



# RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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

Email: [hansard@parliament.qld.gov.au](mailto:hansard@parliament.qld.gov.au)

Phone (07) 3553 6344

## FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

### Wednesday, 1 September 2021

Subject	Page
<b>SPEAKER'S RULING</b> .....	2319
Same Question Rule .....	2319
<b>SPEAKER'S STATEMENTS</b> .....	2319
Parliamentary Education Material .....	2319
School Group Tours .....	2320
<b>PETITIONS</b> .....	2320
<b>TABLED PAPERS</b> .....	2321
<b>MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS</b> .....	2322
Coronavirus, Update .....	2322
Satellite Hospitals .....	2322
Cross River Rail .....	2323
Single-Use Plastics .....	2324
Rio Tinto, Renewable Energy .....	2324
Coronavirus, Economy .....	2325
Kindy Uplift Pilot Program .....	2325
Coronavirus, Vaccination .....	2326
Satellite Hospitals .....	2326
Coronavirus, Small Business .....	2326
Single-Use Plastics .....	2327
Masters, Senior Constable D .....	2328
Townsville Stronger Communities Action Group .....	2328
Indigenous Languages .....	2328
<b>NOTICE OF MOTION</b> .....	2329
Palaszczuk Labor Government, Ipsos Polling Data; Order to Table Documents .....	2329
<b>QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE</b> .....	2329
Coronavirus, Queensland Border Restrictions .....	2329

# Table of Contents – Wednesday, 1 September 2021

Coronavirus, Queensland Border Restrictions .....	2330
Natural Disasters, Preparedness .....	2330
Coronavirus, Queensland Border Restrictions .....	2331
Bruce Highway .....	2331
Coronavirus, Queensland Border Restrictions .....	2332
Social Infrastructure .....	2333
Coronavirus, Queensland Border Restrictions .....	2333
Coronavirus, Business and Industry Groups .....	2334
Toowoomba, Quarantine Facility .....	2335
Electrical Safety .....	2335
<b>PRIVILEGE .....</b>	<b>2336</b>
Alleged Deliberate Misleading of the House .....	2336
<b>QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE .....</b>	<b>2336</b>
Electrical Safety .....	2336
Caboolture Hospital, Patient Safety .....	2336
First Nations People, Coronavirus Vaccination .....	2337
Coronavirus, Vaccines .....	2338
Roads and Transport Infrastructure .....	2338
Coronavirus, Queensland Border Restrictions .....	2339
Electric Vehicles, Government Fleet .....	2340
Coronavirus, Vaccination .....	2340
Science .....	2341
<b>SUPERANNUATION (STATE PUBLIC SECTOR) (SCHEME ADMINISTRATION) AMENDMENT BILL .....</b>	<b>2341</b>
Message from Deputy Governor .....	2341
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Message, dated 1 September 2021, from His Excellency the Deputy Governor recommending the Superannuation (State Public Sector) (Scheme Administration) Amendment Bill 2021 .....	2341
Introduction .....	2342
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Superannuation (State Public Sector) (Scheme Administration) Amendment Bill 2021 .....	2342
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Superannuation (State Public Sector) (Scheme Administration) Amendment Bill 2021, explanatory notes .....	2342
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Superannuation (State Public Sector) (Scheme Administration) Amendment Bill 2021, statement of compatibility with human rights .....	2342
First Reading .....	2343
Referral to Economics and Governance Committee .....	2343
<b>QUEENSLAND UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY AMENDMENT BILL .....</b>	<b>2343</b>
Introduction .....	2343
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Queensland University of Technology Amendment Bill 2021 .....	2343
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Queensland University of Technology Amendment Bill 2021, explanatory notes .....	2343
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Queensland University of Technology Amendment Bill 2021, statement of compatibility with human rights .....	2343
First Reading .....	2344
Referral to Education, Employment and Training Committee .....	2344
<b>APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL .....</b>	<b>2345</b>
Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate) .....	2345
Appropriation Bill .....	2345
Transport and Resources Committee, Report .....	2345
Legal Affairs and Safety Committee, Report .....	2349
<b>WORKING WITH CHILDREN (INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES) AMENDMENT BILL .....</b>	<b>2356</b>
Introduction .....	2356
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Working with Children (Indigenous Communities) Amendment Bill 2021 .....	2356
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Working with Children (Indigenous Communities) Amendment Bill 2021, explanatory notes .....	2356
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Working with Children (Indigenous Communities) Amendment Bill 2021, statement of compatibility with human rights .....	2356
First Reading .....	2360
Referral to Legal Affairs and Safety Committee .....	2361
<b>APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL .....</b>	<b>2361</b>
Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate) .....	2361
Appropriation Bill .....	2361
Legal Affairs and Safety Committee, Report .....	2361
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Email, dated 23 March 2021, from the Queensland Building and Construction Commission titled 'Request for invoices—Norton Rose Fulbright' .....	2363
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Letter, dated 16 July 2021, from the member for Maroochydore, Ms Fiona Simpson MP, to the Chairman, Crime and Corruption Commission, Mr Alan MacSporran QC, and letter, dated 10 August 2021, from the Executive Director, Integrity Services, Crime and Corruption Commission, Ms Elizabeth Foulger, to the member for Maroochydore, Ms Fiona Simpson MP, regarding non-disclosure of information by the Queensland Building and Construction Commission .....	2363
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Report by Genavieve Beaumont, titled 'Report on the context of parliamentary committee reforms in New Zealand, Scotland and Quebec and research findings' .....	2364
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Document, dated 5 May 2020, titled 'Research Findings: Table 1: Gaps, Opportunities and Recommendations' regarding the committee system .....	2364

# Table of Contents – Wednesday, 1 September 2021

<i>Tabled paper:</i> Document, undated, titled 'Panel notes—Current issues with the parliamentary committee system' .....	2364
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Document by the member for Noosa, Ms Sandy Bolton MP, regarding recommendations relating to the estimates hearing process .....	2364
<b>Community Support and Services Committee, Report.....</b>	<b>2365</b>
Clauses 1 to 4, as read, agreed to. ....	2376
Schedules 1 and 2, as read, agreed to. ....	2376
<b>Third Reading (Cognate Debate).....</b>	<b>2376</b>
<b>Long Title (Cognate Debate).....</b>	<b>2376</b>
<b>MOTION .....</b>	<b>2376</b>
<b>Suspension of Standing Order.....</b>	<b>2376</b>
<b>PUBLIC HEALTH AND OTHER LEGISLATION (FURTHER EXTENSION OF EXPIRING PROVISIONS) AMENDMENT</b>	
<b>BILL .....</b>	<b>2376</b>
<b>Second Reading .....</b>	<b>2376</b>
<b>MOTION .....</b>	<b>2396</b>
<b>Palaszczyk Labor Government, Ipsos Polling Data; Order to Table Documents.....</b>	<b>2396</b>
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Article from the <i>Guardian</i> , dated 26 October 2020, titled '\$1.1m of public money used to fund Liberal-linked market research sent to PM'S office' .....	2403
<b>PRIVILEGE .....</b>	<b>2407</b>
<b>Correction to <i>Record of Proceedings</i>, Apology .....</b>	<b>2407</b>
<b>MOTION .....</b>	<b>2407</b>
<b>Palaszczyk Labor Government, Ipsos Polling Data; Order to Table Documents.....</b>	<b>2407</b>
Division: Question put—That the motion be agreed to. ....	2407
Resolved in the negative. ....	2407
<b>PUBLIC HEALTH AND OTHER LEGISLATION (FURTHER EXTENSION OF EXPIRING PROVISIONS) AMENDMENT</b>	
<b>BILL .....</b>	<b>2408</b>
<b>Second Reading .....</b>	<b>2408</b>
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Document, undated, titled 'Mungindi, QLD 2406' .....	2410
<b>ADJOURNMENT .....</b>	<b>2418</b>
<b>Slater Clifton-Walker .....</b>	<b>2418</b>
<b>Slater Clifton-Walker; Wynnum, Local Newspaper .....</b>	<b>2418</b>
<b>Coronavirus, Queensland Border Restrictions .....</b>	<b>2419</b>
<b>Balmoral State High School .....</b>	<b>2419</b>
<b>Scenic Rim, Bushfires .....</b>	<b>2420</b>
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Bundle of articles from the Fassifern Guardian & Tribune online relating to the bushfire in the Gold Coast hinterland region in 2019.....	2420
<b>Afghanistan, Australian Defence Force Personnel .....</b>	<b>2421</b>
<b>Sexual Health Education.....</b>	<b>2421</b>
<b>Springwood Electorate, Environmental Advocacy .....</b>	<b>2422</b>
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Poem by Jay Sebasio, titled 'Polution!? It has to stop!' .....	2422
<b>Gympie, Health Services.....</b>	<b>2422</b>
<b>Sweet Dreams and Good Night Wishes, Care Bag Appeal .....</b>	<b>2423</b>
<b>ATTENDANCE .....</b>	<b>2424</b>



## WEDNESDAY, 1 SEPTEMBER 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 RULING

#### Same Question Rule



**Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I have considered the Public Health and Other Legislation (Further Extension of Expiring Provisions) Amendment Bill 2021 and the application of the same question rule. On the whole, most of the clauses in the Public Health and Other Legislation (Further Extension of Expiring Provisions) Amendment Bill are amendments to, or renewals of, sunset provisions. As such, and in accordance with my earlier ruling on 20 April 2021, these clauses do not enliven the same question rule. However, there are provisions in the bill which propose to amend the commencement clauses of two pieces of legislation which have previously been agreed to by the House in this session. This is contrary to standing order 87 and therefore enlivens the same question rule. Accordingly, the same question rule is enlivened by clauses 24, 50, 51, 53 and 54 of the bill contrary to standing order 87. I seek leave to incorporate my full ruling circulated in my name. Is leave granted?

Leave granted.

#### SPEAKER'S RULING—APPLICATION OF SAME QUESTION RULE TO PUBLIC HEALTH AND OTHER LEGISLATION (FURTHER EXTENSION OF EXPIRING PROVISIONS) AMENDMENT BILL

I have considered the Public Health and Other Legislation (Further Extension of Expiring Provisions) Amendment Bill 2021 and the application of the same question rule.

Standing Order 87 provides the general rule of Westminster parliamentary practice that, once the House has resolved a matter in the affirmative or negative, the same question shall not again be proposed in the same session. Similarly, Standing Order 150 provides for the application of the same question rule in relation to amendments, new clauses or schedules of a bill. As previous Speakers have noted, the matters do not have to be identical but merely the same in substance as the previous matter. In other words, it is a question of substance, not form (Speaker Reynolds, Record of Proceedings, 9 September 2008, p. 2559).

On the whole, most of the clauses in the Public Health and Other Legislation (Further Extension of Expiring Provisions) Amendment Bill are amendments to, or renewals of, sunset provisions.

As I concluded in a ruling on 20 April this year, the same question rule is not enlivened by an amendment to a sunset provision or a new sunset provision where the question is whether to extend the sunset provision because the question posed is essentially a different expiry date to that originally fixed. It is substantially a new or different question (Speaker Pitt, Record of Proceedings, 20 April 2021, p. 898). Accordingly, the same question rule is not enlivened with respect to these provisions.

The provisions in the Bill which seek to amend the Public Health and Other Legislation (Extension of Expiring Provisions) Amendment Act 2021 and the Public Health and Other Legislation (Public Health Emergency) Amendment Act 2020, however, propose to amend the commencement clauses of both these Acts to a later date. This appears to be an example of particular clauses of a government bill seeking to amend clauses of a government bill passed earlier in the session which would enliven the same question rule, contrary to Standing Order 87.

Accordingly I rule that the same question rule is enlivened by clauses 24, 50, 51, 53 and 54 of the bill contrary to Standing Order 87.

### SPEAKER'S STATEMENTS

#### Parliamentary Education Material




**Mr SPEAKER:** I wish to advise a suite of new education materials has been added to the parliament's website. The materials, designed by the Parliamentary Education Team, in consultation with our Queensland Parliament Teacher Advisory Group, are aligned with the Australian curriculum.

The suite consists of a series of five short videos which explain how Queensland parliament works. Each video has associated static and interactive teacher and student resources. The materials, including role plays and case studies, all contain syllabus links to make it easy for Queensland teachers to fit these contemporary and accurate resources into their lesson planning. This is just the start, with more materials in the pipeline to come.

