill also effects changes to the governance structure of the National Injury Insurance Agency Queensland by abolishing its board and transferring responsibility for its management to a chief executive officer, initially the Insurance Commissioner overseeing Queensland's compulsory third party insurance scheme. Bringing oversight of the two motor accident injury schemes together will save costs and deliver efficiencies.

The bill also restructures the governance of the government's productivity policies by repealing the Queensland Productivity Commission Act 2015. The bill abolishes the Queensland Productivity Commission and enables the integration of the commission's economic policy experts into the new Office of Productivity and Red Tape Reduction. This new office will support an additional focus on productivity and regulatory reform as part of the government's economic recovery policies. It will retain the in-depth and longer term focus of the Queensland Productivity Commission which will support the development of expert economic policy advice.

The bill also repeals the Building Queensland Act 2015 to abolish Building Queensland and integrate its functions, staff, assets and resources into the department administered by the Deputy Premier, the Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning. I would like to take the opportunity to thank Building Queensland's board, CEO and staff for their hard work and expert advice over the past five years.

The integration of Building Queensland staff into the Deputy Premier's department ensures that the expertise and capability demonstrated by the Building Queensland team will remain in the department, continuing the strong contribution to the state's infrastructure planning. The reformed

approach aims to strike the balance between assisting agencies to deliver good quality proposals and enabling more strategic oversight of proposal development at a much earlier time. Taking a more active role in early planning, before proposals are locked in, will see the Deputy Premier's department assist agencies to develop stronger capital and strategic asset management plans to meet service delivery requirements. This coordinated approach will help deliver infrastructure that underpins economic growth, boosts social and environmental outcomes, supports jobs and will create long-term prosperity for Queenslanders.

The repeal of the Public Safety Business Agency Act is a demonstration of the Palaszczuk government's commitment to keeping Queenslanders safe. Our communities want and deserve the best frontline services possible. This government will support our frontline workers by ensuring that we have the best management practices possible so that they can get on with the job of protecting our communities. When addressing the Economics and Governance Committee, Queensland Police Service Deputy Commissioner Doug Smith stated that these changes will lead to the achievement of a more efficient governance structure as well as a better integration of staff within organisations.

The bill also provides that where a state law requires or authorises government agencies to publish information in print, this is now satisfied by publishing online. The practical effect is that government agencies must publish certain information online rather than in print. This is a modernisation, cost-saving and red-tape reduction measure.

The fee unit model will streamline the annual process of indexing regulatory fees and reduce administrative inefficiencies for agencies and the Office of the Queensland Parliamentary Counsel. Removing these administrative inefficiencies for both agencies and the Office of the Queensland Parliamentary Counsel will save money and realise substantial productivity gains across government, as staffing effort can be redirected to focus on service delivery and higher value priorities.

As I said in my opening remarks, Queensland's nation-leading health response to COVID-19 has delivered our nation-leading economic response. Our targeted economic recovery plan has meant Queensland's economy has bounced back faster than every other state. During debate some members opposite complained that the Economic Recovery Plan had disappeared. Rest assured, members of the LNP, it is alive and well and powering Queensland's recovery. I table it again for the benefit of all members of the House.

Tabled paper: Queensland Government Unite & Recover publication titled 'Queensland's Economic Recovery Plan' [\[728\]](#).

I remind LNP members once again, even though they deliberately choose wilful ignorance, that we have added more jobs since the pandemic started than any other state or territory. Our economic growth is twice as fast as the next fastest growing state and as a result our balance sheet is in a stronger position than many other states and territories.

I note that during the debate, the member for Mermaid Beach cited the impact of COVID-19 on the United Kingdom, which has endured the worst recession in 300 years. Tragically, the mismanagement of the pandemic by the Boris Johnson Tory government has seen as many as one in seven citizens infected with COVID-19 and 128,000 deaths. A non-existent health response has led to a catastrophic economic result.

During the debate we saw several two-bit wordsmiths try their hand at retitling the bill. The member for Mermaid Beach tried his hand with the 'avoid a ratings agency downgrade bill'. In his defence, this bill has been favourably looked upon by the ratings agencies, but more on that later. Then we had the member for Everton with the 'questionable savings bill'. For a savings bill that apparently raised so many questions, I was disappointed that the former shadow treasurer did not ask more during the debate. Of course, the member for Kawana took the cake with his incredibly elegant suggestion, the 'debt non-reduction and minimal savings bill'. What a poet! We have not seen a more creative mind at work since the bloke who came up with the playground classic, 'I know you are, you said you are, but what am I?'

Those opposite also drew attention to the time allocated to the bill. The LNP's wafer-thin contribution to the committee report complained of having insufficient time allocated to considering the bill. After whingeing and moaning incessantly every sitting week since the dawn of time that the LNP had insufficient time to debate bills, when given the opportunity to debate a significant and important bill during a full sitting week the LNP whinged and moaned incessantly that they had too much time to debate a bill! What a sickening but nonetheless typical double standard of the LNP.

Now that the government has given every member opposite a full week to debate debt reduction and savings, the LNP find themselves with too much time to deliver their alternative three word vision for the Queensland economy: cut, sack, sell. The LNP revert to the lazy old stereotype of 'better

financial management'. The people of Queensland have left the LNP behind because they know that Labor's management of the COVID crisis was world class and that Labor are the better economic managers. In their first budget, the last LNP government not only managed to sack 14,000 Queenslanders, it also racked up a \$4.6 billion deficit and added \$7.5 billion to general government sector debt.

Mr Bailey: Quite an effort!

Mr DICK: I take the interjection from the minister. Quite an effort! We know the LNP is dismissive of so-called 'borrowing to keep the lights on', something I note that the Morrison LNP government is borrowing \$1.1 trillion to do, but the Queensland LNP managed the rare feat of borrowing to turn the lights off! If you are going to rack up debt you should probably use it to support Queenslanders, LNP, not sack them. This goes to a broader point on debt that the LNP is dishonestly misrepresenting to the people of Queensland. Several times during the debate the LNP tried unsuccessfully to mount a case that \$4 billion in fact equals \$28 billion. Let me spell it out clearly for those opposite: as part of the economic recovery plan, the Palaszczuk Labor government followed the advice of the Reserve Bank governor and increased borrowings to support Queensland's economy.

I announced at the COVID-19 Fiscal and Economic Review that our government would borrow \$4 billion for additional economic recovery measures. The opposition now seeks to conflate that with \$28 billion in borrowings. That \$28 billion reflects \$4 billion for economic recovery measures; \$2 billion in deferred withdrawals from the defined benefit fund; \$1 billion in job support loans through QRIDA; movements in the capital position and in cash holdings by government-owned corporations; and \$19 billion in revisions to the operating position relative to the 2019-20 budget. The simple fiscal arithmetic, which the Morrison government is also exposed to, is that borrowings must rise to cover the gap between falling revenues and increasing expenditures induced by COVID.

Are there alternative approaches? During the debate, the LNP offered three familiar alternatives: cut, sack, and sell. These are the only three ways the LNP know how to reduce debt and produce savings, and it fuels the LNP's hatred for this bill, a bill that reduces debt without selling assets and that generates savings without resorting to savage cuts or sackings.

Turning to the substance of the arguments from those opposite, we have heard that the debt reduction is a smokescreen, the valuation of the Titles Registry is overblown and that the ratings agencies will not be convinced by the Queensland Future Fund. On debt reduction, members opposite dishonestly trundled out the mistruth that the LNP did not sell anything while holding what they thought was a smoking gun on government land transactions. Unfortunately, they had the smoking gun gripped by the barrel and turned on themselves because there is a long record of LNP land sales.

Writing in the *Australian Financial Review* in October 2014, Mark Ludlow and Matthew Cranston documented the \$10.7 billion worth of assets sold by the LNP since 2012, including the \$7.1 billion sale of Queensland Motorways. When Queensland Motorways was sold, the office of the LNP Treasurer, the member for Clayfield, endorsed the deal by saying 'investors clearly have confidence in the Queensland economy'. Sadly for the LNP, that confidence was not shared by the people of Queensland who saw the LNP's \$37 billion privatisation program looming and promptly wiped out the Newman and Nicholls government. As 'LNP' is an acronym that stands for 'Leaving Nothing Public', Queensland ports, electricity transmission networks and water pipes were all on the chopping block.

As everyone on this side of the House knows, given the chance the LNP will do it all over again, as LNP speaker after LNP speaker insisted when they suggested that the sensible debt reduction measures in this bill did not go far enough. Among others, the member for Mermaid Beach gave the game away when he said of the Titles Registry valuation—

... an asset only has a definitive determinable valuation when market forces can determine that valuation ... In other words, if you are not actually selling the Titles Registry, there is no chance of finding out the real market value ...

The LNP members, who were very keen to talk about government sector net worth at the last budget, now think that we cannot know the value of anything until we sell everything. This bill proves the opposite. The fact that the Queensland Titles Registry is valued so much more highly than those privatised in New South Wales and Victoria shows that if an asset seems worth selling then it is worth keeping in the hands of the people of Queensland.

Not to be outdone by himself, when the member for Mermaid Beach was not insulting our Pacific island neighbour Tuvalu, which coincidentally also kept out COVID-19, he was making suspicious remarks like 'anyone can pay for friendly valuations'. Of the Queensland Future Fund he said, 'I cannot

believe the ratings agencies will fall for this three-card monte trick'. That is not only an insult to the professionalism of the ratings agencies but also flies in the face of their published opinions on Queensland. Other members of the LNP shared his opinion.

In their ratings action of 31 March, Moody's—the same agency that downgraded Queensland to a negative outlook under the LNP—said—

Governance considerations are material to Moody's assessment of Queensland's credit profile, taking into account its strong institutional framework and prudent financial planning. The establishment—and in time seed funding—of the Queensland Future Fund also supports Moody's view of Queensland's strong governance. Its public policy has demonstrated a discipline to repay debt, supportive of the state's broader debt management practices.

Just as the opposition has claimed that the debt reduction measures do not go far enough because we are not selling assets, they also suggest that the savings measures are inadequate because we are not making the savage cuts that an LNP administration would unleash. As I said in my opening remarks, the four-year \$3 billion savings and debt plan had already achieved \$367 million in savings by December last year. I will provide a further update on the program when I present the state budget in just under three weeks time.