In addition, the communications team has designed a new gallery of Parliament House images and information about the amazing heritage building that we work in. It is often described as a working museum. The new site invites members of the public to take a look inside Parliament House and provides insight into the unique rooms, artefacts and fixtures such as the coat of arms, chandeliers and furniture. This new image gallery is an opportunity for everyone to learn more about Parliament House and its history, no matter where they live in Queensland. Both the education materials and 'Take a look inside Parliament House' can be found under the new visit and learn section of the parliament's website.

### School Group Tours

 **Mr SPEAKER:** I wish to advise that we will be visited in the gallery later this morning by students and teachers from Glenview State School in the electorate of Caloundra and Clover Hill State School in the electorate of Mudgeraba.

## PETITIONS

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

### Gold Coast Light Rail, Stage 4

**Mr Hart**, from 5,479 petitioners, requesting the House to ensure a comprehensive evaluation of all route and mode options for Stage 4 of the Gold Coast Light Rail and a pause on all planning, business case and land acquisition actions until the review is completed [\[1280\]](#).

### Public Health and Other Legislation (Further Extension of Expiring Provisions) Amendment Bill

**Mr Andrew**, from 17,872 petitioners requesting the House to oppose the Public Health and Other Legislation (Further Extension of Expiring Provisions) Amendment Bill, to extend Queensland's 'State of Emergency' powers and measures into a third year [\[1281\]](#).

### COVID-19 Business Support Package

**Mr Bleijie**, from 509 petitioners, requesting the House to implement a COVID business support package which would include giving businesses lump sum payments to cover loss of income during lockdowns and restricted trade and event cancellation rebates to cover financial losses if events are cancelled due to a lockdown or restrictions [\[1282\]](#).

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

### Mount Cotton Road-Double Jump Road Intersection

527 petitioners, requesting the House to install traffic signals at the intersection of Mt Cotton Road and Double Jump Road as a matter of urgency [\[1283\]](#).

### D'Aguilar Highway, Overtaking Lanes

280 petitioners, requesting the House to install multiple new overtaking lanes in both directions for the entire length of the D'Aguilar Highway [\[1284\]](#).

### Cyclists

574 petitioners, requesting the House to pass legislation including on the spot fines where cyclists ride on narrow roads and highways without cycle lanes where a purpose built cycle lane exists adjacent [\[1285\]](#).

### Roadworks, Speed Limits

966 petitioners, requesting the House to introduce and pass legislation to require traffic control companies to remove/cover speed restriction signs when no roadworks are actually taking place [\[1286\]](#).

### Lindum Railway Station, Overpass

135 petitioners, requesting the House to announce a start date and a projected completion date for the proposed Lindum Rail Station overpass [\[1287\]](#).

### D'Aguilar Highway, Maintenance

219 petitioners, requesting the House to ensure a rebuild and resurface of the D'Aguilar Highway especially where pot holes continue to occur and where the highway is repeatedly patched [\[1288\]](#).

### **Caloundra, Impact of Vehicles**

190 petitioners, requesting the House to adopt a range of measures to ensure a solution to the traffic volume, speeding, hooning and vehicle noise in Caloundra [\[1289\]](#).

### **Parking, Signage**

99 petitioners, requesting the House to pass new or amend existing legislation to require all local governments comply with Australian Standards for existing and future parking signage [\[1290\]](#).

### **Road Maintenance, Site Clean-up**

142 petitioners, requesting the House to put in place a mandatory requirement for the Department of Transport and Main Roads and their contractors to clean up the site around each pothole at the same time as they are repaired [\[1291\]](#).

### **D'Aguilar Highway, Merging Lanes**

212 petitioners, requesting the House to reduce spending on football games and the Olympic Games and allocate additional funding to the D'Aguilar Highway for merge lanes at the intersections where of King Street and Williams Road joins the D'Aguilar Highway [\[1292\]](#).

### **Hospitals, Car Parking**

464 petitioners, requesting the House to cease the imposition of fees and charges for car parking on hospital patients because it is no less than a tax on the sick [\[1293\]](#).

### **Roads, Signage**

86 petitioners, requesting the House to approve new traffic warning signage such as "Large Multiple Pot Holes Ahead" or "Drive on this Queensland Government Highway at your own risk" [\[1294\]](#).

### **Hospitals, Car Parking and Wait Times**

440 petitioners, requesting the House to waive/cancel hospital patients parking fees and to ensure patient waiting times are much closer to appointment times and not two hours plus [\[1295\]](#).

### **Roads, Signage**

112 petitioners, requesting the House to inspect and rectify all dirty, faded and non-reflective traffic signs on state controlled road and highways [\[1296\]](#).

### **Voluntary Assisted Dying, Referendum**

729 petitioners, requesting the House to initiate a referendum on voluntary assisted dying the next time all Queenslanders are required to vote [\[1297\]](#).

### **Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill**

419 petitioners requesting the House to take special cognisance of the views of electors within their respective divisions on all petitions dealing with the Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill 2021 [\[1298\]](#).

### **Petitions**

202 petitioners, requesting the House to modify the e-petition system to gather analysis of petitioners by electorates and to make this data available to interested members of the public [\[1299\]](#).

Petitions received.

## **TABLED PAPERS**

### **TABLING OF DOCUMENTS (SO 32)**

#### **SPEAKER'S PAPER**

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

Speaker of the Legislative Assembly (Hon. Pitt)—

[1300](#) Oath of Allegiance and of Office: Member for Stretton (Mr Martin)

#### **MEMBER'S PAPER**


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

Member for Burdekin (Mr Last)—

[1301](#) Nonconforming petition regarding saving Alligator Creek swimming hole camp ground

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

### Coronavirus, Update

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.38 am): I can record that we have zero community cases today in Queensland and one case was identified in hotel quarantine, which is good news. We have 23 active cases. We have done 11,315 tests in the past 24 hours, a very clear sign that Queenslanders are still going and getting tested, which is exactly what we want to see. Queensland Health administered 19,876 vaccines yesterday. That is very well done.

Since June this year, there have been 16 separate COVID clusters in Queensland; that is, 16 potential outbreaks that we have faced and contained. Of course, those clusters include the delta strain which is currently causing so much concern in New South Wales, Victoria and New Zealand. Queensland's achievements in containing the spread of the pandemic have not happened by accident and it has not been easy. It has meant taking difficult decisions not everyone agrees with, but I hope everyone can agree with our fundamental goal that it is about saving lives. In the entire pandemic in Queensland we have lost seven lives. Our state is not in lockdown. Five million Queenslanders can go to work and school with very minimal restrictions.

To ease the impact of some of our measures, yesterday I announced ways that boarding school children from interstate hotspots can be reunited with their families. Today I announce that, as of Saturday, Queensland residents can begin returning from interstate hotspots into hotel quarantine in Queensland. The pause on the intake has only just begun. Numbers in our quarantine hotels have only slightly eased—

**Mr Krause** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK**:—so we can offer places to 50 as a start, but—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER**: Members to my left, the Premier has the call.


**Ms PALASZCZUK**: I will say that again, Mr Speaker. Numbers in our quarantine hotels have only slightly eased so we can offer places to 50 families as a start, but we will add more places as rooms become available. No-one pretends that we will not face further outbreaks during this pandemic. The answer is to get vaccinated, and this is Queensland's unique time to use these days to get vaccinated before we have another outbreak, but we are reliant on the supply coming from the federal government. That is the fact. Give us the supply; we will put the vaccines out.

**Mr Mickelberg** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER**: Member for Buderim!

**Ms PALASZCZUK**: As more supplies of the vaccine arrive, we will find ways to deliver them in more hubs. I urge everyone to take the opportunity to get these vaccines, protect each other and protect our hard-won gains against this virus. Finally, I wish to correct the record. Yesterday I said 51.3 per cent of eligible Queenslanders had received their first dose of vaccine. I am advised that the correct figure is 50.56 per cent and 31.7 per cent of Queenslanders have been fully vaccinated.

### Satellite Hospitals

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.42 am): The health and wellbeing of Queenslanders is our priority. At the election we committed \$265 million to deliver seven satellite hospitals throughout Queensland. Today I am proud to announce that we have reached another major milestone in the delivery of this commitment. I can confirm that we have identified and earmarked another four sites for new satellite hospitals at Caboolture, where we have identified a 1.3 hectare parcel of land on Rowe Street; in Pine Rivers, where we have identified a 1.5 hectare parcel of land on Dohles Rocks Road at Kallangur; in Redlands, where we have identified a 1.4 hectare—

**Mrs Frecklington** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER**: The member for Nanango will cease her interjections. The member for Mermaid Beach will—

**Ms PALASZCZUK**: Member for Nanango, you are getting an upgraded hospital thanks to the Palaszczuk Labor government.

**Government members** interjected.



**Mr SPEAKER:** Premier—

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Premier—

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Government delivery—

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order!

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** We know where Queenslanders live.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order, Premier! Premier—

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I am looking forward to going and opening that soon.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Minister, when is that happening?

**Mr SPEAKER:** Premier, it would assist the House if you were able to direct your comments through the chair and not towards other members.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. As I said to the member for Nanango—

**Mrs Frecklington** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:**—it is the Palaszczuk Labor government that is upgrading the Kingaroy Hospital.

**Government members:** Put your mask on!

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

**Government members** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Wear your mask.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr Dick:** Take the health advice.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** There we are—health advice!

**Mr SPEAKER:** Members, need I remind you of the standing orders which allow for the member on their feet to be heard by the parliament and to be understood by Hansard without interjection or interference. We are not getting that this morning.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** In Redlands we have identified a 1.4 hectare property on Meissner Street and on the Gold Coast we have identified a 1.4 hectare parcel of land on Boyd Street at Tugun. This is on top of the two sites that we have already announced at Bribie Island and Ripley. This \$265 million commitment will enable us to deliver care closer to home for thousands of Queenslanders and will create jobs. Our satellite hospital program will create more than 750 jobs during construction, injecting millions into local businesses throughout the state.

### Cross River Rail




**Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.44 am): We are also forging ahead to deliver the largest infrastructure project in Queensland's history in time for the Olympic Games. By the time we host the 2032 Olympics, Cross River Rail will have transformed the way Queenslanders move throughout the south-east. Tunnels will give spectators easy access to our venues, including an upgraded Gabba which will be serviced by a brand new underground train station, and the new Roma Street station will become Brisbane's transport hub for the games, with commuters able to jump on buses to explore other parts of our city.

Following the IOC's decision to award the games to Queensland, I am proud to report that construction on Cross River Rail has continued to ramp up. Last week the second of two tunnel-boring machines broke through at Roma Street, and I know the Minister for Transport was there to witness that firsthand—well done, Minister—and today I can confirm that the twin tunnels at the centre of the project are now more than halfway complete. Some 3.3 kilometres of twin tunnels have already been cleared and the Roma Street cavern is completely excavated. Work is powering along at 14 separate sites throughout South-East Queensland.

We are working hard to fast-track major projects because we know that infrastructure is vital when it comes to creating jobs and rebuilding our economy. Today there are more than 2,900 people working on Cross River Rail and by the end of the year it will reach peak construction with around 3,000 people hard at work. This project will change the way Queenslanders travel throughout the south-east. It will make it quicker and easier to catch a train during peak times. It will ease the pressure on some

of our most congested roads from the Sunshine Coast to the Gold Coast. Thanks to the way Queenslanders have responded to COVID-19, our economy is rebuilding faster and stronger than other states. Projects like this are at the core of our economic recovery plan.

### Single-Use Plastics


 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.46 am): It is the final straw for a number of single-use plastics in Queensland. From today—who wrote that?

**Dr Miles:** I thought it was good.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thought so too. From today the ban covers single-use plastic straws, stirrers, cutlery, plates and bowls as well as single-use takeaway containers and cups made from expanded polystyrene. The ban will stop these items being supplied in Queensland, including items provided free with purchased meals or sold in packets as party supplies. It will help reduce single-use plastic pollution by 20 per cent over the next two years and is part of our war on waste to stop rubbish ending up in our local waterways, our beaches and landfill. Of course, there will be some exemptions to ensure that Queenslanders with disability or healthcare needs can continue to access and use items necessary for them.