However, the measures outlined in the bill seek to deliver up to \$3 million in direct savings per year and significant further indirect savings. Importantly, the changes set a foundation for further reform to the Public Service to deliver ongoing savings. As the then deputy under treasurer said to the Economics and Governance Committee, the measures and initiatives within the bill 'signal the intent to continually reform and improve the management of public finances and the optimal structures for the functions the government undertakes.' In the post-COVID world we can and must do things differently. Our government's \$367 million of announced savings to date demonstrate that.

Yet those opposite bleat about the inadequacy of the additional \$3 million in savings. 'It means nothing. \$3 million is nothing', said the member for Chatsworth. Opposition member after opposition member said that \$3 million was light on, it was inadequate, it meant nothing to them. I can tell the House that it means something to the people of Queensland. If \$3 million means nothing to the LNP then the election commitments they made to their local communities must mean nothing to them too. If \$3 million means nothing to the LNP then the promise made by the member for Kawana of \$200,000 for the Kawana Surf Club must mean absolutely nothing to him and to his community. If \$3 million means nothing to the LNP then the election commitment made by the member for Toowoomba South of \$500,000 to the Darling Heights Community Hub at Darling Heights State School must mean nothing to him and nothing to them. If \$3 million means nothing to the LNP then the promise made by the member for Ninderry that the Coolum Police Station should be upgraded with a \$2.7 million investment must mean nothing to him and nothing to that community. If \$3 million means nothing to the LNP then the promise made by the member for Burleigh, who waxed lyrical about the flaws in the bill, must mean nothing to him because he promised \$500,000 to that community to upgrade the Burleigh Heads walking track. On and on it goes. You could cut the hypocrisy with a knife.

I have outlined the rationale for integrating the Queensland Productivity Commission within Queensland Treasury. It will sharpen the focus on productivity and regulatory reform as part of the government's economic reforms. I note that in 2015 when the Productivity Commission was created the member for Coomera worried aloud that it might be just 'a toothless tiger', that it may be 'just a name' and 'unable to do anything'. I would like to assure the member for Coomera that by integrating the QPC within Queensland Treasury we are only further sharpening the teeth of the government's productivity agenda.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DICK: They are awake, but they are not awake to the double standards of saying that \$3 million means nothing to them and the raft of commitments that they made to their communities during the election. What if the member for Kawana had said to the Kawana Surf Club, 'I won't give you \$200,000; I will give you \$3 million.' Can members imagine what that community would have thought about that? They would not have thought that \$3 million was worth nothing. They would have thought that was a sound investment in their community. Their double standards are sickening. Speaker after speaker said that \$3 million means nothing. I say this to members opposite: you can go down to Logan Central Plaza in the middle of my electorate and talk to the battlers there who balance a book every week on their pension and say to their face that \$3 million means nothing. You say that to them. You go down the main street of Kingaroy—

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. There are longstanding rules about addressing members in this chamber through the chair and on six occasions the Treasurer has not addressed his commentary through you, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Treasurer, I remind you to put your comments through the chair.

Mr DICK: I say to the members of the LNP: you go down the main street of the largest community—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DICK: Members opposite should walk down the main streets of the largest communities in their electorates. The member for Kawana should stand outside the largest shopping centre in the Kawana community and speak to every single person who comes out and say to them, '\$3 million means nothing to me.' I challenge every single member of the LNP to do that. They say one thing in here and they say something else in the community. Our government values every single dollar. Our government will make that work for Queenslanders. We will do that for everybody who supported us in the last election to get the best economic recovery possible in response to COVID-19.

Members opposite voiced similar concerns about the integration of Building Queensland, which is another sensible move that provides a more coordinated and strategic infrastructure advisory and assurance function within government. However, I note that other than describing the provisions of the bill no LNP member—not one—commented on the Public Safety Business Agency being integrated within the QFES. They are embarrassed to comment on the PSBA because it exposes their drive to privatise the public emergency properties of the Queensland government.

The LNP were also mute on the bill's proposal of a fee unit model. They were condemning the lack of red-tape reduction constantly, but not one member commented on that. That reform stands to save hundreds of hours of Public Service time, updating dollar value fees. Again, the LNP are afraid to talk about fees and charges, because under the LNP fees and charges escalated by 11 per cent in three years. By contrast, the indexation, under the Palaszczuk Labor government is just 1.7 per cent, the lowest in a decade.

We have made a number of changes that we intend to implement across the public sector. This bill will make a significant reform to the administration of the public sector. It will save money, it will make government more efficient and, most importantly, it will support Queensland as we charge our way away from COVID-19 and deliver a strong economic response for Queensland. I commend the bill to the House.

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

AYES, 51:

ALP, 49—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Hunt, Kelly, A. King, S. King, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Madden, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.

Grn, 2—Berkman, MacMahon.

NOES, 36:

LNP, 31—Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Boyce, Camm, Crandon, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Gerber, Hart, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister (proxy), Mander, McDonald, Mickelberg, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, O'Connor, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Weir.

KAP, 3—Dametto, Katter, Knuth.

PHON, 1—Andrew.

Ind, 1—Bolton.

Pairs: Howard, Stevens; Pegg, Watts.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Bill read a second time.

Consideration in Detail

Clause 1—



Mr BLEIJIE (4.16 pm): I move the following amendment—

1 Clause 1 (Short title)

Page 20, lines 7 and 8, '*Debt Reduction and Savings Act 2021*'—
omit, insert—

Debt Non-reduction and Minimal Savings Act 2021

I table the explanatory notes to my amendments.

Tabled paper: Debt Reduction and Savings Bill 2021, explanatory notes to Mr Jarrod Bleijie's amendments [729].

This amendment properly reflects what the title of this bill ought to be—the 'Debt Non-Reduction and Minimal Savings Bill'. If members had listened to the debate that has been had over the last three days they would know that not one Labor member has said what the debt will be reduced by. We are projecting over the forward estimates a debt of \$130 billion in this state, yet neither the Treasurer in his reply nor the Labor members have said, 'The \$130 billion projected debt will be \$125 billion,' or 'It will be \$100 billion.' What is the debt being reduced by? That is why the opposition opposed the second reading of the bill. We say that the title of this bill should be 'Debt Non-Reduction and Minimal Savings Bill' because, although the Treasurer spoke about \$3 billion in savings over four years, the Acting Under Treasurer identified savings of only \$3 million. That is minimal. Out of \$3 billion, \$3 million is a minimal saving.

In response to the committee report I think the Treasurer said, 'It is the strong intent of the bill.' That is the thing! It is the intent of the bill! I can imagine the Treasurer on his roadshow. He loves a good prop under his arm. He will go with his debt reduction bill. At every press conference he will stand there with his debt reduction bill. He will walk into every department and say, 'It's the intention.' Just by seeing the Treasurer, with his aura, walking into places with the bill up here—

Mr Bailey interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister for Transport and Main Roads, you will direct your comments through the chair.

Mr BLEIJIE: He will say, 'It's the intention that debt will be reduced in this state.' There is no plan to reduce debt. This bill does not reduce debt. Under this Treasurer's watch, there is a \$130 billion projected debt, which he did not tell the people of Queensland about. If this was a real debt reduction bill, he would be advising the members of this House that the \$130 billion is being reduced. I ask the Treasurer what it is being reduced by. He now has an opportunity to respond.

In his summation he talked about the battlers of Woodridge. What he does not tell the battlers of Woodridge is that, despite being represented by the Treasurer of the state, Woodridge has the highest unemployment rate in the state. That is a legacy this Treasurer should not be proud of.

If the Treasurer is fair dinkum about debt reduction, he should tell us now, in four seconds, how much this bill will reduce the state's debt by. If not, it is nothing!

(Time expired)

Mr DICK: The member for Kawana's amendment is an embarrassment. It mocks the legislative process in this state. It traduces the LNP and, mostly importantly of all, it diminishes the member for Kawana. The government opposes the amendment.

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

AYES, 31:

LNP, 31—Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Boyce, Camm, Crandon, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Gerber, Hart, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister (proxy), Mander, McDonald, Mickelberg, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, O'Connor, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Weir.

NOES, 52:

ALP, 49—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Hunt, Kelly, A. King, S. King, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Madden, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.

Grn, 2—Berkman, MacMahon.

Ind, 1—Bolton.

Pairs: Howard, Stevens; Pegg, Watts.

Resolved in the negative.

Non-government amendment (Mr Bleijie) negatived.

Mr SPEAKER: I note that the member for Kawana's amendment No. 2 is essentially the same question as contained in the member's amendment No. 1 and therefore would offend standing order 150 if moved. Therefore, I rule the member for Kawana's amendment No. 2 out of order on procedural grounds.

Division: Question put—That clause 1, as read, stand part of the bill.

AYES, 52:

ALP, 49—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Hunt, Kelly, A. King, S. King, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Madden, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.

Grn, 2—Berkman, MacMahon.

Ind, 1—Bolton.

NOES, 31:

LNP, 31—Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Boyce, Camm, Crandon, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Gerber, Hart, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister (proxy), Mander, McDonald, Mickelberg, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, O'Connor, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Weir.


Pairs: Howard, Stevens; Pegg, Watts.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause 1, as read, agreed to.

Clause 2, as read, agreed to.

Clause 3—

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (4.28 pm): Clause 3 out of 234—I intend to speak on every clause, I think—sets out the main purpose of the bill. Clause 3(1) states—

The main purpose of this Act is to support the State's contribution to the Queensland Future (Debt Retirement) Fund established under the Queensland Future Fund Act 2020.

We have just had the debate on the issue of the contribution to the Queensland Future (Debt Retirement) Fund. I think it is questionable what this bill will actually do and how much it will actually contribute to the Debt Retirement Fund. We have had three days of debate. No-one can offer us any figure of what the debt will be reduced by. The question the Treasurer must answer is: as at today's date, which is 27 May, what is the current total state debt? What is the current total state debt as of today's date? I will keep speaking for a couple of minutes so you can get the figure.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Kawana, you will direct your comments through the chair.

Mr BLEIJIE: I will keep speaking so the Treasurer can get the figure. As at today's date—right now: what is the current state debt? Then, for the benefit of honourable members in this House, I would like know: when this bill passes and receives assent, what will the debt be reduced by? What will that figure be?

What I am asking for is today's debt level. I am not asking the Treasurer to go on Stefanovic tomorrow to try to explain this. We understand that debt is a tool. We get it. What I am asking the Treasurer is quite simple: as at today's date, what is the state total debt? When we pass this bill, which is named the debt reduction bill, what is the debt going to reduce by? I want the total as of today's date and the projected debt level once this bill passes. I suspect it is not going to change. I take that back—I mislead. It will change. It will go up. It always goes up under Labor. That is the problem. That is why we are opposing this bill. It is disingenuous. It is not reducing debt on behalf of Queensland taxpayers. After this bill passes, do we think taxes will be lower for Queenslanders? No. Do we think services will increase their fees and charges under Labor? Yes. Do we think Queenslanders will get a better service from the Labor state government when it comes to their customer service focus? No.

Treasurer, here is the simple question: what is the total state debt of Queensland as at today's date and what is projected debt once this bill receives royal assent and commences pursuant to clause 2? What is the projected debt? I would be very interested to know if it is going down or if the Treasurer is still projecting the debt to skyrocket to \$130 billion over the next four years. If it does not decrease, what is the point of the bill?

Mr DICK: The House will be updated on the level of state borrowings when I present the state budget on 15 June.

Division: Question put—That clause 3, as read, stand part of the bill.

AYES, 52:

ALP, 49—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Hunt, Kelly, A. King, S. King, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Madden, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.

Grn, 2—Berkman, MacMahon.

Ind, 1—Bolton.

NOES, 31:

LNP, 31—Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Boyce, Camm, Crandon, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Gerber, Hart, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister (proxy), Mander, McDonald, Mickelberg, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, O'Connor, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Weir.

Pairs: Howard, Stevens; Pegg, Watts.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause 3, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 4 to 6—

Division: Question put—That clauses 4 to 6, as read, stand part of the bill.

AYES, 52:

ALP, 49—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Hunt, Kelly, A. King, S. King, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Madden, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.

Grn, 2—Berkman, MacMahon.

Ind, 1—Bolton.

NOES, 31:


LNP, 31—Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Boyce, Camm, Crandon, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Gerber, Hart, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister (proxy), Mander, McDonald, Mickelberg, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, O'Connor, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Weir.

Pairs: Howard, Stevens; Pegg, Watts.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clauses 4 to 6, as read, agreed to.


Clause 7—

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (4.38 pm): Clause 7 is the declaration of the operator. Pursuant to the bill, the Queensland Titles Registry Pty Ltd is declared to be the operator. I would like to ask the Treasurer to provide details to the House of when that company was registered and whether he would table a copy of the company search for members' consideration.

Clause 7, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 8 to 10, as read, agreed to.

Clause 11—

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (4.39 pm): Clause 11 sets out the details to do with the new entity, the operator. As we said in the provision before, the Queensland Titles Registry is the operator. In essence, the government is transferring the title of the Queensland titles office to this new company, and fees and charges will be applicable and so forth.

The questions we need answered by the Treasurer are: what is the current revenue of the Queensland titles office? There are two questions: what is the current revenue of the Queensland titles office for the past three years annually; and where did they derive the valuation, as set out in the committee process, of \$4.1 billion, considering New South Wales and Victoria entered sale and lease arrangements with their respective titles offices at a lot less than \$4.1 billion? They were at \$2.65 billion and \$2.85 billion, if memory serves me correctly, yet somehow the Queensland government comes up with a valuation of nearly double that at \$4.1 billion. I suspect the transactions that New South Wales and Victoria submit are more frequent than Queensland.

What is the methodology of the valuation of \$4.1 billion? Is it based on revenue? If that is the case, what is the revenue? I do not think that the Queensland titles office actually has any assets, so it is purely a revenue based source for titles of water allocations, water licences, transfer of property and so forth. It is transfer fees, registration fees and so forth. Was the \$4.1 billion valuation conducted by Treasury? If that is the case, is it based on the revenue? If the valuation is based on the revenue then Queenslanders deserve to know—after all, it is their titles office—what the revenue is. It has not been forthcoming over the last three days of debate. It was not forthcoming in the committee process with the Deputy Under Treasurer. There was talk about minimal savings of \$3 million, but there was no talk about the revenue of the titles office.

The Treasurer owes an explanation to this House of what has been the revenue—if I say to the Treasurer ‘for the last three years annually’, he will have the figures there in his book—of the titles office. Was the methodology used for the valuation of \$4.1 billion based on that revenue? If it was not, what was it? As I understand it, there are no other assets applicable to the titles office. Treasurer, the question that members of parliament on this side of the House want an answer to is: what is the revenue of the titles office, and what is the methodology for the \$4.1 billion valuation placed on the titles office?

Mr SPEAKER: I remind the member for Kawana that comments should come through the chair.

Mr DICK: A valuation of \$4.2 billion for the Titles Registry was recognised in the COVID-19 Fiscal and Economic Review and the 2020-21 budget. The valuation was informed by due diligence undertaken by Queensland Treasury and the Queensland Investment Corporation. Final asset values will be released as part of the Queensland budget in June.

Mr JANETZKI: I want to expand on the questions asked by the member for Kawana. It is pleasing that we have an opportunity for consideration in detail, because we have not had that for a very long time. It is important to examine clauses before the House, and there can be no more important clause in this bill than this one.

We just heard the member for Kawana ask a reasonable question about the revenue raised by the Titles Registry. What we heard from the Treasurer was a sidestep, an evasion. The Treasurer himself in his 2012 mea culpa to the *Brisbane Times* recognised that Labor of that era, the Bligh era, had ‘seriously miscalculated’—I think were the words he used—what it meant to Queenslanders to have their AAA credit rating removed. The Treasurer understands, appropriately, the importance of the credit rating here in Queensland, and he has clearly made it a key part of this bill that the value of this Titles Registry would see the credit ratings agencies satisfied.


It is important that on this side of the House we ask these technical questions. The member for Kawana has quite rightly asked a question with respect to the revenue that is raised by the Titles Registry, particularly when we know that the New South Wales titles registry office was fully privatised for \$2.6 billion, in Victoria it was \$2.8 billion and in Queensland we have \$4.1 billion. The Treasurer has just mentioned \$4.2 billion. Considering there is a risk of writedowns if this has been overvalued, it is vitally important that we understand the mechanisms by which the Titles Registry has been valued.

In that regard, in addition to the member for Kawana’s question I would like to ask the Treasurer what is the total expense base of the Titles Registry as part of understanding the true value and the appropriate valuation. I would also like to ask questions in relation to what was the discount rate used in the valuation and what was the earnings multiple that was used in the valuation of the Titles Registry? These are reasonable questions to ask. When considering the valuation, these questions would have been considered by Treasury or by the Treasurer’s staff. Surely, when we are relying on this valuation to be sound to keep credit rating agencies satisfied they would have done that due diligence on the valuation. They would have done that because this is important to the Queensland people, and the Treasurer should provide a clear answer for the House.

Mr DICK: The state opposition has made it clear at every stage that they oppose every aspect of this bill. These questions are not asked in good faith.

Clause 11 as read, agreed to.

Clause 12—

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (4.46 pm): Clause 12 relates to Titles Registry fees. I cannot believe the state Treasurer does not know the revenue of the titles office. These are the registry fees they are putting into this new company, but there is currently the Queensland titles office which for many, many years has been receiving revenue from titles and the registration fees that Queenslanders pay.

How is it that the state Treasurer cannot get a note from anyone in Treasury in the next 20 seconds to say what the current revenue is? If they are basing the \$4.2 billion valuation on revenue but they cannot tell the House what the revenue is, then it puts to bed what we have been saying for three days: this whole bill is a con job. If the \$4.2 billion valuation is based on the revenue and they are not going to tell members who are voting on these clauses what the revenue of the Queensland titles office is, then it shows this whole thing has been a farce. This bill will do nothing like what the Treasurer has been talking about.

Earlier I asked the Treasurer what the state debt is as at today's date. He did not know and he did not want to answer it. Surely, the state Treasurer is briefed every morning on what the current state debt is. Today the Treasurer gets up and says the opposition is not genuine because we are opposing the bill, so these questions are not genuine. Yes, we are opposing this bill, but that does not mean we are not genuinely trying to ascertain the revenue of the titles office. It is important to ascertain the methodology someone used for the valuation the Treasurer is using for the entirety of this bill and using to set up this Registry Co and transferring the Queensland titles office to this new company.

If it was based on revenue and they are using revenue as the valuation, then the Treasurer ought to tell members of the parliament who are voting on these important clauses what the revenue is and not dismiss it as arrogantly as he has. 'You don't need to know; I'm not telling you,' is what the Treasurer just said. We can oppose the bill, and we do oppose the bill. If the Treasurer does not tell us what the revenue of the titles office is at the moment, then our justification for opposing this bill has been exactly right because it has been shown for the con that it is on the people of Queensland. Treasurer—

Mr SPEAKER: Through the chair, member for Kawana.

Mr BLEIJIE: I ask the Treasurer to explain to this House what the current revenue of the Queensland titles office is.

Division: Question put—That clause 12, as read, stand part of the bill.

AYES, 52:

ALP, 49—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Hunt, Kelly, A. King, S. King, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Madden, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.

Grn, 2—Berkman, MacMahon.

Ind, 1—Bolton.

NOES, 31:

LNP, 31—Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Boyce, Camm, Crandon, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Gerber, Hart, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister (proxy), Mander, McDonald, Mickelberg, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, O'Connor, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Weir.


Pairs: Howard, Stevens; Pegg, Watts.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause 12, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 13 to 18, as read, agreed to.

Clause 19—

 **Mr JANETZKI** (4.54 pm): One of the reasons the member for Kawana and I are taking this opportunity during consideration in detail—which, I must admit, we have not seen much of since the government has been guillotining bills for most of the last 3½ years—is that it is a good opportunity for us to ask significant questions in relation to particular clauses on this bill.

Mr McDonald: They are important questions.

Mr JANETZKI: These are important questions. I recall the former member for Hinchinbrook, Mr Cripps, would take advantage of this opportunity so it is important that we take advantage of this opportunity to ask questions of the Treasurer. One of the reasons why it is important is that clause 19 of this bill allows the Treasurer to decide 'the most appropriate way for the State to hold an interest in the operator'—meaning Registry Co—and 'the assets, liabilities, rights, responsibilities, obligations, and operations ... to be transferred'. More importantly, the final catch-all provision in this clause actually allows the Treasurer to decide 'anything else necessary or incidental to facilitate the operation of the operator in a way that achieves the main purpose of the Bill'.

I put it to the House that that is nearly a blank cheque for the Treasurer. It is a blank cheque for the Treasurer to implement Registry Co with a sleight of hand; it is the trickery of the Titles Registry to be transferred without proper scrutiny of the House. The questions relating to the valuation that have been asked by the member for Kawana and me are important questions, particularly when the Treasurer has a clear run at doing anything necessary or incidental to facilitate the operation of Registry Co.