Half of all plastics are designed to only be used once. That has sadly led to more than 75 per cent of the waste that is removed from our beaches being made of plastic. Preventing this rubbish from ending up on our beautiful beaches and waterways will protect our beautiful reef, its \$6 billion economy and the jobs that it supports. We have already seen the benefits of the lightweight single-use plastic shopping bag ban, with surveys showing a 70 per cent reduction in all plastic bag litter since the bag ban began in 2018. We have also seen more than four billion containers exchanged through our popular Containers for Change program and we are leading the change in creating a circular economy as part of our record \$1.4 billion investment in the environment and through initiatives like the \$40 million Recycling Modernisation Fund. While we continue to manage the health response and focus on our economic recovery, we are also working hard to protect our environment and the jobs that rely on it.

### Rio Tinto, Renewable Energy

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning) (9.48 am): Last week I was pleased to attend the opening of Rio Tinto's new Brisbane office at the Midtown Centre on Charlotte Street along with the Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen. Two buildings there have been combined and refurbished to create one stunning workplace. Some 11,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions were saved through the use of recycled materials for the build.

It is fitting that this Australian first innovation be situated in Queensland because, like the architects of this building, the Palaszczuk government is delivering sustainability opportunities into the future for our state. We are working with leading global companies like Rio Tinto to create Queensland jobs, protect jobs in the future economy and achieve our goal of net zero emissions by 2050 because we know that pursuing those targets will create huge opportunities with more jobs in more industries right along the renewable energy supply chain.

Hydrogen is key to Queensland's future. Queensland is on its way to becoming a world leader in this new technology, with Gladstone becoming a hydrogen and renewable energy hub right in the middle of our Central Queensland Renewable Energy Zone. Rio Tinto has already announced a feasibility study into using clean hydrogen to replace natural gas in its alumina refining process at Yarwun and last week the energy minister and I helped witness an important new development: Rio Tinto signed a letter of intent to partner with Sumitomo Corporation, focusing on Yarwun as the location for a Gladstone hydrogen plant. This partnership presents an amazing opportunity for Queensland as it provides the potential for large-scale hydrogen production. That would mean making renewable hydrogen here, ensuring Queenslanders get the first benefits from it and then exporting it to the world, creating new income streams.

In Gladstone we have already seen our own Stanwell Corporation and Japan's largest hydrogen supplier, Iwatani Corporation, form a consortium to progress plans for a large-scale renewable hydrogen export facility. This is only the beginning of a wave of international collaborations that will lead to new industries and new jobs underpinned by our supply of renewable energy. The Palaszczuk government is pleased to support partnerships like this. We are determined to work with Queensland employers like Rio Tinto to capture the economic opportunity and highly skilled jobs that will come from the development of hydrogen here in Queensland.

## Coronavirus, Economy



**Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Investment) (9.51 am): As I told the House yesterday, our government will not run up the white flag when it comes to protecting the health of Queenslanders. As the budget makes clear, protecting the health of Queenslanders is not a health strategy, it is the bedrock of our economic strategy. Our economic recovery plan is delivering results for our state. Yesterday the Australian Bureau of Statistics released data on building approvals for the month of July. In every state and territory dwelling approvals went backwards—every state except one: Queensland. In Queensland dwelling approvals rose, up nine per cent for the month and up 37.4 per cent since May 2020. That means more construction jobs for Queenslanders, but also more housing supply, helping to reduce the pressure in our housing market.

Our \$70 million Build-to-Rent program is also underway. Last week I announced the start of the construction of our first Build-to-Rent project developed by Mirvac in Newstead. Thanks to our government, almost 100 of the 395 apartments in this project will be set aside for affordable housing and work will soon get underway on the second Build-to-Rent project on Brunswick Street in the Valley. Between them, these two projects will support 440 construction jobs—more great news for Queensland workers and their families.

More jobs and more homes are just a few of the benefits that we are getting from living in an open economy, living in freedom as we do in Queensland. The only reason we have that freedom is because of our tough border controls that are keeping the virus out. Our government will not subject Queenslanders to an uncontrolled outbreak of the virus and the needless illness and suffering that follows. That is because a health disaster becomes an economic disaster. But not everyone agrees with us. Today we hear the federal Attorney-General, Michaelia Cash, egging on cranks like Clive Palmer to attack our border controls in the High Court. Everybody knows the Morrison government does not believe in border controls. That is why they backed Clive Palmer's challenge the first time—all the way to the High Court—and we can see it happening again.

I say to the Prime Minister, Scott Morrison, Queenslanders are not hiding under the doona, Queenslanders are not living in caves; we are protecting jobs and lives and businesses our way—the Queensland way. Queenslanders are living in freedom and growing our economy, not despite our border controls but precisely because of them. My message to Scott Morrison and the LNP is stop conspiring with Clive Palmer and stop tolerating cranks like George Christensen and Matt Canavan, Queenslanders who would let the virus in and let the virus rip.

The strength of our health response continues to underpin Queensland's economic recovery plan. Our borders are the front line of defence for our health and our jobs. All Queenslanders should back these controls and the health advice that supports them, and that includes the Leader of the Opposition.

## Kindy Uplift Pilot Program




**Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (9.54 am): Can I start by giving a special shout-out to all our wonderful early childhood educators on what is Early Childhood Educators Day. The Palaszczuk government is committed to ensuring all children get a great start in life, no matter their circumstances, and this includes ensuring they have access to a quality kindergarten program in the year before school. We know the benefits that flow from kindergarten and early education. However, we also know not all kindy kids arrive at the kindy gate with the same capability levels. We want to ensure that all kids have the support they need to reach their full potential so I am delighted today to announce the Palaszczuk government's \$40 million Kindy Uplift Pilot Program.

Kindy Uplift will provide extra support for vulnerable and disadvantaged children at more than 400 kindies across the state. The pilot will commence next year and will deliver a targeted, needs based program for kindy kids and build the capacity of providers to support them. I invite all members to join me at today's official launch at midday on the Green Deck on level 7 of the Parliamentary Annexe. I look forward to meeting with the kids, parents and staff from Kambu Amaroo Kindergarten in Silkstone in the electorate of Ipswich who will be attending the launch.


Kindy Uplift aims to help around 13,500 Queensland children each year with a range of kindy programs focusing on five targeted improvement areas: oral and language communication, processing information and responding, physicality, social and emotional capability and access and inclusion. For example, funding could be used to introduce a wellbeing support program for kids who are doing it tough. Kindy Uplift is an exciting program, trialling a model of additional resources and early supports

for kids who need it most. Kindy Uplift is part of the Palaszczuk government's commitment to the wellbeing of our children, with targeted early support for kids and communities. Our Queensland kindy kids deserve no less.

### Coronavirus, Vaccination

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (9.56 am): I wish to correct the record in relation to the vaccination statistics. The information we have received this morning has updated those statistics. The Premier has already identified what the updated figures for our vaccination rates are. The good news is that it is still over 50 per cent. We are very proud of the work that all of our health workers have done. We want to see that vaccination rate get much higher. We call on every member of parliament to encourage their communities to come out and get vaccinated, to stop the argument around the vaccine and actually encourage people to get vaccinated.

### Satellite Hospitals

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (9.57 am): The Palaszczuk government is proud of its track record of delivering innovative and quality health care for all Queenslanders. We invest in infrastructure, create local jobs, ensure that our health system remains strong and we strengthen our economy. This work is vital to our COVID-19 economic recovery plan. This pandemic has reminded all of us just how important our investment and support for quality frontline health care is for Queensland. Our Satellite Hospitals Program is another step closer to completion. Today we are pleased to announce that we have locked in preferred sites for our satellite hospitals in Tugun, Redlands, Caboolture and Pine Rivers. Parcels of land have been chosen in Rowe Street, Caboolture, Dohles Rocks Road, Kallangur, Meissner Street, Redlands and Boyd Street, Tugun.


**Ms Bates** interjected.

**Mrs D'ATH:** She has started already! I thank the local members on this side of the House for their strong advocacy and excitement to deliver these satellite hospitals for their local communities. All up we will build seven satellite hospitals as part of our \$265 million commitment to Queenslanders in Redlands, Bribie Island, Ripley, Caboolture, Tugun, Brisbane South and Pine Rivers. Now that we have selected our preferred sites we can move forward and be one step closer to completion.

Our Satellite Hospitals Program is one that is groundbreaking. It is an Australian first to bring new and improved health services to the heart of growing communities while taking pressure off our busy emergency departments. Our investment means that patients will have access to services closer to home and in a more convenient setting, and we will back local jobs by supporting more than 768 construction jobs across the entire program, not to mention the ongoing health jobs created.

All of the areas where we are building satellite hospitals have experienced significant growth in recent years. That is why the Palaszczuk government is stepping up to meet the demand for health services across the south-east corner. A range of services are being considered for the satellite hospitals, including community health services, ambulatory and low acuity day therapy services such as renal dialysis and chemotherapy, complex wound management, urgent care for minor injury and illness, and outpatient activities. The Palaszczuk government is always investing in additional health infrastructure to ensure that Queenslanders continue to get the best possible care. It is only the Palaszczuk government that is getting on with the job, delivering satellite hospitals for Queenslanders.

### Coronavirus, Small Business

 **Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development) (10.00 am): We know that COVID-19 is incredibly tough for small businesses and that is why we have put backing small business at the heart of our \$14.2 billion COVID-19 economic recovery plan. The best thing we can do for small business is to make sure our economy is growing and do everything we can to make sure any lockdowns are short and sharp so we can keep businesses open and trading.


However, we are supporting businesses in other ways too, most recently through the announcement by the Treasurer of a \$600 million package of grants jointly funded with the federal government, which includes grants of up to \$30,000 for those impacted by lockdowns. There is also a \$50 million package for tourism and hospitality businesses and a range of tailored one-on-one supports. There is also the \$20 million Queensland COVID-19 cleaning rebate, which offers a rebate of up to \$10,000 to businesses and community organisations named as exposure sites that do the right thing once named, closing and cleaning to keep others safe. That can be expensive and that is hard to take.

Recently I was with the member for Cooper in her electorate, and what a great advocate she is for small business. We visited the Pet Cafe, a fantastic small family business. They had already spent \$4,000 on a deep clean and were over the moon when I told them that they could be reimbursed for up to 80 per cent of those costs. Before I go on, I must say how excited my cats were about the dried sardine lollypops I brought home from the Pet Cafe. If you are in the market for pet treats, that is a great place to go. I have written to eligible businesses to make sure they are aware of the cleaning rebate. I ask all members in the House to spread the word as well.

I also flag that this week we have established our community hub for small businesses in the Queensland coastal border communities. At the end of last week I was in Coolangatta to talk to those businesses. It was clear that many were not aware of the considerable support already available to them. Along with the door-to-door work our fantastic departmental team is currently undertaking, the hub will be a source of information and support. I thank the Minister for Communities for the great partnership between our two departments in getting that quickly established.

I want to thank our small businesses in Queensland for the way they work so hard to do the right thing and for the contribution they make to their communities and to the Queensland economy. I want them to know that the Palaszczuk government backs them.

### Single-Use Plastics

 **Hon. MAJ SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Youth Affairs) (10.02 am): The Sunshine State is giving a swathe of single-use plastics the flick with our latest ban taking effect today. As the Premier said, half of all plastics are designed to be used only once. Less than one-fifth of all plastic is recycled globally, which has contributed to more than 75 per cent of the waste collected from our beaches being made of plastic.

Today's ban is part of our war on waste to stop rubbish from ending up in local waterways, beaches and landfill. It adds to our record \$1.4 billion investment to protect the environment, support business and create jobs as part of our COVID-19 economic recovery plan. Preventing that rubbish from ending up on our beaches and in our waterways will protect animals such as turtles, which alone have a 20 per cent chance of dying if they ingest just one piece of plastic. It will help protect our beautiful reef and the \$6 billion economy and 60,000 jobs it supports. We know that eight million tonnes of plastic leaks into the ocean around the world each year, which is 170 wheelie bins of plastics every minute.

Today, Queensland is stepping up to show the world that we are doing our bit. Today we are banning products such as single-use plastic straws and expanded polystyrene takeaway containers and cups. We are also banning cutlery, bowls, plates and a range of other products.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I will allow it. They will not be around for much longer.

**Ms SCANLON:** The ban will stop those items being supplied in Queensland and it includes items provided free with purchased meals or sold in packets such as party supplies. It will help reduce plastic pollution by 20 per cent over the next two years. We have already seen the benefits of the lightweight single-use plastic shopping bag ban, as the Premier said, with a 70 per cent reduction in all plastic bag litter since the bag ban began in 2018.