It is entirely appropriate that we would ask questions and expect answers. My hope is that if the Treasurer did not have that information available to hand he would be able to rely on bureaucrats who would be able to furnish him with that information because these are not difficult questions when people are starting to calculate valuations. This is Queensland's taxpayer value. This is \$4.1 billion of value and the government should be able to explain how that value is calculated. These are simple questions about expenses that the Titles Registry may incur or revenue streams that the Titles Registry may enjoy. They are simple questions, and it is simply not good enough for the Treasurer to remain silent when these are questions that go to the fundamental valuation of this \$4.1 billion asset of the Queensland people. The Treasurer must answer them.

Mr BLEIJIE: Clause 19(2) says—

For subsection (1), the Minister may decide—

- (a) the most appropriate way for the State to hold an interest in the operator, including, for example, by deciding whether shares in the operator are to be transferred to another entity with or without consideration—

My question to the Treasurer is: what is it contemplating? Is it QIC? Is it another operator? What went into that particular provision in this bill for Treasury to contemplate if it is a QIC or another subsidiary company? As the shadow Treasurer just said, (c) is basically a blank cheque for the Labor Treasurer and the last thing anyone ought to do is give a blank cheque to a Labor Treasurer.

I want to make this point. In this consideration in detail we have had the Treasurer not being able to advise the debt level, the revenue of the titles office, the details of the Queensland Titles Registry Pty Ltd and the expenses. I put it to the House that at least former treasurer Trad—despite our huge differences—would sit in here and take the time to answer the questions. I put it to you, Mr Speaker, that when the member for Mulgrave served as Treasurer he would take the time and have the decency to sit in the Treasury seat and answer questions because the member for Mulgrave understood the bills—

Mr Janetzki: He was across the brief.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection—he was across the brief, as was the former member for South Brisbane. Despite our differences—and I have been in this parliament for 12 years—at least the member for Mulgrave had the decency to try to explain and did explain on occasion when the opposition asked relevant questions. Now we have the situation where the current Treasurer so arrogantly and flippantly dismisses every member of this parliament, even his own colleagues. They are too afraid to ask questions of the Treasurer. Is it that he is just arrogantly dismissing the questions, or is it that he does not know the answer? I suspect it is the arrogance and dismissive nature of this Treasurer, the member for Woodridge. He could not care less about spending the time in this chamber answering these questions.

What is contemplated by this particular provision with respect to the transfer 'with or without consideration'? What was it contemplating when Treasury drafted that particular provision in the bill? It is not good enough for the current Treasurer to dismiss all of these questions—not knowing the debt level, not knowing the revenue of the titles office based on the fact that this whole bill is about the titles office transfer, and not detailing the details of the registration company. What was the contemplation of this particular provision?

Mr SPEAKER: Before calling the Treasurer, can I just give some guidance. Member for Kawana, relevance is still important when it comes to the clauses. Some parts of the questioning were particularly relevant to the clause and others I could argue were certainly not.

Mr DICK: I will say this to the member for Toowoomba South. I worked in this House with Andrew Cripps. I know Andrew Cripps and you, Sir, are no Andrew Cripps.

Mr SPEAKER: The Treasurer will direct his comments through the chair. I am going to be pretty clear to both members who have carriage of this bill. Comments will be directed through the chair or I will start sitting people down.

Division: Question put—That clause 19, as read, stand part of the bill.

AYES, 51:

ALP, 49—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Crawford, D’Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Hunt, Kelly, A. King, S. King, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Madden, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, O’Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.

Grn, 2—Berkman, MacMahon.

NOES, 31:

LNP, 31—Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Boyce, Camm, Crandon, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Gerber, Hart, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister (proxy), Mander, McDonald, Mickelberg, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, O’Connor, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Weir.

Pairs: Howard, Stevens; Pegg, Watts.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause 19, as read, agreed to.

Clause 20—



Mr BLEIJIE (5.06 pm): Clause 20 deals with the transfer notice. It says—

... the Minister may, by gazette notice ... do any of the following—

I make particular reference to 2(1)(e) which states—

make provision for a legal proceeding that is being, or may be, taken by or against the State or an official to be continued or taken by or against the operator;

Of course, this is about transfers from the Titles Registry office. The question to the Treasurer is: are there any current actions on foot, either that the titles office has taken against anyone or that an individual or company has taken against the state? What actions are currently being taken against the state or that the state has taken that would deal with or have to be transferred pursuant to 2(1)(e) of the bill?

Mr DICK: There are none that I am aware of personally.

Clause 20, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 21 to 148, as read, agreed to.

Omission of heading—



Mr BLEIJIE (5.08 pm): I move the following amendment—

3 Chapter 2, heading (Other Debt Reduction and Savings Measures)

Page 106, lines 8 and 9, ‘Debt Reduction and Savings’—

omit.

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

Mr SPEAKER: Ring the bells for one minute.

AYES, 31:

LNP, 31—Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Boyce, Camm, Crandon, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Gerber, Hart, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister (proxy), Mander, McDonald, Mickelberg, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, O’Connor, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Weir.

NOES, 51:

ALP, 49—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Crawford, D’Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Hunt, Kelly, A. King, S. King, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Madden, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, O’Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.

Grn, 2—Berkman, MacMahon.

Pairs: Howard, Stevens; Pegg, Watts.

Resolved in the negative.

Non-government amendment (Mr Bleijie) negated.

Clauses 149 to 156, as read, agreed to.

Clause 157—



Mr JANETZKI (5.10 pm): This provision relates to the repeal of Building Queensland, a much trumpeted reform of the Palaszczuk government in 2015. It has presided over some of the most baffling infrastructure decisions we have seen. It has not stopped cost blowouts at Southern Queensland Correctional Centre. It has not put up a credible business case for Cross River Rail. It has not done any business case at all in relation to the Gabba redevelopment. My question to the Treasurer is quite straightforward, and my hope is that we receive an answer. What will be the new process for reviewing a business case with the abolition of Building Queensland?

Mr BLEIJIE: Here we go again: an act of parliament—not a provision or a clause—is being repealed by this Treasurer. Because he does not like the legacy of his Labor predecessors, he wants to set his own agenda or whatever the case may be. I was in parliament when the bill to establish Building Queensland was introduced. They said it would create efficiencies, create savings and get Queensland going—power would go into this body—yet here we are repealing it!

Mrs Frecklington: We actually debated it until two o'clock in the morning.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take that interjection. This shows that they think their own policy has been a complete failure. Whatever the case is—whether or not it is a failure—the fact is that the Treasurer is abolishing Building Queensland when he was in the government that set it up!

Mrs Frecklington: He was a cabinet minister.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection. The Treasurer would have voted to establish this. He held senior portfolio responsible roles that would have had an economic impact and would have had some say over this. I would not be surprised if it was his idea but he is just blaming his predecessors. Imagine the conversation around the cabinet table! He would have gone in there with the bill book under his arm, right up to his chest, and made out that this whole thing was his idea. Now he is abolishing the very body that was set up by a bill that sought to ensure that things would happen quickly and that projects would be approved. However, projects that ought to have gone through this process—like the Mooloolah River interchange—never made it to Building Queensland. Then the government saw blowouts in Cross River Rail and all these other projects that never made it to Building Queensland.

It is justified to ask what Building Queensland actually did. Maybe it did not live up to expectations, but what more would we expect from the Labor government? This is not the only body being abolished by this legislation. We will get to those in another couple of clauses. The very body that the Labor government set up, that this arrogant Treasurer sat around the cabinet table and voted for, is a complete failure. By repealing the act that established Building Queensland, tonight government members are saying, 'Yes, we failed Queensland.' What a debacle!

(Time expired)

Mr DICK: I reject entirely the assertions and suppositions of the member for Kawana. To answer the question of the member for Toowoomba South, which was asked respectfully, agencies will take on a lead role for infrastructure proposal development, with the best practice business case development framework and assurance framework developed by Building Queensland continuing to apply. The Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning will support agencies with expert, scalable assistance and assurance for proposal development provided where needed and will work with agencies more broadly to improve proposal development capabilities. The department will undertake a centralised role in overseeing and supporting these assurance functions while remaining independent of the project proponents and investment decisions that follow robust infrastructure proposal assessment. Infrastructure proposals will remain subject to independent third-party assurance, with expert advice continuing to inform decision-making. The government has developed refreshed governance arrangements which will give clear direction on its expectations for this approach. The government will publish further detail on these new arrangements following the repeal of the Building Queensland Act.

Mr BENNETT: My question is to the Treasurer about the abolishment of Building Queensland. I did not quite hear his response so, with due respect, I do not want to repeat myself. I want to make a point about the abolishment of Building Queensland from the perspective of Queenslanders who, for whatever reason, since 2015 put their faith in the establishment of a board that would turbocharge our infrastructure spend and put credible business cases to the government. The private sector was going

to benefit as well. I have questions about the four projects that still sit on Building Queensland's webpage and what we in the regions can expect from the abolishment of this organisation and its transfer back into government.

There are four projects in particular on which I would appreciate some guarantee and an acknowledgement that they will not be kicked into the long grass or sit on a bench collecting dust. There is the Somerset Dam Improvement Project involving water security for Queensland and the Burdekin Falls Dam. Then there are two projects I am more passionate about—they are currently with Building Queensland—that are essential to the Bundaberg region and we really must talk about. The options paper in relation to Paradise Dam was due last year and is due now. I appreciate that there are concerns around that—I am not trying to politicise the issue—but it is important that the options paper be delivered as soon as possible for the economic drivers for the region. The other project relates to the Bundaberg Hospital—whether it will be a level 5 or whatever—

An honourable member interjected.

Mr BENNETT: I know that the narrative has changed, but the business case is an important document. It is important that the people of the region understand what the future of the region looks like.

In light of the winding up of Building Queensland and its reabsorption into a government agency, I ask for assurances from the Treasurer about these business cases relevant to the future of Queensland—the three key water infrastructure projects and the new hospital, at whatever level, for our region that has been promised. The level of the hospital is not the debate tonight. The debate is how we can have confidence in the new process. I was never a fan of Building Queensland; however, I understood the motivations. I was never in a political position to argue in 2015 the rights and wrongs of that, but that is what we were given and the process we had. Its success or otherwise can be debated all night, but we have a clear indication that Building Queensland will wind up.

My concern on the public record is about four projects that now present themselves for Queensland, two in particular for the Bundaberg region. There is the options paper for Paradise Dam. The business case has been funded by government. We welcome that. We would like reassurances that, going forward, these projects will not be further delayed. People of the regions should have confidence that the projects that are before Building Queensland will be materially delivered in a good and effective manner. Building Queensland has become something that none of us should be proud of, but we certainly do not want to see its regression into the department making things even worse.

Mr DICK: To answer the member for Burnett's question, of course I stand full square behind the incredible infrastructure legacy of our government and how that has been delivered—record budgets and record infrastructure delivery—and that will continue in the future. I move—

That the debate be now adjourned.

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

AYES, 49:

ALP, 49—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Hunt, Kelly, A. King, S. King, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Madden, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.


NOES, 31:

LNP, 31—Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Boyce, Camm, Crandon, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Gerber, Hart, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister (proxy), Mander, McDonald, Mickelberg, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, O'Connor, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Weir.

Pairs: Howard, Stevens; Pegg, Watts.

Resolved in the affirmative.

LEAVE TO MOVE MOTION

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (5.24 pm): I seek leave to move a motion without notice.

Division: Question put—That leave be granted.

Mr SPEAKER: The bells will ring for one minute.

AYES, 49:

ALP, 49—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Hunt, Kelly, A. King, S. King, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Madden, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.

NOES, 31:

LNP, 31—Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Boyce, Camm, Crandon, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Gerber, Hart, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister (proxy), Mander, McDonald, Mickelberg, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, O'Connor, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Weir.

Pairs: Howard, Stevens; Pegg, Watts.

Resolved in the affirmative.

DEBT REDUCTION AND SAVINGS BILL

Declared Urgent; Allocation of Time Limit Order



Hon. YM D'ATH (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (5.26 pm): I move—

That, under the provisions of standing order 137, the Debt Reduction and Savings Bill be declared an urgent bill and the following time limits apply to enable the bill to be passed through its remaining stages at this day's sitting:

- (a) consideration in detail to be completed by 5.50 pm;
- (b) third reading by 5.55 pm; and
- (c) long title agreed by 5.59 pm.

If the stage has not been completed by the time specified, Mr Speaker shall put all remaining questions necessary to pass the bill, including clauses and schedules en bloc and any amendments to be moved by the minister in charge of the bill, without further amendment or debate.



Mr BLEIJIE (Kawana—LNP) (5.26 pm): This is a debate we ought to have had on Tuesday with the Business Committee, but there was no Business Committee meeting.

An opposition member: There's no business!

Mr BLEIJIE: It is hard to have a Business Committee meeting when there is no business on the *Notice Paper*, yet all week the government has been filibustering this bill only to then guillotine the debate. All week it has said, 'We want everyone to speak and we're just filling the list,' and then we get to the end of the day and, because it has not managed its time, it says, 'Oh, dear, we're going to run out of time and if we do this bill's going to have to come to the next parliamentary sitting for debate.'

An opposition member: Oops!

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection: oops! The government completely mismanaged the time. This morning the government went from 17 speakers on the speaking list down to about 10 speakers, so it completely mismanaged it. All we want to do is one bill. That is all the government tried to get through this week and now we are forced to guillotine this bill because this Treasurer does not want to and cannot answer the questions that we have been asking in consideration in detail. This is the contempt in which those opposite hold this place. They do not want to be here.

As was pointed out on the front page of the *Courier-Mail* this morning, this is a lazy government. People who have served for a long time in this place, including the member for Maroochydore, cannot recall a time when there has been one bill on the *Notice Paper* for debate. Those opposite cannot even manage their time to get through one bill this week. They filibustered during the week—Tuesday and Wednesday—because if they had got to Thursday and the bill had been finished there was no bill to go on to.

Mrs D'Ath: There's 29 address-in-replies.

Mr BLEIJIE: Indeed, where have the address-in-replies been this week? I take the Leader of the House's interjection. If the Leader of the House wanted to get through address-in-replies, how many did we get through this week? Zero—zero address-in-replies, one bill.

Those opposite were fearful that if they had got through the debt reduction bill then they would have had no other bill to speak about. They could have gone onto the address-in-reply debate, but in terms of actually voting on matters that are important to Queenslanders they had no agenda—no agenda, no plan for Queensland, no idea. That is what we have got to in the state of Queensland.

This is one of the disadvantages of a four-year term. When a government has run out of puff seven months into its term, God help us for the next three years and three months. If the government has already run out of steam, has already run out of puff and has already run out of ideas, what does the future of the next three years and three months hold? Nothing, no plan. In my 12 years in this place I have not seen a government that has treated this parliament like its political plaything more than the Labor Party.

Those opposite did not read the news this morning in the *Courier-Mail* or listen to the news conference I gave earlier talking to the journalist about democracy constantly under attack by this mob just because of the ego of one individual in this place—and he is sitting in the Treasurer's chair across the chamber. He does not want to answer the questions. I think it was when I advised the House earlier that Woodridge has the highest unemployment rate in the state—and that is no legacy this Treasurer should be proud of—that we now have this debate being guillotined with no consideration in detail about the Productivity Commission being abolished, an independent body set up by the former treasurer, the member for Mulgrave, a body that did some very important work. That is completely irrelevant to the debate we are holding, but it is important. I make the point that we are not able to debate that particular provision of the bill because those opposite have guillotined the consideration in detail and will not allow members to speak on those important provisions of the bill.

They are guillotining the bill, rushing it through now, because the Treasurer did not want to answer the questions asked by the opposition. I say to the Leader of the House that it does not matter if this bill, the 'debt non-reduction and minimal savings bill'—the amendment that I did not get up earlier—sits on the *Notice Paper* and we debate it next week because it does nothing anyway. It does not reduce debt and it results in minimal savings.

We could continue the consideration in detail. In fact, I submit that we should continue it and not have the guillotine. It will give the Treasurer some time to look for the answers to our questions. He would be able to spend the time between this sitting and the budget sitting finding the answers to the questions that we are asking, such as what is the revenue of the titles office—he did not know; what is the current state debt as at today's date, 27 May—he did not know; and what are the details of this company that is being registered that has the functions of the titles office—he has no idea. Just because this Treasurer does not want to answer the questions those opposite are going to stop the debate happening.

We saw much guillotining of debate last term. We have seen little guillotining this term because there has not been more than a couple of bills a week to debate. The government has slowed the agenda in the House. In the last few sitting weeks we have not had a guillotine. The parliament has operated how it should operate: any member who wants the opportunity to speak on a bill can speak on a bill. For 12 years I have been saying that any member who wants an opportunity to speak should be able to speak.

Now we are getting to the stupid situation that those opposite do not even want to have consideration in detail which, on a Treasury bill, is so important to give the opposition the opportunity to forensically look at the issues contained in the bill. Other ministers would say consideration in detail is fine, they will answer the questions, but not this Treasurer. Do members know why? Because this Treasurer sits above everybody else. He thinks this is his little plaything. He would have had in his diary that this would have been finished three hours ago and he would be off doing whatever he was going to be doing this afternoon. The fact is that he has had to sit here with the rest of the plebs. I am sorry that the Treasurer has had to sit here and do the job he gets paid for.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Kawana, can I give you some guidance? We are debating a motion regarding time frames. Ensure that we get back to the time frames regarding the passage of the bill.

Mr BLEIJIE: We are strongly opposed to the guillotining of this bill. We should continue the consideration in detail through until six o'clock, have the adjournment and then come back in a few weeks and continue the consideration in detail. The fact that the Treasurer does not want to sit here and answer questions to forensically examine the bill through the consideration in detail is appalling. It is a disgrace. It mocks democracy. It is an attack on democracy. What else would you expect from the Queensland Labor Party?

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Mr Speaker?

Mr SPEAKER: I call the Leader of the House. That is twice you have just missed out, I apologise, member for Nanango. I know you are seeking the call.



Hon. YM D'ATH (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (5.35 pm): I move—

That the question be now put.

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The standing orders provide that at your discretion you can ascertain whether appropriate time for a debate has elapsed. I would submit to you that having one speaker of the opposition is not an appropriate time frame for such an important motion where we are guillotining an important bill.

Mr SPEAKER: The fact that the Leader of the House sought the call is closing the debate on this motion. There is no subjectivity from the Speaker involved in this particular case. The leader has moved that the question be put.

Ms SIMPSON: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I seek your clarification. I respect your view and that of the Deputy Clerk. Is this a separate issue in putting that the motion be agreed to as opposed to closing the debate?

Mr SPEAKER: No. As the mover of the motion the Leader of the House has effectively closed the debate by seeking the call and speaking.

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

AYES, 49:

ALP, 49—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Hunt, Kelly, A. King, S. King, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Madden, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.

NOES, 31:

LNP, 31—Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Boyce, Camm, Crandon, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Gerber, Hart, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister (proxy), Mander, McDonald, Mickelberg, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, O'Connor, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Weir.

Pairs: Howard, Stevens; Pegg, Watts.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Consideration in Detail

Resumed from p. 1758.

Resumed on clause 157—

Clause 157, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 158 to 195, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 196 to 209, as read, agreed to.

Clause 210, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 211 to 215, as read, agreed to.

Clause 216—



Mr JANETZKI (5.42 pm): This provision relates to the removal of the Queensland Productivity Commission. If anything has been proven during the consideration in detail debate this afternoon, it is that in Queensland we need some ideas because the Treasurer is simply not going to offer them. We have seen a clear mismanagement of consideration in detail this afternoon. We could see the Treasurer start to worry as soon as we asked the most basic questions on valuations, because the Treasurer simply was not in a position to answer those questions or if he was he blatantly decided not to answer them.

Mr Minnikin: Or couldn't.

Mr JANETZKI: Or could not; I take the interjection from the member for Chatsworth. The Treasurer speaking sotto voce—speaking under his breath or very low—does not change a single thing: he has no idea. This afternoon the opposition have given full-throated support to the Queensland economy because we need answers as, with the abolition of the Queensland Productivity Commission, those on the other side of the House and the Treasurer will be speaking under their breath. Without the Productivity Commission they will be speaking sotto voce and they will not be speaking for the people of Queensland.

The next time we come into this House the Treasurer will not have the repeal of the Productivity Commission to hide behind. The next time the Treasurer comes into this House he has to deliver a budget and there will be nowhere to hide. The Leader of the House will not be able to move a guillotine

motion to save the Treasurer from delivering his budget. The Treasurer will be expected to deliver some answers for the people of Queensland and the abolition of the Queensland Productivity Commission this afternoon will not help him.