Queensland businesses and community groups are on board with the ban too. In partnership with the National Retail Association we have already engaged with more than 5,000 businesses just over the past three months, helping small to large retailers to prepare for the ban. They have gone to over 310 centres and shopping strips throughout the state, providing resources and advice to cafes, restaurants, food outlets, discount stores, supermarkets, party suppliers, markets and many more. Even though many retailers have been doing it tough during the pandemic, the response has been overwhelmingly positive with retailers keen to do their bit for the environment.

Through the Boomerang Alliance we have also helped community groups and communities prepare for the upcoming ban. We have been very impressed with the take-up of these forums, with more than 400 attendees so far. Of course, there will be exemptions to ensure that Queenslanders with a disability or healthcare needs can continue to access and use items necessary for them.

Queenslanders have been leading the force in the war on waste. We have seen more than four billion containers exchanged through our Containers for Change program and we are leading the charge in creating a circular economy as part of our record \$1.4 billion investment in the environment through initiatives such as our Recycling Modernisation Fund. With the economy and jobs now growing and recovering from the impacts of COVID-19 thanks to our recovery plan, so too is our environment with the ban on even more single-use plastics.

### Masters, Senior Constable D



**Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (10.06 am): Since we last gathered in this chamber, the Queensland Police Service and, indeed, the Queensland community have suffered a tragic loss. Police officer Senior Constable Dave Masters' life was taken as he bravely carried out his duties. It is indeed a great tragedy.

I take this opportunity to pay tribute to Dave. He was a much loved and extremely highly regarded member of the Queensland Police Service and his community. To his family, especially Dave's wife, Sharon, and his son, Jack, I offer my deepest condolences. To provide support to Dave's family, a fundraising event is being held tonight at Parliament House, hosted by the member for Bancroft and supported by many members of this House, including the member for Kurwongbah. I encourage other members to attend. I ask all members to now take a moment to reflect on the contribution of Senior Constable Dave Masters to his community.

### Townsville Stronger Communities Action Group



**Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (10.07 am): Following a review, the multi-agency Townsville Stronger Communities Action Group will be revamped and refreshed. It will have strong leadership. It will now be led by the northern region's top police officer, Townsville based Assistant Commissioner Mark Wheeler and Youth Justice Deputy Director-General Phillip Brooks.

Since the group was first established, there have been significant changes to the way in which youth justice is dealt with in Townsville. Bail laws have been strengthened and they are showing early results, with more recidivist offenders being held in custody more often and for longer.

In acknowledging the efforts of my colleague Minister Linard and her department, there is ongoing investment in youth justice resources and intervention programs in Townsville, including the successful joint police and youth justice co-responder teams, and there are more police on the ground with more on the way. As a result, the Townsville Stronger Communities Action Group's key role now will be a revitalised focus on early intervention. That means delivering the appropriate programs and supports to young people and their families earlier and sooner.

Those changes follow a review that relied upon open and frank discussions with individuals working in the youth justice area in Townsville. Whilst those contributions must be kept confidential to respect the spirit in which they were given, in the interests of openness and transparency the government is sharing the reforms that flowed from the report. Those reforms and others will be made because we always want to do things better. That is what we are doing in Townsville: putting in place measures that further support community safety.

### Indigenous Languages



**Hon. CD CRAWFORD** (Barron River—ALP) (Minister for Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (10.10 am): Today, 1 September, marks Indigenous Literacy Day, a day on which we celebrate stories and languages. The Palaszczuk government is committed to reviving, preserving and promoting First Nations languages in Queensland. This is because we know that First Nations languages are a big part of developing a strong and positive cultural identity, a sense of pride, place, being and belonging; and Indigenous children who learn to read in their first languages also often achieve better English literacy learning outcomes.

As we acknowledge at the opening of parliament each day, Queensland is home to two of the oldest living cultures in the world and with that comes more than 150 traditional languages. Sadly, many of these languages are endangered, with only 50 of them remaining today. Fewer than 20, predominantly in the north of the state and in the Torres Strait, are used as first languages.

Languages are endangered when they are at risk of falling out of use. If a language loses all of its native speakers, it becomes an extinct language. With so many of our state's traditional languages at risk, this highlights the importance of ensuring the survival of some of our state's most precious, but also most vulnerable, cultural heritage.

As part of our commitment to reframe the relationship and address the impacts our colonial history has had on Indigenous languages, we are today launching the next round of the Indigenous Languages Grants. These grants are just one of our initiatives to protect Indigenous languages under the Many Voices: Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages Policy.

This year, the Queensland government is making a record investment of \$400,000 for the 2021 Indigenous Languages Grants. These grants will help more Queenslanders connect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages and support First Nations peoples keep their connection to culture, through their languages, strong. Applications are now open for grants of up to \$20,000 to support local communities to celebrate, promote and revive Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages. Applications will close at 3 pm on Friday, 15 October. I encourage Queenslanders to find out more at [www.qld.gov.au/ilg](http://www.qld.gov.au/ilg).

These grants, co-funded by my department and the Department of Education, have supported more than 50 language initiatives since 2019. Murgon State School and Mountain Creek State High School parents and citizens associations are amongst the grant recipients from the 2020 round of grants. Both are making fantastic progress on their respective projects in partnership with local elders and traditional language speakers.

At Murgon State School work is underway on a community yarning circle, including a mural by students and local artists the Langton family, to celebrate traditional Wakka Wakka language and stories. Mountain Creek State High School is collaborating with local Gubbi Gubbi representatives James and Jo Doyle to create a garden with totems showcasing the school values in traditional language.

In Cape York, Pama Languages received funding to preserve the Guugu Yimithirr language for generations to come. It is worth noting that the Guugu Yimithirr language, one of the few surviving languages still spoken today, was the first language to be recorded on the Australian continent in 1770. Our first Aboriginal state member in this House, Eric Deeral, was a Guugu Yimithirr man, a language speaker and a storyteller. I wonder if Eric would have had an opportunity to speak in his mother tongue during his time in this House.

Ahead of the United Nations International Decade of Indigenous Languages 2022-2032, the Palaszczuk government is committed to supporting grassroots organisations and community-led initiatives to bring to life Indigenous languages in Queensland. Our investment aligns with the national Closing the Gap target for a sustained increase in the number and strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages being spoken by 2031.

In the current climate of a global pandemic, Indigenous languages are even more important and critical to Queensland's COVID health and economic response. Materials provided in Indigenous languages ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have access to relevant and culturally appropriate information about the virus, the vaccination rollout and the recovery progress. Celebrating language and culture is also important on Queensland's Path to Treaty, as we acknowledge the impacts of historical practices on First Nations people and work towards a just, fair and inclusive future.

## NOTICE OF MOTION

### Palaszczuk Labor Government, Ipsos Polling Data; Order to Table Documents



**Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (10.14 am): I give notice that I shall move—

That, in accordance with standing order 27, this House orders the Premier to table by 14 September 2021 all qualitative and quantitative results of community sentiment polling surrounding the pandemic undertaken by Ipsos Public Affairs on behalf of the government.

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

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

### Coronavirus, Queensland Border Restrictions



**Mr CRISAFULLI** (10.15 am): My question is to the Premier. Can the Premier advise how many Queenslanders have been made stateless by her decision to lock them out with two hours notice and when will the Premier bring all Queenslanders home?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I am very pleased that the opposition leader has asked that question. I can answer him this way: as I said today, we have had discussions with Queensland Health and police overnight and there is some capacity for 50 families to return this weekend. The hotels have been full. Why have we put a pause in place? It is because the delta virus is running rampant in New South Wales. If you go and ask any Queenslanders, they will say that they do not want the delta virus brought

here. New South Wales is in a crisis situation at the moment. The peak will not be until October. If you want to see a health system on the verge of collapse, you will see that in October. I do not want that here.

**Mr Mander** interjected.

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

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Let me make it very clear: one of the main reasons we have had to put a halt on hotel quarantine is that during the month of August alone 5,044 people have come into our hotels on domestic quarantine. Also, in respect of international arrivals, we have faced double our cap—the cap set by the Commonwealth. We had an agreement with the federal government that we would halve our caps. During the month of August our cap was 3,019. Outside the cap we accepted 3,056, so there have been 6,072 international arrivals.

**Mr Dick:** Who controls that?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** The federal government controls that. I can confirm that the Prime Minister has also written to me. He has said very clearly—

I acknowledge there have been a high number of arrivals into Queensland during July and August 2021.

He has said that we will now get the forecast international passenger arrivals from 1 September to 31 October 2021. I expect there now to be a massive reduction in international arrivals. During September and October this will free up a lot of hotel quarantine spaces for people who are coming to Queensland, whether they are returning Queensland residents or people wanting to move here. You cannot blame people for wanting to move here—the best state in the nation! I say to those opposite: there are zero community cases in Queensland today. We will hear at 11 o'clock how many there are in New South Wales.

### **Coronavirus, Queensland Border Restrictions**

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** My question is to the Premier. Given the snap quarantine decision was based on a capacity issue, will the Premier advise how many hotel quarantine spaces are currently free as of today and why stateless Queenslanders cannot fill them immediately?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** For the Leader of the Opposition who was not listening, as I said, for the month of August—

**Opposition members:** Today.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Today is 1 September. For the month of August we have had 5,044 domestic air arrivals and 6,072 international arrivals. As I said, we have 50 spaces coming available for the weekend and we keep some capacity because we do not know when the charter flights are coming in. We do not know when the federal government is sending international arrivals in. We have said we will be taking two additional plane loads from Afghanistan, which we accept. We are doing our humanitarian duty. Yes, our hotels are full. As soon as there is availability we will make those rooms available, as I have said today.

### **Natural Disasters, Preparedness**

**Mr SMITH:** My question is of the Premier and Minister for Trade. Will the Premier update the House on our seasonal weather outlook and outline the Palaszczuk government's disaster preparedness?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the member for Bundaberg for the question. Not only are we dealing with the global pandemic at the moment but we also have to prepare for natural disasters. I can confirm that cabinet was briefed on Monday by the Bureau of Meteorology about the weather outlook for the upcoming season. We know that the dry conditions will continue around the Wide Bay region for some considerable months, but we have been advised that we are expecting above average rainfall—

**Mrs Frecklington** interjected.

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

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Members to my right.

**Mr Kelly** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Greenslopes, I have called the House to order. You are warned under the standing orders.



**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I will take that interjection. We put the money on the table for the levee in Bundaberg. There is nothing from the feds. We are still waiting. Pick up the phone and call your mates in Canberra. We are expecting above average rainfall in the south-east, which is good news.

I can also confirm that our \$15 million investment in the large aerial tanker continues. The LAT has reported for duty in Bundaberg.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** It is no laughing matter to have preparedness for the fire season.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Pause the clock. Premier, please resume your seat. Members to my left, the Premier seems to be, as I can hear, speaking about matters that should be of interest, in terms of its content and subject matter, to all members of the House. I would ask that interjections cease so that I can hear the response being provided to the question asked by the member for Bundaberg.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** As I said during estimates, the LAT will now remain in Australia all year round, which is fantastic news. It will do its duty in Queensland and then go down to Victoria. Hopefully there will not be a big need to use it. It is great to know that we have it in case we need it. It has arrived in Bundaberg. We look forward to seeing the pilots in the very near future when we visit Bundaberg.

As we know, this is about making sure we get everything we can ready. We also have access to 150 helicopters and planes if needed to support any firefighting in the Wide Bay region. We will be monitoring the Wide Bay, Burnett and Capricornia regions. A lot of rainfall is due for the south-east. Whilst it will not be as significant as 2010-11, they are predicting rainfall similar to that rainfall event but not as severe. That is great news.

Cabinet will get another update in October in preparation for our cyclone season. I commend all of our staff employed across the state who serve our state well and are always on duty and prepared to combat any natural disaster that comes our way.

*(Time expired)*

### **Coronavirus, Queensland Border Restrictions**

**Mr BLEIJIE:** My question is to the Premier. We have been inundated with cries for help from stateless Queenslanders like Stephen. Stephen returned home to Queensland after attending a funeral in New South Wales. He had a valid border pass until it was cancelled by the Premier's snap decision. He was then directed to leave quarantine and return to New South Wales. He was happy to stay in quarantine but he was fined over \$5,000. How many Queenslanders has the Premier deported and fined on the way out?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I am not aware of those circumstances. If the member forwards them to the health minister the health minister will follow them up with the exemptions unit.