We know from this Treasurer that they are short of ideas. In 2017 the Productivity Commission had six reviews but only five since and only one referral in 2020. We know that the Queensland Productivity Commission has been starved of its purpose but now, post COVID, Queensland needs good ideas more than ever before. We need to activate the private sector. We need to get lobby groups such as the CCIQ and the Property Council to meet with government. The Treasurer should be meeting with them regularly to get the best of their ideas. The best of the independent minds of the Productivity Commission should be working for the betterment and the productive capacity of Queensland. We need that more than ever because once again this afternoon we have seen that the Treasurer is simply not up to the job. If the Treasurer needs the Leader of the House to move a motion to guillotine consideration in detail because he does not have answers for Queenslanders—

Mr Minnikin: It is a protection racket.

Mr JANETZKI: It is a protection racket. If he does not have answers for Queenslanders, either from the Productivity Commissioner or from himself, we have every reason to be concerned about the budget that is to come next month.


Mr BLEIJIE: When he was Treasurer, the member for Mulgrave set up the Productivity Commission as an independent body to look at government finances and policies. It is concerning that six years after the member for Mulgrave set up the Productivity Commission to independently look at these things and conduct reviews, including into electricity prices, service delivery in Indigenous communities and other areas, it is being abolished and this Treasurer is saying that that is okay because it will just go into Treasury. This is happening because this Treasurer does not want the independent scrutiny that the QPC delivers. That is the issue. He does not like scrutiny. When he was the Attorney-General he tried to hide the SPER debt levels. He tries to hide the figures.

The Treasurer is abolishing the Queensland Productivity Commission, which has done its work in terms of reviews and government policies have changed because of those reviews. The commission has produced reviews that said certain things should be done in certain ways in term of regulations or whatever the case may be, but those opposite do not like to hear it because Treasurer Dick does not want to be told what to do as he thinks he knows everything. He has done everything he can to get his position. He has jumped ahead of his colleagues to get his position. This afternoon he has shown that he thinks he is above everyone in this House and that he does not want to answer questions.

The proposal to abolish the Productivity Commission is one of the fundamental reasons why the opposition opposes the entirety of the bill. Why on earth would you abolish the very body that is giving independent advice? It is because the commission has produced reports that contain recommendations that those opposite do not like. They do not like the scrutiny. I put it to members that moving the commission under the umbrella of the department means it will completely lose its independence. There will be no independent body looking at this government and, in particular, this Treasurer. Why on earth would they abolish it? I congratulate former treasurer Pitt, the member for Mulgrave, for introducing the Productivity Commission, which was doing what it was designed to do. I think it is a shameful exercise that the Labor Treasurer would betray his trust in the former treasurer and abolish this very body.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: It is good to get an opportunity in this House to talk to this amendment. To think that we are standing in this House abolishing the Productivity Commission—an independent body, away from government, to look into the finances of government—as established by the good Speaker himself! It was doing the job it was set up to do. The reason it is being abolished is that this Treasurer does not like the fact that the Productivity Commission is doing exactly the job it was meant to do—that is, to criticise when things go wrong. It is serving its purpose. Possibly, it is similar to the reason he got rid of former treasurer Trad's appointment of Building Queensland. Former treasurer Pitt: Productivity Commission—gone. Former treasurer Trad: Building Queensland—gone.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Nanango, I will ask you to resume your seat. Pursuant to the motion agreed to earlier today and the time now being 5.50 pm, I call the Treasurer to table the explanatory notes to his amendments and the statement of compatibility with human rights.

 **Mr DICK** (5.50 pm): I table the explanatory notes to my amendments and the statement of compatibility with human rights.

Tabled paper: Debt Reduction and Savings Bill 2021, explanatory notes to Hon. Cameron Dick's amendments [730].

Tabled paper: Debt Reduction and Savings Bill 2021, statement of compatibility with human rights contained in Hon. Cameron Dick's amendments [731].

Question put—That the minister's amendments Nos 1 to 4, clauses 216 to 250, as amended, and schedules 1 to 6 be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

Amendments agreed to.

Amendments as circulated—

- 1 **Clause 234 (Insertion of new s 48A)**
Page 181, line 7 to page 182, line 10—
omit.
- 2 **Clause 241 (Amendment of s 214 (Executive officer may be taken to have committed offence))**
Page 185, lines 13 to 18—
omit.
- 3 **Clause 246 (Amendment of s 233 (Making departmental standards))**
Page 187, lines 20 to 22—
omit.
- 4 **Clause 249 (Insertion of new s 279A)**
Page 189, lines 5 to 10—
omit.

Clauses 216 to 250, as amended, agreed to.

Schedules 1 to 6, as read, agreed to.

Third Reading

Division: Question put—That the bill, as amended, be now read a third time.

Mr SPEAKER: Ring the bells for one minute.

AYES, 51:

ALP, 49—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Hunt, Kelly, A. King, S. King, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Madden, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.

Grn, 2—Berkman, MacMahon.

NOES, 35:

LNP, 31—Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Boyce, Camm, Crandon, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Gerber, Hart, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister (proxy), Mander, McDonald, Mickelberg, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, O'Connor, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Weir.

KAP, 3—Dametto, Katter, Knuth.

PHON, 1—Andrew.

Pairs: Howard, Stevens; Pegg, Watts.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Bill read a third time.

Long Title

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

Mr SPEAKER: Ring the bells for one minute.

AYES, 51:

ALP, 49—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Hunt, Kelly, A. King, S. King, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Madden, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.

Grn, 2—Berkman, MacMahon.

NOES, 35:

LNP, 31—Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Boyce, Camm, Crandon, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Gerber, Hart, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister (proxy), Mander, McDonald, Mickelberg, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, O'Connor, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Weir.

KAP, 3—Dametto, Katter, Knuth.


PHON, 1—Andrew.

Pairs: Howard, Stevens; Pegg, Watts.

Resolved in the affirmative.

COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Portfolio Committees, Reporting Date and Referral of Auditor-General's Report

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (5.55 pm): I seek to advise the House of the determinations made by the Committee of the Legislative Assembly at its meeting today. The committee has resolved, pursuant to standing order 136, that the Health and Environment Committee report on the Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill by 20 August 2021. The committee has resolved, pursuant to standing order 194B, that the Auditor-General's Report 18: 2020-21—*Education 2020* be referred to the Education, Employment and Training Committee.

ETHICS COMMITTEE

Report

 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (5.56 pm): I seek leave to table a report of the Ethics Committee.

Leave granted.

Mr POWER: I table report No. 206, titled *Matter of privilege referred by the Speaker on 13 August 2020 relating to the alleged behaviour of a visitor signed into the parliamentary precinct by a member, and the failure of the member to adequately supervise that visitor*.


Tabled paper: Ethics Committee: Report No. 206, 57th Parliament—Matter of privilege referred by the Speaker on 13 August 2020 relating to the alleged behaviour of a visitor signed into the Parliamentary precinct by a member, and the failure of the member to adequately supervise that visitor [\[732\]](#).

This report deals with allegations made against the member for Mirani and Mr Troy Thompson. In relation to the allegations made against the member for Mirani, the committee did not make a finding of contempt and recommends the House take no further action. The committee, however, reminds the member for Mirani of his obligations as a member of parliament to ensure his visitors to the precinct uphold the standards required to preserve the dignity of the parliament.

In relation to the allegations against Mr Troy Thompson, the committee found Mr Thompson in contempt for disorderly conduct. The committee recommends that the House take no further action and that the Speaker ban Mr Thompson from the parliamentary precinct under section 50 of the Parliamentary Service Act 1988. I commend the report to the House.

ADJOURNMENT

Resource Industry Network Awards


 **Ms CAMM** (Whitsunday—LNP) (5.58 pm): Last Friday night, it was an absolute privilege to attend the annual awards evening of Resource Industry Network, formerly known as the Mackay Area Industry Network, MAIN, when it was formed some 20 years ago. We were able to celebrate their 20-year anniversary. At the Friday night RIN Awards gala dinner we acknowledged 10 individuals who played a pivotal role in the organisation's history as well as two stakeholders who have supported the Resource Industry Network tremendously.

The Resource Industry Network was formed as a cluster similar to that of HunterNet in the Hunter Valley, supporting mining, engineering, technical services and businesses to work more collaboratively together. The individuals who have contributed to the 20-year history include Alan Ruming, the late Tony Britton, Peter Van Iersel, Margaret Cameron, Karen McIntyre, Narelle Pearse, Julie Boyd, Mick Crowe, Tony Caruso and Adrienne Rourke. Organisations that were also recognised for their contribution included Mackay Regional Council and Central Queensland University.

I am proud to have been part of the council, formerly as deputy mayor, and a former Resource Industry Network board member and work collaboratively to match the states government's investment in what is now the Resource Centre of Excellence. The council leased the land on a long-term basis to the Resource Industry Network and the Resource Centre of Excellence to ensure that they could expand. Stage 2 planning to support the METS sector and the resources sector is well underway. I also acknowledge the hard work and contribution of the former Mackay Regional Council CEO, Craig Doyle, and his team who helped facilitate that funding arrangement with the state government and Resource Industry Network, which was very challenging at the time, to ensure we could deliver what is an excellent facility and the underground coalmining stimulator.

I also take the time to congratulate Chairman Dave Hartigan for his commitment and the leadership that he and his board continue to demonstrate. We fought for payment terms and fairness for the resources industry's large mining houses and companies and facilitated the Go Galilee Basin rally on the lawns of the council grounds to fight for our coalmining sector. I acknowledge the safety leadership that is demonstrated through the annual safety conference and the continued facilitation of innovation, export and excellence across the METS sector. I take the opportunity to acknowledge all of the award winners on the night. It was a very successful night. Here is to another 20 years of representation of the resources industry and METS sector.

City of Logan Volunteer Awards; Harmony Day


 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Investment) (6.01 pm): Over the past couple of weeks I have had the pleasure of attending some memorable community events in Logan—events I feel really encompass everything great about our city and its people. They showcased the big hearts of our residents—the generosity that extends through our streets and has supported so many, especially during this prolonged pandemic period. Our volunteers are at the core of this local goodwill—selfless citizens who give their everything without expecting anything in return. These special individuals go about their work without any fuss, so it was nice to make a bit of a fuss about them at the City of Logan Volunteer Awards.

I want to take the opportunity in this House to congratulate this year's award winners, including: Club Beenleigh President Peter Harrison-Kyte, Logan's Volunteer of the Year, who gives around 40 hours of his week to a variety of local organisations after years spent working in our police service; Melanie McKenzie, who received the Spirit of Logan Award for her Harrison's Little Wings charity that supports mothers and families who have lost a child or baby; and the team from the Muslim Charitable Foundation from the electorate of Woodridge, who were presented with the Outstanding Community Organisation Award for their efforts feeding the homeless and helping vulnerable youth.