### **Bruce Highway**

**Mrs GILBERT:** My question is of the Premier and Minister for Trade. Will the Premier update the House on the Palaszczuk government's investment in the Bruce Highway which is critical to our economic recovery plan?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the member for Mackay for the question. We know how important the Bruce Highway is for Queenslanders. Who can forget the old Bruce Highway hoax from those opposite—the member for Nanango promising the world and then when the time came nothing was there.

**Mr Dick:** Zero. Not a dollar.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Not a dollar. That big hoax up until a couple of days before the election. She was happy to drive up and down the Bruce Highway promising the world to everyone. We cannot trust anything the opposition says. I go back to them calling for the border to be opened 64 times. Imagine what would have happened to this state if that was done. Queenslanders do not forget. They know that on this side of the House we are rock solid in keeping Queenslanders safe. We care about their health. We care about their jobs. We want to make sure that they continue to be safe.

The 1,700 kilometre Bruce Highway is a vital link between all of our regional centres. It keeps our freight moving. It keeps our communities connected.

**Mr Bleijie** interjected.

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

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** It is the lifeblood of our regions. Our long-term Bruce Highway upgrade program is critical to making sure all motorists can use that highway to get to their destination safely. There is so much work happening along the Bruce Highway. When we say we are going to do something we deliver it. There is the Gympie bypass, the Caloundra Road to the Sunshine Motorway upgrade, the Townsville ring-road stage 5 as well as the \$120 million Mackay Northern Access upgrade. I know that Minister Bailey was in Mackay last week with the member having a look at that fantastic project.

Today I can announce that we have six new regional members joining the Bruce Highway trust. We have Ellie Pearson from South Kolan, Anita Mumford from Sarina, Julie Boyd from Mackay, Robert Dorgelo from Magnetic Island, Tania Dennis from Townsville and Brian Hughes from Innisfail. That is exactly what we want. We want regional representation on the Bruce Highway trust. This is about making sure that regional members get to have a say. We will get on with the job of making sure that we deliver for them.

These six regional voices will help identify what our regions need and lock in a long-term pipeline of jobs right along Queensland's coast. They have a diverse range of backgrounds, including in engineering, road safety, architecture, urban design and governance, and a wealth of knowledge that can only be gained from living in communities along the Bruce Highway. I look forward to their advice on how we can improve the Bruce Highway even further to unlock economic growth in our regional communities, build flood resilience and improve safety for the thousands of Queenslanders who use the Bruce Highway every single day.

*(Time expired)*

### **Coronavirus, Queensland Border Restrictions**

**Mr JANETZKI:** My question is to the Premier. The Treasurer has questioned the sanity of those asking COVID related questions. What is the government's plan—

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Members to my right, the question will be heard in silence. If there is a point of order to be raised it can be raised after the question has been completed. Please start your question again, member.

**Mr JANETZKI:** The Treasurer has questioned the sanity of those asking COVID related questions. What is the government's plan for the path out of lockdowns and restrictions once vaccination rates reach 70 per cent and then 80 per cent?

**Mr DICK:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take personal offence at those words and ask the honourable member to withdraw, particularly the first part of the question.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The Treasurer has taken offence to the first part of the question. I ask you to withdraw.

**Mr JANETZKI:** I withdraw.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The question, as asked, will stand.

**Mr BAILEY:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Under standing order 115(b)(iv), there is a clear imputation in that question. I believe it is out of order.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Minister, the member has just withdrawn the part which was—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Members to my left!

**Mr Mickelberg** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Buderim, you are warned under the standing orders. Member for Nanango, you are coming very close to making it two days in a row. There is no point of order. The question with that part removed is available to be answered.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the member for the question. As we know, on this side of the House we are determined to protect Queenslanders. I do not want to see our hospitals overrun with COVID patients as we are seeing in other parts of the world. I do not want to have to stand up and tell families that they have lost their loved ones because of a massive outbreak of delta.

The one thing I am focused on is getting Queenslanders vaccinated. If only the Commonwealth would give us more supply, I could vaccinate more Queenslanders right now. We have this magical window where we can vaccinate as many Queenslanders as possible so that when the virus gets here the impact will be less.

What is the plan on their side? All we hear is crickets. I urge every member to go back to their community and ask them do they want to see the delta virus rip through their communities. Do they want to see the Kingaroy Hospital, the Roma Hospital, the Longreach Hospital, the Torres Strait and Thursday Island Hospital overrun with their people who are sick and dying with COVID?

The best thing New South Wales can do is get COVID under control in their state and not blame Western Australia and Queensland for keeping Queenslanders and Western Australians safe. I will stand up for this state every single day. Queenslanders expect that of a government that cares about them.

We are yet to hear what the LNP have to say. They were happy to open the borders and let the virus in and now they are happy to do it again. Let me say this: we are getting further modelling done by the Doherty Institute. I want to see a paper. I do not want to see a slide show. I want to see detailed information, detailed modelling, because the initial Doherty modelling was based on 30 cases in Australia. It was not based on 10,000 cases in New South Wales.

Let me say this to every single member: if you open up this state and you let the virus in here, every child under 12 is vulnerable—every single child. Every child from zero to 12 is vulnerable because they are the unvaccinated. Until I can get answers on that, we will stand firm and we will stand strong.

*(Time expired)*

**Mr Millar** interjected.

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

### Social Infrastructure

**Ms HOWARD:** My question is of the Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning. Can the Deputy Premier update the House on how the government is investing in social infrastructure for communities impacted by COVID-19 as part of our economic recovery?

**Dr MILES:** I thank the member for Ipswich for her question. She knows how important it is that we invest in infrastructure to create jobs now and to deliver lasting benefits to communities that will go on to serve those communities. That is why the Palaszczuk government has allocated \$8 million for our Community Infrastructure Investment Partnership grants—investments in social infrastructure in communities that have been impacted by COVID-19.

We will partner with 12 hardworking non-government organisations to support them to upgrade their facilities to deliver more and better community services and job readiness services. The 12 projects selected are across the state from Cairns to Brisbane. Those projects will allow the expansion of social and employment readiness services, as well as support our wider economic recovery and deliver health and wellbeing benefits.

For example, in the member's own electorate of Ipswich, we have committed \$235,240 to Y-Care to allow them to convert a disused aged-care facility into a youth centre. There are projects in Ayr, in Kingaroy, on the Sunshine Coast and in Brisbane. Mr Speaker, in Far North Queensland, we have committed \$1.47 million to Gindija for their new learning and wellness centre. I understand that you attended the sod turning for ARC Disability Services for their community services hub in Edmonton not long ago. These projects will make a real difference to their communities. They will support 26 construction jobs, plus more jobs in delivering the services that will benefit those communities in an ongoing way.

We are only able to invest in these infrastructure projects because of our health response. We are not here in Queensland in a cave. The LNP and the Prime Minister for Sydney might want us to open our borders and let the virus in. He might want us to deliberately infect Queenslanders—our young people who cannot have a vaccine and Queenslanders who cannot yet get a vaccine because he did not buy enough of them. Queenslanders have worked too hard to give in now. We have worked too hard to admit defeat this close to the end of the pandemic. As Sydney enters the 10th week—the 10th week—of lockdown, we will keep our borders closed so we can keep our pubs open and continue to invest in vital social infrastructure.

### Coronavirus, Queensland Border Restrictions

**Mr MINNIKIN:** Mr Speaker—

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Chatsworth, I have not seen that technique of removing your mask before.

**Mr MINNIKIN:** My question is to the Premier. I refer to social media posts by the Minister for Transport undermining the Doherty Institute modelling. If the plan the Premier signed up to at national cabinet is not the plan, what is the government's plan to provide Queenslanders a path out of COVID?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the member for the question. Can I correct the record? I said that there were 10,000 cases in New South Wales. There are in fact 21,208 cases and 96 deaths. That is 96 people who have lost their lives. That is 96 families who are grieving—96.

As I said previously—and I might elaborate on this—I have asked for some further research about children. I honestly believe that we need to have further research done on what happens to the zero to 12-year-old cohort as they remain unvaccinated.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** You may laugh on that side. This is the most serious issue that our country will face. The plan has now moved to vaccinate high school students which I fully support. Once again, we do not know when we are getting the supply. Give me the supply and we will get our high school students vaccinated. We only have to look at the US where it is the pandemic of the unvaccinated.

From reports from people I met with recently in Tokyo, children, who are unprotected as there has not been the research findings about whether or not they can be vaccinated, are basically all wearing masks—through airports, to childcare centres and to schools. Unless there is an answer on how these young people are going to be vaccinated, you are putting this most vulnerable population at risk. Anyone who has grandchildren or young children or nephews or nieces knows how that plays on people's minds.

My understanding is the Doherty Institute has said they will go and look that. The plan also talks about the federal government looking at the booster program. Where is the booster program? We have not even got the vaccination program out. There are many steps ahead of us towards this plan, but the No. 1 thing we can do is get as many of our population vaccinated as possible now. Give us the supply—supply comes from the federal government—and we will vaccinate people. We will take it to their workplaces just like we have announced we are going to do. We will roll out mass vaccination hubs and we will encourage people to get vaccinated as quickly and as soon as possible.

Let me finally say this: in some other states they are talking about picnics. I do not think that picnics are a leveller about how you are getting out of this pandemic. You only have to look around Queensland to see that we are open, we are protecting our lifestyle, and that is the same in other states—

*(Time expired)*

### **Coronavirus, Business and Industry Groups**

**Mr MELLISH:** My question is of the Treasurer and Minister for Investment. Will the Treasurer update the House on how the Palaszczuk government has worked with business and industry groups through the pandemic, and is the Treasurer aware of any alternative approaches?

**Mr DICK:** I thank the member for Aspley for his question. Our government is maintaining Queensland's strong stance against COVID-19 because that allows our state's economy to recover. That is because our government is pro business and pro growth. I have been travelling around Queensland speaking with business leaders, and I love doing that. I love engaging with regional businesses and taking their questions. Very often I am accompanied by the assistant Treasurer, the member for Jordan, and we see the smiling faces of members opposite in the audience when I give my address. Don't they love it when I say, 'Debt down, deficit down, jobs up, economic growth up'? They love it when they hear that, as I know members of the government love it. On top of our budget roadshows we have been holding a number of investor roadshows around Queensland. I held one up in Toowoomba at Wellcamp Airport just a few weeks ago, engaging with business and industry groups—that is what Labor governments do—attracting more jobs and more skilled jobs to Queensland. We want to attract investment, attract growth and attract jobs to Queensland.

When we hold our investor round tables we do not charge business for that. That is an approach which might seem novel to those members opposite, because as we read in the paper again this week the ECQ, the Electoral Commission, is stepping up its investigation into the LNP. There are allegations of illegal donations from property developers. Fools to their folly! I read that the member for Nanango and the member for Ninderry are alleged to have attended fundraisers with property developers. Who is making these allegations? They are coming from within the LNP. The allegations are coming from current and former LNP members. It reminds us that the LNP are not sending in their best and brightest when their former state director had to write to LNP MPs to say, 'Don't break the law.' Imagine that, your state director writing to you as a member of parliament saying, 'Please, LNP member of parliament,

don't break the law. Don't attend donation funded events with property developers.' But they went and attended anyway. They would have us believe it is not an issue: they just got the name and address of the attendees wrong.

This is typical of the LNP: money over people, donors over doctors and the advice they give to the government about COVID-19. They always put moneyed interests—the interests of their donors, the interests of business—against the interests of people. That is what they do. Why do they have to be before the ECQ? Because they cannot comply with the law of Queensland. They will not obey the law. We act for the benefit of all Queenslanders: they act for the benefit of their donors.

### **Toowoomba, Quarantine Facility**

**Mr WEIR:** My question is to the Premier. I refer to the Audit Office report on confidentiality and the disclosure of government contracts, which states the public money that government is spending on what and with which vendors. Will the Premier explain why the government will not tell Queenslanders how much they paid for the Toowoomba quarantine facility?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I love to talk about the Toowoomba quarantine facility. I can tell you that it is less than the Victorian facility. It is going to be a lot, lot less than the Commonwealth is going to pay for Pinkenba—

**Dr Miles:** And bigger and sooner.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** That is right; it will be finished sooner. Whilst I am on my feet, I have been a very strong advocate for regional quarantine in this state. Regional quarantine is the best way we can have a safe environment for returned travellers but also for the staff who have to look after travellers. It can be used for a whole variety of different purposes, including returning Australians, domestic returnees and seasonal workers, which I know a lot of our farming communities are talking about at the moment. The universities are also very interested in some limited international returns once we have the vulnerable Australians come back.

Regional quarantine has always been one of our top priorities. I think everybody in this House recognises that quarantine is a federal government responsibility. Well, we decided that we are not going to wait any longer. We are going to get on with the job, and we are going to partner and we are going to build it. Then there is the argument that it is not an international airport. The Cathay Pacific international freighter was there when we were up there the other day. It can take international planes; that is not a problem. If you build it, they will come. This is the best way we can protect our families across Queensland.

**Mr WEIR:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance. The question was quite specific: 'How much is this facility going to cost?'

**Mr SPEAKER:** The question is related to relevance. Premier, there was a specific question asked regarding dollar figures. If you are able to turn your attention to those.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** As those matters are commercial-in-confidence, we have said very clearly—

**Dr Miles:** Do you support it?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** That is right; I take the Deputy Premier's interjection. Do you support regional quarantine facilities in Queensland; yes or no? You just have no idea, no plan. On that side there is no plan, no understanding about—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order!

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** It will be up and running by the end of this year. By Christmas that facility will be ready to be utilised. We are getting on with the job and we are going to build it. As I said, it will be a lot, lot less than what the federal government is going to be paying for Pinkenba.

### **Electrical Safety**

**Mr HEALY:** My question is of the Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing. Will the minister update the House on this year's Electrical Safety Week and any significant and recent prosecutions initiated under the Electrical Safety Act?

**Ms GRACE:** I thank the member for the question. I know that keeping Cairns safe, not only in relation to electrical safety but also from COVID, is close to his heart. I thank the member for the question. Often when it comes to electrical safety there are no second chances. Unfortunately, last year there were 22 serious incidents in Queensland. Tragically, three of these incidents involved a fatality. I

can confirm today that one prosecution under the Electrical Safety Act has proceeded in North Queensland in relation to one of the tragic events, and that has been taken by the independent prosecutor.

Next week is Electrical Safety Week and it is very important. Mr Speaker, why can we conduct Electrical Safety Week? Because we have kept Queensland safe we can continue our education with regard to safety and Electrical Safety Week. We are making sure that forums and events can now proceed. Because Queensland is safe, we can move around. We will be conducting forums and events to educate industry leaders, electrical workers, contractors and apprentices. There will be a social media campaign warning house owners—and I do warn house owners—not to make electrical safety one of your do-it-yourself projects. Make sure you get a licensed electrician to do the work because that is always the safest way.

It is never too early for our young Queenslanders to think about electrical safety. I am pleased that Energy Queensland, together with the minister, is once again running its Safety Heroes program in our primary schools. That is a great event.


Every worker has the right to return home safely each and every day. I want to commend our hardworking inspectors who do an excellent job in making sure that these workplaces are safe. They are committed inspectors, and they do not deserve the unhinged and often hysterical allegations that come from those opposite. These allegations are simply bizarre and they are unfounded and baseless, but they continue to come. Even yesterday it was so bizarre because they have thrown the CCC into that bizarre, baseless allegation. They have tabled documents, they have put reports in and they have written to the CCC. Every single allegation has been baseless and nothing has been found.

Can I set the record straight. We had 16 occupational violence incidents reported by our inspectors: 11 related to—

Interruption.

## PRIVILEGE

### Alleged Deliberate Misleading of the House


 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (10.50 am): Mr Speaker, I rise on a matter of privilege suddenly arising. The Crime and Corruption Commission are currently investigating the Office of Industrial Relations under the minister's portfolio through an external agency. I think the minister has misled the House and I will be writing to you about that.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Thank you. Minister, you have the call.

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

### Electrical Safety

Resumed.

 **Ms GRACE:** Can I set the record straight. There have been 16 occupational violence incidents: 11 related to employers, two related to members of the public, one related to an injured worker and two related to unions. Electrical Safety Week is all about safety and I look forward to it next week.

### Caboolture Hospital, Patient Safety

**Ms BATES:** My question is to the Minister for Health. Can the minister guarantee the Caboolture Hospital surgical crisis will not produce another Jayant Patel?

**Mrs D'ATH:** I find it pretty appalling that those opposite are calling this a crisis when there is yet to be put forward evidence of any systemic flaws in the hospital system itself. All of the matters that have been raised so far have been investigated and are being considered by Clinical Excellence Queensland. At this point in time, there are no findings of systemic failings in this system or by any one individual. I can advise the House—

**Ms Bates** interjected.

**Mrs D'ATH:** I take that interjection. I was about to advise the House on the phone line that was set up at midday yesterday. As at 7 am today, we have had three calls. We saw the media reports that dozens of people had come forward with complaints about the care they had received, so I encourage people with genuine cases to come forward and officially report it on the phone line we have established.

Can I correct the record. The reports today say that the Caboolture Hospital set up this phone line. No, it has been set up within Queensland Health so people do not have to have concerns that they are going to Caboolture Hospital and only being managed by Caboolture Hospital. This is a phone line set up by Queensland Health to ensure that Queenslanders who have any concerns about the treatment they have received at the Caboolture Hospital can put those issues forward in a formal way to have them properly considered. That is the way to do it. Those on the other side, particularly the member for Mudgeeraba, who likes to constantly interject, should stop trying to talk down our system.

**Ms Bates** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The member for Mudgeeraba will cease her interjections.

**Mrs D'ATH:** At a time when the public needs confidence in their health system and they need confidence in the health advice we are giving them to keep them safe, those opposite should be acknowledging the work that health workers do. We should be thanking our health workers and acknowledging the work that they do instead of standing up and throwing around the word 'crisis'. Those opposite have done that for months now without any acknowledgement of the pressures on the system, the demands we are having, the reasons for those demands, where those pressures are coming from and what should be done at a Commonwealth level. We will never, ever hear those on the other side talking about the responsibility of the Commonwealth when it comes to the health system in this country. They talk about vaccines and holding Morrison to account for vaccines—which they are not really doing. The fact is that the Commonwealth did not order enough vaccines in this country and we are where we are because they failed to plan properly. Those are the things the opposition should be talking about.

*(Time expired)*

**Ms Bates** interjected.

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

### **First Nations People, Coronavirus Vaccination**

**Ms LUI:** My question is to the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services. Can the minister update the House on how the Palaszczuk government is rolling out COVID-19 vaccinations for Queensland's First Nations people, including the Make the Choice campaign?

**Mrs D'ATH:** It is a pleasure to answer the member's question. I know she is very passionate about ensuring that we are closing the gap in health outcomes for our First Nations Queenslanders. I am very proud to talk about what we are doing to roll out the vaccinations that we do have in this state. We know that vaccination offers the best protection against COVID-19. Over 42,000 First Nations Queenslanders have made the choice and stepped up to be vaccinated, with over half of that number fully immunised. While this is a positive start, the vaccination rate for our First Nations Queenslanders aged 16 and over is almost half the broader Queensland population. That is why the Palaszczuk government is focusing on achieving vaccination rates for eligible First Nations people in line with the Queensland general population. We know local solutions developed by First Nations people for First Nations people work. You only have to see the great work happening in the member for Cook's electorate.

I am advised that in the Torres Strait area 74 per cent of eligible First Nations people have received at least one dose of the vaccine and 51 per cent of the First Nations people are fully vaccinated. That HHS is higher than the state average. We congratulate them and the community for embracing this and seeing the importance of getting vaccinated.

In the Torres Strait, Boigu Island, Thursday Island, Saibai Island and Dauan Island have achieved 100 per cent vaccination across the eligible population. The Torres and Cape HHS is working collaboratively with our Primary Health Networks, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community controlled health services, First Nations councils and other community organisations. Local solutions are being co-developed and rolled out across the state, and they are being backed up by the strong collective leadership of mayors from our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander remote and discrete communities. We thank them for their continued support.

With South-East Queensland being home to the largest population of our First Nations people, collaborative initiatives to boost vaccination rates are underway. This includes the Institute for Urban Indigenous Health I Stepped Up campaign featuring well-known First Nations people, including our very own members for Algeester and Bundamba, and I believe the member for Cook has been involved in that as well. There is also the First Nations vaccination blitz, with one recently visiting my own electorate of Redcliffe and Caboolture as well.

Building on all of this great work, the Palaszczuk government recently launched the Make the Choice campaign with the Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Health Council to increase accessibility of the vaccine and provide trusted information. The Palaszczuk government is backing initiatives developed by our hardworking First Nations health sector and community partners to close the gap in First Nations vaccination rates in Queensland. I thank those First Nations people who have already made the choice to get vaccinated and protect themselves, their family and their community. I encourage all to take up this option.

*(Time expired)*

### Coronavirus, Vaccines

**Mr ANDREW:** My question is to the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services. On 21 July, Dr Nikolai Petrovsky wrote to the health minister seeking political support for Australian technology COVAX-19 vaccination. Will the minister support all vaccine options during this state of emergency for Queensland, including the non-mRNA option COVAX-19?

**Mrs D'ATH:** I thank the member for his question, although I believe I have already provided a response to the member on this. In relation to approvals of vaccines, this is done by the TGA and ATAGI. It is done by health professionals, not by governments deciding which vaccine to use and which not to use. Any vaccine that is approved in this country to use against COVID will be used in this state, assuming the vaccines are available.

Those vaccines have to be approved by the TGA. They have to go through the same proper processes that any other vaccine is assessed by to ensure the safety of the people of Queensland and Australia.

**Mr Dick:** Does Pauline Hanson support vaccination?

**Mrs D'ATH:** It should not be individual states—I take that interjection because Pauline Hanson certainly has not done anything to support the vaccine rollout. She has been shameful and harmful in her comments, as have Clive Palmer and others out there in the community, talking about the credibility and the confidence around vaccines.

In relation to the member's question, I have already provided the answer in writing, but for the benefit of the whole House, I say it is not Queensland—the member is shaking his head, but I am happy to follow up because I believe a response was provided. Individual states should not be going it alone as to which vaccine is approved. They cannot do that. We should not do that. There is nothing wrong with mRNA vaccines. There is nothing wrong. They have been approved—

**Mr Dick:** Stop misleading people.

**Mrs D'ATH:**—and so the member opposite should stop talking down and misleading people about the vaccines that are already approved in this country. They have gone through a process. Stand by that advice; follow that recommendation. If other vaccines are approved they should be used, and of course they have to first be provided for use. They have to be sourced, whether they are made here in this country—and we would love to see vaccines made in Queensland; we would absolutely support making the vaccines here—or overseas. However, they have to be approved by the TGA for use. Individual states cannot be doing that alone.

I look forward to the member for Mirani standing up and telling the community they should get vaccinated; they should get vaccinated with those vaccines that are already approved. He should tell them they should not be waiting for something else to come along that they think would be better, but get vaccinated right now with one of the vaccines that are available in this country in line with the TGA recommendations. To do anything else is irresponsible and reckless; it puts lives at risk and it stops this economy and this country opening up. We have led the way and the member should look at how open our economy is. That is due to the decisions we have made, and we stand by those decisions.

### Roads and Transport Infrastructure

**Ms BOYD:** My question is to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. Can the minister give an update on the Palaszczuk government's record Transport and Roads Investment Program?

**Mr BAILEY:** I thank the member, who is such a strong supporter of roads and infrastructure in her electorate and across the state. We are seeing that road infrastructure construction sites are going strongly right across Queensland. While New South Wales has ground to a halt in terms of their economy, our infrastructure construction is booming in Queensland. We have pumped more than \$1.3 billion of stimulus into the economy in response to COVID. What does that mean? It means that we are seeing almost 200 extra road upgrades rolling out right now across Queensland. We have



completed 72 upgrades already out of a total of 190 road upgrades right across Queensland. I have been travelling extensively across the state, as has the Assistant Minister for Regional Roads and we see how much work is being done right across the state. He was in Longreach recently and I had to be up the coast.

We see the six-laning of the Bruce Highway from Steve Irwin Way to the Bribie Island turn-off. We see the extra lane on the M1 near the Gateway arterial almost open near the electorates of the members for Springwood and Waterford. We see the Houghton River flood plain and nine kilometres of a new, much more flood immune Bruce Highway open to traffic. We see the duplication of the Capricorn Highway to Gracemere open to traffic, and recently we completed another five kilometres of the Peninsula Development Road in the member for Cook's electorate in Cape York. So much is happening because we have kept Queenslanders safe, and our infrastructure and economy is continuing on.