I also want to give a shout-out to some of the other volunteer groups in Woodridge, groups like: Logan Central Meals on Wheels; ADRA Community Centre; Access Community Services; YFS; the Centre for Women & Co.; Logan Amputees and Family Support Group; the Centre Against Sexual Violence; Hurricane Stars Club; Rosies Logan Central; and A Touch of Hope. Their collective efforts change lives every day, and their commitment to community deserves to be recognised and applauded.

I was also fortunate to be invited to Woodridge State School's Harmony Day event last Friday—a celebration of Logan's rich multicultural fabric and an opportunity to give thanks to one of the school's shining lights for more than two decades. Harmony Day was an initiative started in 1999—22 years ago—the same year principal Garry Molloy, who is on leave, started at Woodridge State School. That connection is striking because Garry's enthusiasm and dedication to his role has contributed to a more harmonious Logan—a better Queensland. He has given a generation of our young people the positive platform they needed to gain knowledge, to get a job and ultimately to achieve their goals. This is the wonderful legacy Garry Molloy leaves in the community of Woodridge, and on behalf of our community I would like to commend him for the trail he has blazed and the mark he has made. For when people like Garry and our local volunteers devote their lives to improving the lives of others, our whole community benefits.

Callide C Power Station, Fire

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (6.03 pm): On Tuesday, an explosion followed by a fire occurred at the Callide C Power Station causing massive power outages throughout the state from the border with New South Wales to north of Cairns—a huge geographical area. Units 3 and 4 at Callide C tripped just before 2 pm, with unit 2 at Callide B and Stanwell plus three units at Gladstone correspondingly tripping, creating chaos to the electricity supply in Queensland. Thankfully, through some miracle, there were no fatalities or injuries to the 260 workers at the power station. Their safety is front and centre and our first consideration.


The shortfall in electricity delivery was met by gas supplies and the importation of power from New South Wales until Gladstone and Stanwell were back online. This incident highlights the impact on our state when a loss of generation of this magnitude occurs. The power outage affected a total of 477,000 customers, with traffic lights going out across Brisbane, causing traffic bedlam, and businesses plunged into darkness and experiencing economic losses. It is expected further outages may be experienced before other generators can come online to increase the capacity lost by the fire before repair work can commence.

This incident demonstrates what can happen when reliable base load power is not available in the system. I call on the minister to explain what impact reducing the output and management of these power stations has had on this situation. These generators are meant to run under load, not be idled back every day. We are hearing that Callide 4 will not be back online for 12 months. While the other Callide generators will be back in service within weeks, this still leaves this state one major generator short at this time.

There are a number of generators undergoing service and maintenance as we speak so we are already a bit tight on supply, especially in the morning and evening when solar is not generating. Whilst events such as happened at Callide are rare if there is a large unscheduled shutdown it would create an interesting situation. This is where our gas-fired generators played a large role in stabilising the grid on Tuesday. They are an integral part of our energy mix.

There will be a workplace and health investigation conducted to scrutinise the cause of the explosion and subsequent fire. This should be an open and accountable investigation to ensure Queenslanders are fully informed on just how this incident happened. They deserve that. I once again call on the energy minister to show Queenslanders the plan for reaching the government's 50 per cent renewable energy target—one that will give the public and industry confidence that blackouts like this will not become a way of life.

Kurwongbah Electorate, Small Business

 **Mr KING** (Kurwongbah—ALP) (6.06 pm): It is my pleasure tonight during Queensland's Small Business Month to speak in this place about some of the great small businesses across the Kurwongbah electorate. We know that small businesses are the backbone of the economy. We know that the impacts of COVID-19 have put pressures on this backbone like never before. That is why we have delivered millions of dollars in small business adaptation grants to help operators adjust their business models in the face of the pandemic. In my electorate alone, around half a million dollars has helped over 50 local businesses with grants of up to \$10,000 each.

I would like to thank those businesses who took the time to show me around their operations and have a chat with me about how these grants would help them to stay afloat last year. Thanks go to: Yoga with Trudy; Little Fishes Swim School; Eckersley Printing; Outback Insulation; SolarEast; Hello World Burpengary; Mot Mot Cafe at Petrie—they were very lucky as they opened right next to the university and railway station just as COVID struck which meant no university students or commuter so \$10,000 really helped Dan; Choice of India in Narangba, a plug for them and their great curry; and Car Tune Mechanics.


In celebration of Small Business Month I was delighted to have the opportunity to invite some local small business people here to parliament for a special reception with our Minister for Small Business, the Hon. Di Farmer, during the last sitting week. We welcomed representatives from Kurwongbah based businesses: the award winning Chilli Coffee; and Old Petrie Town's Copper and Cane Distillery. Thanks to Jimmy—the other Jimmy Sullivan, the Chilli Coffee man—Christine, Shelley and Guy for coming in. I also ran into Cameron and Felice from Kallangur based business Dragon Speed Creations and we caught up on old times when I was their member of parliament.

There is more good news for small businesses with three new state government grants programs specifically targeted to small businesses. There is Business Basics delivering grants of up to \$5000 for new and emerging businesses. Guidelines are now available and applications open on 31 May. The Business Growth Fund has grants of up to \$50,000 for evolving and fast-growing small and medium sized businesses to buy highly specialised equipment. There is the Business Boost with grants of up to \$15,000 to support established small businesses.

Finally, I just want to mention that I have been running a small business promotion on my Facebook page this month asking followers to tag in a local takeaway business to go in the draw for a \$70 voucher towards their next visit. It is not too late to enter. For any Kurwongbah constituents listening, head to my Facebook page at ShaneKingMP and get tagging before the end of May.

With the few seconds I have left, I would like to put in another plug for the Redcliffe Dolphins NRL bid. There is a home game this weekend against the PNG Hunters. I suggest all members come along and hear the roar at Dolphin Stadium. You will really enjoy yourself.

Olympic and Paralympic Games, Kitesurfing

 **Mr BENNETT** (Burnett—LNP) (6.09 pm): Madam Deputy Speaker, I hope you have heard the rumblings coming out of the Burnett. We have some exciting news: the Burnett has put in our bid to host the kitesurfing events at Elliott Heads for the 2032 Olympics. I am getting in early and giving all members notice that Olympic kitesurfing is coming to Elliott Heads.

I can tell you now that the world will quite literally be 'blown away' when they see the Burnett's pristine kitesurfing location. Today I would love to share with the House our plan to host the Olympic kitesurfing fraternity from across the globe, and I hope by the time I am finished members will be just as excited as many people in my electorate are.

Elliott Heads has some of the best conditions, the best terrain and the best location for the sport, and it is time we shared it with the rest of the world. Over recent months, I joined forces with Wind Slasher legend Peter Higgins to 'power up' our bid. A big thanks goes to Mr Higgins and his team at Driftwood cafe for their support in making this dream a reality.

So why Elliott Heads? In terms of coastal topography, you could not pick a more perfect spot to host a kitesurfing event. We have the rare good fortune of both ocean and river conditions all in the one place. There is a huge amount of kitesurfing real estate already there, plenty of spectator positions and ideal weather patterns. Do not just take my word for it. Our annual Wind Slasher event attracts competitors from all over the country and globe. They all say the same thing: Elliott Heads is simply the best place when it comes to kitesurfing.


Bringing an Olympic sport to our region, as we know, would be a tremendous boost for the Wide Bay economically, socially and culturally, so today I am asking for the support of the House. Our region is already well established in regard to infrastructure. When it comes to tourism, the Burnett region and its operators are truly experts in their field.

Tourism is an important part of our economy and, despite the trials faced due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we were still proud to welcome hundreds of thousands of visitors to the region in 2019 and 2020. Tourism Research Australia has reported well over two million visitor nights in the Bundaberg Regional Council area alone. The Bundaberg region is secure in its tourism, hospitality, industrial and cultural sectors and, in my opinion, would successfully host a wonderful Olympic event to meet international standards.

We have written to the Minister for Sport, the Queensland Olympic Council and the Bundaberg Regional Council. Tonight I am giving notice to each and every member of parliament so they can spread the word about bringing the Olympic sport of kitesurfing to Elliott Heads. In the words of Mr Higgins, 'We are truly blessed by having one of Australia's premier locations for kiting with Elliott Heads fast becoming a bucket list location for kites around the globe.' So let's share our piece of paradise.

Kitesurfing will be an Olympic demonstration sport in Tokyo next month—we hope—and it will be an Olympic sport in Paris in 2024. Only eight short years after that, the Olympics, which we hope will come to Queensland, will allow a real and tangible opportunity to have kitesurfing right here in Queensland, in the Burnett electorate. It is the best location, with the best people, providing the best opportunity for Queensland to shine in the 2032 Olympics.

Thompson, Mrs FA

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (6.12 pm): As parliamentarians, we meet many great Queenslanders each and every day. I would like to take this opportunity to talk about one great Queenslander I met recently. On my visit to Barcardine Hospital the other week the wonderful hospital staff introduced me to a patient they were caring for—Frances Amelia Thompson, affectionately known as 'Toddy' to her friends and family.

After a bit of chitchat with Toddy, she asked me from the depths of her very snugly warm bed, 'Are you the Prime Minister?' to which I explained, 'No, I am the health minister.' Her response was, 'Well thank you very much for coming to see me, love.' She was such a darling. She then asked me had I been introduced to her daughter Sharon, who has worked as a laundress for the last 41 years at Barcardine Hospital, and her granddaughter Katie, who works at the hospital as a healthcare worker and in admin while she completes her registered nursing training in October this year.

It was suggested that the place to catch up with both of them would be at the 'Lang Park' of Barcardine, the local showgrounds, where Toddy's favourite football team in Australia the mighty Barcardine Sand Goannas—hopefully soon to be premiers—were playing that night. It was there that I

had the pleasure of meeting Sharon and Katie, carrying armfuls of burgers. I explained to them that I had met Toddy that day and that she was an absolute delight and how blessed they were, as I was to have met her.


A lot has changed in Toddy's lifetime. She has seen electric stoves come in, bitumen roads and TVs. She has always been a fierce advocate for her family of seven children, her husband, Bernie, and her community of not only Barcaldine but also more broadly regional Queensland.