What is really clear is that we know the record of those opposite, and they would have imperilled that sort of infrastructure. The threats made by those opposite to our health response are on the record. They called for the borders to be opened 64 times. They abused our health leadership as 'punch-drunk bureaucrats'. Do honourable members remember that? They equated our health response to putting a doona over our head. That was the Leader of the Opposition. Can honourable members imagine what would have happened if they had control of this state?

We all remember how close members opposite are to Clive Palmer. A bunch of heavyweights from the LNP were on his superyacht on election night, and he has ads all over newspapers saying 'open the borders'. We know what their connections and records are. They refuse to criticise and control Christensen and Rennick. They have bungled the vaccine rollout, they have bungled quarantine, there is nothing on boosters and these are the nations that are ahead of us on the vaccine rollout: Costa Rica, Slovenia, Chile, Lithuania, Iceland, Greece, Turkey, Czechia, Estonia, Portugal and Poland, amongst many others. They are ahead of this country because the Prime Minister has botched the vaccine rollout, he has botched quarantine and he is not even talking about boosters. It is a disgrace.

*(Time expired)*

### **Coronavirus, Queensland Border Restrictions**

**Mr KNUTH:** My question without notice is to the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services. Can the minister explain why an exemption was granted for 100 NRL players' families to enter Queensland this week while a breast cancer patient returning from Sydney, who lives in my electorate, had to wait seven days to be granted entry, causing her to cancel a specialist appointment in Cairns?

**Mrs D'ATH:** I thank the member for his question. As the Premier explained in question time yesterday, the NRL hotel quarantine arrangements are completely separate to the state government's hotel quarantine capacity in terms of how many we can take in—both international and domestic arrivals. We made a decision last week and announced that suspension for people with a right of entry, so we are not talking about people with exemptions. We are talking about people who would have automatically had a right to come to Queensland and go into hotel quarantine—Queensland residents and also those seeking to relocate.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mrs D'ATH:** Of those recent arrivals, 85 per cent—and I know those opposite keep talking about Queensland residents—are people who live interstate who want to relocate to Queensland. That was the reason we needed to have that suspension: to create that capacity. The decision and the announcement the Premier has made today are certainly welcome. We are now seeing, because of that decision we made last week, some easing of capacity and we are able to open up some rooms now.

However, that suspension did not impact people applying for exemptions. They are still dealt with. My team, the exemption team, which has been ramped up again recently, are dealing with an extraordinary number of exemptions. They are making very difficult decisions of hardship in relation to those requests—end of life, funerals, health care and all of those sorts of particular requests. They are working on those as quickly as they possibly can. Whenever there is an outbreak interstate we see massive surges; we have thousands coming in. Our team have copped a lot of abuse and a lot of threats, but they are doing a tremendous job.

I know there is heartache. We have seen heartache all over the world. We have seen people's lives lost and we have seen health workers' lives lost because of this virus. We see that as at today 100 people in New South Wales have died from one cluster since it started on 16 June. It started with one person on 16 June. Many people have been dying because they were infected inside a hospital, so we know it is difficult.

As far as the NRL are concerned, they have not taken one room away from anyone who otherwise would have come in on an exemption because that is dealt with separately and independently of our hotel quarantine capacity. We would not be in this situation if the Commonwealth had stepped in and supported quarantine arrangements months ago.

*(Time expired)*

### **Electric Vehicles, Government Fleet**

**Mr POWER:** My question is for the Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and the Minister for Public Works and Procurement. Can the minister update the House on the growing number of electric vehicles in the government fleet?

**Mr de BRENNI:** I thank the member for Logan for the question. I acknowledge that he is one of the growing number of Queenslanders getting behind the wheel of an electric vehicle and a user of the EV chargers here in parliament, which are in high demand—not that we would find the same in the Commonwealth parliament, I understand. I notice the member for Burleigh is an avid user of the electric vehicle chargers as well.

We have cracked triple digits in the race to decarbonise our government fleet. There is a word the LNP, particularly in Canberra, do not like. The Prime Minister does not like the word 'race'. Today I can confirm that QFleet has now increased the electric vehicle fleet by 100 per cent year on year, and we will do it again next year. That rate is 100 times the uptake rate across the nation. Some 144 electric vehicles by this year's end—288 the next—will be available to our frontline workers in parks, health, education, corrective services and, of course, public works.

I can also confirm that Queensland has become the first state to adopt a hydrogen fleet—zero emissions, the latest technology. That is energy leadership from this Premier. The Palaszczuk government is shrinking Queensland's carbon footprint. We are delivering a 100 per cent increase in our electric vehicle fleet every year and, last time I looked, the weekend has not disappeared. We are on track to eliminate the petrol fleet by 2028 along with its emissions.

That is not the only milestone that QFleet has celebrated in the last few weeks: a few weeks ago QFleet turned 30. Since day one, QFleet has always planned for the lowest possible emissions fleet. It was the Goss Labor government that first appointed an environmental manager for the fleet. It was a Queensland Labor government that adopted the latest technology and brought the first hybrid cars to Queensland in 1999, months before they were available on the Australian market. A decade later, the Beattie government set an emissions target for QFleet, something the LNP in Canberra still refuses to do for our nation. Thirty years of QFleet: another proud Labor legacy for Queensland.

We know that this milestone irks those opposite because, like the Grinch at Christmas, there were no 'happy birthday' cards signed by members of the LNP for QFleet. I wonder if that is because they tried and failed twice to sell off QFleet. Borbidge was thwarted by Beattie in 1998, and it was the honourable Rob Swarten who stood outside this parliament and said that under Labor there would be no garage sales. How can we forget about the member for Broadwater taking advice from the then minister, the member for Everton? In 2012, three hybrids in QFleet were disposed of, sold or flogged off by the member for Everton, sending Queensland backwards like only the LNP can.

**Mr Boothman** interjected.

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

### **Coronavirus, Vaccination**

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I have a question to the Premier. I refer to the Premier's comments made earlier today regarding vaccinations of under-12-year-olds, and I ask: is the Premier now saying that lockdowns and restrictions will not end until 100 per cent of Queenslanders are fully vaccinated?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** What I said very clearly is that I have asked for some further modelling to be done on what happens to this cohort. We need some medical advice, because if we let the virus in to rip through—obviously the opposition wants that to happen—what will happen to the children? I want to know what will happen to the children of this state. It is a fundamental question. It is omitted from any modelling or plan, and every single Queenslanders must be included in that plan.

## Science

**Mr KELLY:** My question is of the Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Youth Affairs. Can the minister update the House on the success of the recent National Science Week and the importance of science to our economic recovery?


**Ms SCANLON:** I thank the member for the question. I know that he is a strong advocate of science in this state. We just held National Science Week, and I want to thank everyone who participated both online and in person. Of course, in Queensland we have relied on the advice of experts and scientists during this global pandemic to make sure we keep our community safe. We know that there are some very interesting views, particularly from the Queensland LNP, when it comes to listening to science—or the lack of listening to science, I should say. In fact, with COVID-19 we have had MPs such as George Christensen come out seconding anti-vaccination legislation. We had Senator Gerard Rennick discrediting COVID testing and promoting the use of Ivermectin or, as many online have dubbed it, horse goo. Then Greg Hunt, the federal health minister, had to come out and urge everyone to stick to the facts and the medical advice when he was being asked questions about his own political colleagues.

Given all of that, it is no surprise that during estimates the LNP actually ran out of questions in the science session. When asked if he had any more questions, the member for Bonney said, no, it was fine. The LNP's refusal to listen to science would be funny if it were not extremely concerning and dangerous, frankly. The member for Greenslopes, a registered nurse, knows too well how important it is that we get the correct advice around vaccinations and the impacts of COVID-19 out there. It is not helpful when tinfoil hat brigade members of the LNP come out with a lack of science and a lack of evidence. Of course, it adds to the history of the LNP. When opposition leader, the member for Nanango wanted to indulge the idea of establishing an 'office of science quality assurance' or, as we like to call it, the 'office of alternative facts'. Those opposite continue to ignore the evidence of science. We are listening to it. Thankfully, we are not listening to the backbench of the LNP when it comes to COVID-19. We will continue to listen to the experts. I thank all scientists across this state for their contribution this year.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The period for question time has expired. Members leaving the chamber, please do so quietly as a courtesy to members rising to speak.

## SUPERANNUATION (STATE PUBLIC SECTOR) (SCHEME ADMINISTRATION) AMENDMENT BILL

### Message from Deputy Governor

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Investment) (11.15 am): I present a message from His Excellency the Deputy Governor.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The message from His Excellency the Deputy Governor recommends the Superannuation (State Public Sector) (Scheme Administration) Amendment Bill. The contents of the message will be incorporated in the *Record of Proceedings*. I table the message for the information of members.

#### MESSAGE

SUPERANNUATION (STATE PUBLIC SECTOR) (SCHEME ADMINISTRATION) AMENDMENT BILL 2021

*Constitution of Queensland 2001*, section 68

I, WALTER SOFRONOFF, Deputy Governor, recommend to the Legislative Assembly a Bill intituled—

A Bill for an Act to amend the Public Officers Superannuation Benefits Recovery Act 1988, the Right to Information Act 2009, the Superannuation (State Public Sector) Act 1990 and the legislation mentioned in schedule 1 for particular purposes, and to repeal the Superannuation (State Public Sector) Deed 1990

DEPUTY GOVERNOR

Date: 1 SEP 2021

*Tabled paper:* Message, dated 1 September 2021, from His Excellency the Deputy Governor recommending the Superannuation (State Public Sector) (Scheme Administration) Amendment Bill 2021 [[1302](#)].

## Introduction



**Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Investment) (11.16 am): I present a bill for an act to amend the Public Officers Superannuation Benefits Recovery Act 1988, the Right to Information Act 2009, the Superannuation (State Public Sector) Act 1990 and the legislation mentioned in schedule 1 for particular purposes, and to repeal the Superannuation (State Public Sector) Deed 1990. I table the bill, the explanatory notes and a statement of compatibility with human rights. I nominate the Economics and Governance Committee to consider the bill.

*Tabled paper:* Superannuation (State Public Sector) (Scheme Administration) Amendment Bill 2021 [\[1303\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Superannuation (State Public Sector) (Scheme Administration) Amendment Bill 2021, explanatory notes [\[1304\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Superannuation (State Public Sector) (Scheme Administration) Amendment Bill 2021, statement of compatibility with human rights [\[1305\]](#).

I am pleased to introduce the Superannuation (State Public Sector) (Scheme Administration) Amendment Bill 2021. The bill will facilitate the proposed merger between QSuper and Sunsuper, two equally strong and respected funds. This follows advice by their boards that a merger is in the best interests of their members.

Everyone deserves to be able to retire with dignity and security. The fundamental objective of Australia's superannuation system is to ensure that hardworking Australians can enjoy a secure standard of living once they retire. Australia's modern system of superannuation was built by the Australian Labor Party. Since Australia's system of compulsory superannuation was established by the Keating Labor government 30 years ago, our national pool of retirement savings has grown to over \$3 trillion. Superannuation has measurably improved the standard of living of millions of Australians, who would otherwise be forced to rely on the aged pension.

Australia's superannuation sector is currently undergoing a period of significant and accelerated consolidation. Recent examples include Aware Super, which was created from the merger of First State Super and VicSuper in July 2020, and MTAA Super and Tasplan, which became Spirit Super earlier this year. LGIA Super and Energy Super have also merged, as have Cbus and Media Super.

The bill that I introduce today is a further significant milestone in Australia's superannuation history. It will facilitate the creation of the second largest superannuation fund in Australia, to be headquartered right here in Queensland. The merged entity would be a financial powerhouse, based in Queensland, with an estimated \$200 billion in net assets and two million members. Having such a significant financial institution based in our state would reinforce Queensland's position as a preferred investment destination.

The merger will be good for members and it will be good for Queensland. The merged fund, like both QSuper and Sunsuper today, will be a profit-for-member fund. That means its only goal is to maximise the return for its members. The greater membership size will allow the new fund to distribute costs across a larger membership base and thereby reduce the cost per member. The funds have indicated that fees will be able to be reduced as a result of this merger. At the same time, the boards of both funds have made strong commitments around employment security for rank-and-file employees, with the merger expected to anchor 2,000 jobs in Queensland. As the new fund grows, it will open opportunities for new jobs for skilled professionals in investment, information technology and customer engagement.