Toddy was born in Barcaldine on 7 October 1922. It was with great sadness that this week I learnt that Toddy passed away on Wednesday, 19 May at 12.10 pm surrounded by her two daughters and her daughter-in-law—just as she had lived, with her nearest and dearest close by. She was 98.

When I met Toddy she was receiving the most wonderful palliative care from the staff at Barcaldine Hospital who had gone above and beyond to make Toddy's last weeks as special as possible. They set up a special room and surrounded Toddy with her favourite things and plants. They visited her throughout the day and ensured that Toddy was very well looked after.

I want to pay tribute to the staff at the Barcaldine Hospital for their compassion and commitment and, on behalf of the Palaszczuk government, thank them for their amazing work. It was truly a privilege to have been able to spend some time with Toddy, to hear her story, to embrace her and to meet her family. It is a moment that I will never forget. Vale Frances Amelia Thompson. Goodbye, Toddy.

Mount Morgan, Fireclay Caverns

 **Mr ANDREW** (Mirani—PHON) (6.15 pm): I rise tonight to talk about some of the jobs lost in my local area, especially at the Fireclay Caverns at Mount Morgan. Over the last seven to 10 years, Mount Morgan has lost between 8,000 and 10,000 tourists every year going through that area. It is such a special and momentous dinosaur cave. The tourism opportunity at Fireclay Caverns at Mount Morgan has gone begging because we cannot access them.


I wrote to the minister this week asking if this could be changed and a determination made so we can get some tourism back to this area. The amazing place of Mount Morgan, which got Queensland and Australia out of debt twice, should be recognised for its contribution and given some consideration as far as tourism is concerned. We need to ensure that, post COVID, we engage in these processes to give these small country towns, rural towns, the biggest benefit we can.

The Fireclay Caverns, with the dinosaur footprints that exist there, need to be reopened. It needs to be looked at by both state and local governments to ensure that the people of Queensland and, indeed, the people of Australia are allowed to go to these areas to have a look.

I also want to talk about the areas in Shoalwater Bay that were brought up by the federal government recently. Looking ahead to when some of the leases close or are shut down in 2025, there will be over 100,000 head of cattle per year that should be taken out of that area. There is a coalmine proposed. There are 167 permanent jobs in that area that will displace what has been taken out by the federal government. The Livingstone Shire Council has lost 10 per cent of its rate revenue because of those buybacks. We need to ensure that those jobs continue to support people in the central area of my electorate as well.

I just wanted to mention that tomorrow is a significant day for my wife, who is sitting in my office listening to this right now. Her grandmother—Dagmar Rehtla—turned 100 this week. She is an absolutely amazing woman. Her husband, Carl, from the mid-sixties through to the mid-eighties was a foreman and one of the cabinet-makers who looked after the premier's office and also the ministerial offices. They came here in the displaced persons scheme just after World War I. That scheme was enacted by Mr Calwell, one of the federal Labor members at that time. It is such a great time for our family. We will all be together tomorrow. I just wanted to mention that. Thank you.

Premier's Export Awards; Northside Indoor Sports Centre

 **Mr MELLISH** (Aspley—ALP) (6.18 pm): Yesterday I had the opportunity to help launch the 2021 Premier's Export Awards. Along with the Premier and the Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries I was delighted to meet with some of Queensland's contenders this year. There were a range of businesses attending and offering a taste of their fantastic products, including: Nutrafruit from Yeerongpilly, which exports probiotic products from Queensland's own Queen Garnett super plum; 4 Hearts Brewing from Ipswich; and Gold Coast Sobah, an exporter of non-alcoholic beers which we were able to taste.

Like the Premier, I continue to be impressed by the resilience of our exporters during the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite setbacks due to the global pandemic, Queensland continues to achieve, with one in five Queensland jobs in the export industry. They are central to our economic recovery. These businesses are critical to our economy, including to our regions and of course our overall economic recovery. Entries will open for the 31st year of the awards in coming weeks, with winners announced in October. Winners will then be in the running to become the national export champion. I look forward to seeing the results of the awards in October and hearing more about the success of our amazing exporters.

It was fantastic to join many of my parliamentary colleagues on Monday night for the inaugural parliamentary Friends of Basketball North v. South match. It was even better that the game was at the Northside Indoor Sports Centre, which only opened in October last year right in the heart of Zillmere. It was hosted by the mighty Northside Wizards. It was even better that the south Queensland team won. The north got off to have a great start with some perimeter sharpshooting from the Speaker and the member for Cairns, but we ground them down through a strong fast-break game through our 'super sub' Ash. Our other 'super sub' Michael hitting threes from the Wizards' logo did not hurt at all. The members for Sandgate, Stafford, Macalister, Oodgeroo and myself, with the help of our professional subs, ran away with it in the end. I think the final score was 64 to 51. We were all winners in the end.

Here is the shield. It is fantastic. We had it engraved already. I would love to table it, but I do not want the Speaker getting his hands on it in that way. He has to win it off us the fair way next year. It was a great opportunity to get out there and experience a sport that is very multicultural. Everyone can play. It is very welcoming. It is a growing sport. We are helping it on the north side through our new Northside Indoor Sports Centre. There are plenty more facilities around the state that will be coming online in the coming years, I am sure. It was a fantastic opportunity to showcase to other members of the parliament what a great facility does for a local community.

Theodore Electorate, Housing



Mr BOOTHMAN (Theodore—LNP) (6.21 pm): I rise today to speak on a matter that should never have happened, a matter that is one of the biggest fears of any home owner—your dream home collapsing around you. This is the reality for a group of home owners on the northern Gold Coast. I table some images of the damage.

Tabled paper: Bundle of photographs depicting building works [\[733\]](#).

In the images you can see the extensive damage to these houses. They are near-new houses. How can this happen in our modern society? How can something go so terribly wrong? That is the question these residents want answers to. They feel they have been left in limbo. Groundwater seeping out of a slope on a hill should raise red flags. The geotechnical report labelled the area in question hummocky ground, which is another cause for concern. I table the geotechnical report, which states—

It should be noted that during the original walkover survey of stage 13a instability was evident at several locations in the form of hummocky ground surface as well as active slips in localised areas associated with ground water seepage.

...

Lot 585, 586 and 622 have been assessed as having a slope instability Hazard Risk Rating of Very High' they are located within a slip area with ground water seepage evident.


Tabled paper: Letter, dated 3 December 2014, from Mortons Urban Solutions, Mr John Harrison, to Planning Assessment, Gold Coast City Council, regarding response to information request for the OPW (civil works) application over Lot 523 SP266201 (CTS) for 'Riverstone Crossing' (Stage 13A), Upper Coomera [\[734\]](#).

The report goes on to make recommendations that residents feel were never sufficiently carried out. We should not be allowing residential estates to be built on hummocky ground, land with active slips and areas of groundwater seepage. We should not be placing family homes on land that has a high chance of slipping; therefore, these affected residents are asking for the laws to be changed to reduce the likelihood of this ever happening again.

Let's talk about these individuals. These are good, hardworking families, and their lives and rights should mean something. George is 58, and he and his wife moved into the house six months ago. His wife has lost so much confidence in the house that she now spends most of her time with family in Adelaide as she is so distressed. Paula, who is a carer for her husband, suffered a serious head injury. She is suffering immense stress and having panic attacks. She needs specialised help to care for her husband. Tony and his wife are semi-retired. They moved into the area in 2018. Their future is uncertain. They ask, 'What do we do now? Where do we live?'

These are only a few of the residents who have been affected by this extensive landslip. This parliament has a moral obligation to do everything in our power to reduce the likelihood of this ever happening again. They also ask Stockland to please do the right thing.

Pine Rivers Electorate

 **Ms BOYD** (Pine Rivers—ALP) (6.24 pm): Today it was my real honour to host the school leaders from Strathpine State School here in the people's house. Student leaders Charlotte Swales, Raidyn Samuel, Riley Lane and Natalie Tonkin were joined by their teacher, Paul Owen. I think that Charlotte was most delighted when she got the only double chocolate muffin on the tray at lunchtime. The highlight for Riley was that people now had to listen to her. It was really lovely to spend time over lunch getting to know them and giving them a bit of a tour around the House. They have such strong convictions and such wonderful leadership skills. Our future is certainly in very bright hands.

Last Friday I joined with the Minister for Education and member for McConnel Grace Grace at Bray Park State High School. Over lunch we joined with P&C Queensland to celebrate P&C volunteers during National Volunteer Week. I want to give a special shout-out to the team at Bray Park headed up by principal Peter Turner and school captains Bianca Bill, Sam Cameron, Ben Fischer and Georgia Woodforth. I am really excited that Georgia will be joining me in my office for some work experience very shortly. It was a wonderful event to pay tribute to volunteers right across the state. In particular, I want to mention Lesley from the P&C at Caloundra State School, who has been active in that P&C for over 40 years. It was sensational.

I want to give a shout-out to the hospitality students who catered and served us throughout the day, the Indigenous dancers and the vocal and jazz ensembles. It was also a great opportunity for the minister to see the investment that the Palaszczuk government is making in the school and the school campus as their numbers continue to balloon. We checked out the new innovation centre which provides for STEM facilities as well as classrooms. It was a wonderful highlight and one that I wanted to share with the House.

Showtime is coming to Pine Rivers. I am in a unique urban electorate—I have three shows that are solely in the Pine Rivers electorate. The Dayboro show will be 3-4 July. It has been going strong for 65 years, and I will be sponsoring the wood chopping and entertainment. Samford show is 10-11 July. It is over 50 years old. They are aiming to go plastic free. There I will be sponsoring the adult arts and craft prizes, pig racing and the equestrian competitions. The Pine Rivers show is a three-day show leading right into the Ekka, so it will be over 30 and 31 July and 1 August. The countdown is on! It is 63 days until the Pine Rivers show is on our doorstep. I am a gold sponsor there for the wood chopping and pig racing. I will use my final seconds to also lend my cry to the chorus of 'Go the Redcliffe Dolphins for the next NRL licence!'

The House adjourned at 6.27 pm.

ATTENDANCE

Andrew, Bailey, Bates, Bennett, Berkman, Bleijie, Bolton, Boothman, Boyce, Boyd, 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, Hunt, Janetzki, Katter, Kelly, King A, King S, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Lauga, Leahy, Linard, Lui, MacMahon, Madden, Mander, McCallum, McDonald, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Mickelberg, Miles, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Mullen, Nicholls, O'Connor, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pease, Perrett, Pitt, Powell, Power, Pugh, Purdie, Richards, Robinson, Rowan, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Simpson, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Weir, Whiting