The bill ensures that the existing entitlements and benefits of QSuper members are preserved following the merger, including those of defined benefit members. I declare for the benefit of the House that I am a member of the QSuper fund. This is achieved by the consolidated trust deed of the merged fund continuing the provisions of the current QSuper trust deed. Any changes to the defined benefit category rules are subject to government consultation and cannot alter the member's benefit design in a detrimental way. Importantly, the state's guarantee in respect of QSuper defined benefit members will continue to be enshrined in legislation. Queensland continues to be the only state in Australia with a fully funded defined benefit superannuation scheme. As at this year's budget, WA's defined benefit fund was \$7 billion in deficit, Victoria had a \$31.2 billion shortfall and the New South Wales scheme administered by the Berejiklian Liberal government was \$68 billion away from full funding.

The board of the merged fund will consist of 13 members from the existing funds, with the current QSuper Chair, Mr Don Luke, to serve as its chair. The board comprises directors with strong commercial acumen and a range of unique but complementary skills, setting the merged fund up for

further success. The Queensland government will continue to be represented on the board given its role as the fund's largest employer sponsor. The superannuation contribution arrangements for state public sector employees and related entities are prescribed under the QSuper deed. These arrangements will continue under the merged fund's trust deed until they are prescribed by regulation, which will be made within 12 months after the commencement of the bill. This structure reflects the state's role to set the superannuation conditions for its employees as part of the broader remuneration framework. The merged fund will continue as the Queensland government's default fund, but the review period for the default arrangements will be extended by 10 years. However, that 10-year extension does not prevent a review in the meantime. A similar arrangement applies for LGIA Super, the fund for Queensland local government employees, which merged with Energy Super on 1 July 2021.

An amendment to the Public Officers Superannuation Benefits Recovery Act is an administrative change that introduces a power of delegation from the minister to the chief executive of the administering department. The delegation would permit the chief executive to agree on the amount to be recovered and enter into an agreement with a publicly funded superannuant convicted of a prescribed offence. An amendment to the Right to Information Act 2009 removes the application of this act to the QSuper board once it has ceased to be a statutory body. A range of minor consequential amendments are made to the City of Brisbane Act 2010, the Governors (Salary and Pensions) Act 2003, the Industrial Relations Act 2016, the Judges (Pensions and Long Leave) Act 1957, the Land Court Act 2000, the Local Government Act 2009, the Parliament of Queensland Act 2001, the Superannuation (Public Employees Portability) Act 1985 and the Statutory Instruments Act 1992. This bill delivers support for the creation of the second largest superannuation fund in Australia. The fund will be Queensland based and will build on the successful legacy of both QSuper and Sunsuper. The merger will be good for Queensland and, what is most important, good for members. I commend the bill to the House.

### First Reading

**Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Investment) (11.23 am): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.


Bill read a first time.

### Referral to Economics and Governance Committee

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

## QUEENSLAND UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY AMENDMENT BILL

### Introduction

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (11.23 am): I present a bill for an act to amend the Queensland University of Technology Act 1998 for particular purposes. I table the bill and explanatory notes and a statement of compatibility with human rights. I nominate the Education, Employment and Training Committee to consider the bill.

*Tabled paper:* Queensland University of Technology Amendment Bill 2021 [\[1306\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Queensland University of Technology Amendment Bill 2021, explanatory notes [\[1307\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Queensland University of Technology Amendment Bill 2021, statement of compatibility with human rights [\[1308\]](#).

I am pleased to introduce the Queensland University of Technology Amendment Bill 2021, which amends the Queensland University of Technology Act 1998 to introduce a new streamlined governing council for the university. The Queensland University of Technology, QUT, is a Queensland public university established under the QUT Act.

**Mrs Frecklington** interjected.

**Ms GRACE:** Those of a certain vintage may even remember it under its previous name—thank you to the member for Nanango for her interjection—the Queensland Institute of Technology, or QIT. The act also establishes the governing body or council which is responsible for the proper and effective management and operation of the university. With 22 members, the current QUT Council is one of the largest governing bodies of Queensland's public universities. As we know, the higher education sector has changed a lot over the years, with Queensland universities now operating in a highly competitive and fluid environment within the state as well as nationally and internationally. Of course, we know that the sector has also been heavily impacted by COVID-19 and universities have had to act quickly to respond. Against this backdrop, QUT has identified the need for a governance structure in place that supports a more flexible and responsive way of operating.

This process has its origins in 2017 when my predecessor Kate Jones oversaw the passage of the University Legislation Amendment Act 2017, which modernised the Queensland public university establishing acts as well as enabling changes to the governance structure of the James Cook University, JCU, Council. The Queensland government invited other public universities to consider their governance arrangements and whether they would like to pursue similar reforms. Following consultation with its university community stakeholders, QUT proposed reforms to its council and provided a new governance model for the changed composition, similar to the reforms undertaken by the JCU Council.

The bill amends the QUT Act to streamline the governance of QUT by reducing the size of the council from 22 to 15 members. The amendments are aimed at supporting effective governance while maintaining an appropriate balance of skills and experience on the council. Specifically, the bill provides for changes to the number of members in the following categories: three Governor in Council appointed members, reduced from eight; five elected members, reduced from nine, including two members of the academic staff of QUT, reduced from three, and one member of the professional staff of QUT, reduced from two; alumni members will be removed as elected members, reduced from two; and four additional members will be appointed by the council, an increase of two, with at least two of these four members to be alumni of QUT. There are no changes to the number of elected student members—that is, two—or official members—that is, three. The bill also introduces requirements to assist with the balance of representation on the council, including that one elected student member is to be an undergraduate student and the other a postgraduate student.

The reduction in the number of council members is in line with Universities Australia's voluntary code of best practice for the governance of Australian universities, which states that a university governing body should desirably be no more than 15 members. The bill makes consequential amendments to the QUT Act on matters relating to the proper constitution of the council and removal of a member from office as a result of reducing the size of the council. The bill also establishes transitional arrangements to enable an ordered and timely transition to the new council membership with as little process and disruption to the council as possible. These arrangements include provisions for reducing the numbers of appointed and elected members, increasing additional members and introducing requirements for the composition of the elected student member and additional member categories. The terms of remaining members will continue as per their current term. The bill will provide a contemporary governance structure for QUT as it looks to continue its goal of providing quality higher education in an increasingly challenging and complex environment.

### **First Reading**

**Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (11.29 am): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

### **Referral to Education, Employment and Training Committee**

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

## APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL

### APPROPRIATION BILL

#### Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)

#### Appropriation Bill

#### Transport and Resources Committee, Report

Resumed from 31 August (see p. 2312).



**Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (11.30 am): I rise to speak on the debate in my role as the shadow minister for public works. I specifically want to talk about the Queensland Building and Construction Commission and issues raised during the estimates hearing. Over the last few years we have had a swathe of staff, both senior staff right down to staff who have been in the commission for some time, who have left. They have done that in recent times because they are sick and tired of the political interference that has gone into decision-making and policy making within the QBCC. In the last six years this body has increased its staff by 40 per cent. If it moves, the Minister for Public Works and Procurement will regulate it. If it benefits the union movement in some way, he will regulate it to formalise that benefit. We asked pointed questions about interference in the day-to-day operations of the QBCC. The minister said the following—

I can categorically assure the committee that operational decisions of the commission are a matter for its officers. Neither the board nor my office nor anyone else has any involvement in those matters.

That statement has enraged both current and former staff of the QBCC. There is example after example of direct board influence in the operations of the QBCC, where board members sit in on staff meetings and where board members give direction with regard to policy development. Over the next short period of time more and more stories will come out from whistleblowers who have had enough of this undue influence by the board, a board that this minister appointed, a board which has as its chairman the former president of the Labor Party, Dick Williams, a board that includes Jade Ingham, a CFMEU heavyweight who has been fined repeatedly for disruptive behaviour on work sites, and the president of the National Fire Industry Association and the CEO of FVS Services Group, Mr Hickman, whose group has benefited directly from the new laws that will put hundreds of small fire protection services out of business. This minister has overseen and, I would argue, facilitated and abetted that process.

We found out this morning that it seems Mr Bassett has done his job as the commissioner and the Labor Party heavies have decided they need to move him on, to find another job for him, so they have found a job for him as the CEO of QLeave. There is only one problem—they forgot to tell the board. Anthony Marx revealed this morning in the *Courier-Mail* that they forgot to tell the board. The current CEO who applied for the job was not told. They found out about it when they read the paper yesterday morning. It is disgraceful that these things happened behind the scenes with the union heavyweights working out where they are going to put people.

I want to tell the minister and the former commissioner—which he will be after this Friday—that we have their testimony on record and it is my goal over these next few months to prove that they misled the parliamentary committee. There are people out there who will back this up. They have to be incredibly careful because they have done everything in legislation to stop whistleblowers revealing what could only be called undue influence at its best and at its worst corruption. This is entirely unacceptable. We will show where board members—not all of them—have undue influence. This is an insult to the good people of the QBCC. Most of them do a fantastic job and are worthy employees.



**Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (11.35 am): The Queensland government is one of the largest procurement agencies in the country. We know that where we spend our money matters because it helps to drive jobs. The Palaszczuk government wants to drive them right here in Queensland. As members can tell, I am incredibly passionate about the Buy Queensland policy so that is where I want to start my estimates contribution today.

Businesses right across Queensland benefit from this policy. I have been informed there are over 500 businesses in the Mount Ommaney electorate alone that are registered to supply the Queensland government—businesses like Queensland Bridge & Civil and Premier Sports & Leisure which has fitted out state schools throughout Queensland with sporting facilities. Even more exciting, since the 2017-18

financial year, the Queensland government has spent over \$400 million with Mount Ommaney businesses. As members know, we have a large industrial subset in my electorate. That is about \$100 million per financial year. That is fantastic. Every single one of these businesses employs more locals from my community. Some of these businesses employ literally hundreds of local people. My motto is where there is one there is more or, in this case, where there is 500 there is more. I want to see more Mount Ommaney businesses continue to sign up to supply the Palaszczuk government through the QTenders procurement process portal.


Of course, one department that excels at the Buy Queensland policy was our first portfolio for the day—that is, Transport and Main Roads. I took the opportunity to ask the minister about the Centenary Bridge upgrade at Jindalee which last year federal member Milton Dick and I were delighted to announce the state and federal government will be co-funding. The design and business case of the project was already funded by the state government, however, the next stage will be equally funded by the state and federal governments and construction will start in 2021. Recently, residents in my electorate and beyond would have received the flyer from Transport and Main Roads in their letterbox and my flyer about upcoming community consultation that the federal member and I will be conducting—or at least I will be conducting because poor Milton has informed me he is going to be stuck in quarantine.

I have mentioned before that Transport and Main Roads uses over 90 per cent Queensland materials sourced from local suppliers like Wagners Concrete in Wacol. This creates a second layer of jobs in the procurement of equipment and materials to construct these world-class projects. It is a real credit to the department and the minister. I am excited that the Centenary Motorway is the first project that is going to be undertaken using the best practice framework.

With the recent decision to award the Olympics to Queensland in 2032—which I am sure every single member of this House is just thrilled about—there is even more opportunity to partner with the federal government, as fifty-fifty partners in the Olympics, on road projects right across Queensland. As we see Olympics planning get underway, this is exciting news for road projects right across Queensland.

Not a week goes by that I do not have a Mount Ommaney constituent contacting me about renewable energy. I am proud of the Palaszczuk government's commitment to 50 per cent renewable energy by 2030 and the landmark \$2 billion commitment that our government has made to reach that figure. It is really exciting. We need a mix of solar, hydro and wind. The minister was able to talk in some detail about some of the projects that we will see get underway in the coming years. We need an energy mix that reflects the changing face of Queensland.

I also thank the members of the secretariat, the public servants who spent hundreds of hours preparing for estimates, the ministers and their staff. A lot of hard work goes into it. I thank all of the members of the committee who came along to ask questions. In one of the earlier estimates hearings this year, during his section of questioning I heard the Clerk of the Parliament comment that the value of the estimates process is not just about the questions asked on the day; it is actually in the preparation and the reflection that comes with the process of preparing for estimates. I completely agree. That process of reflection and contemplation is a really important one. As I have said, I thank the secretariat, my entire committee and my chair, Shane King, for doing a wonderful job. I commend the report to the House.

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (11.40 am): I rise to make a brief contribution on report No. 10 of the Transport and Resources Committee. First of all, I want people to understand why we have estimates and then I will comment on it.

**Ms Boyd:** Oh please.

**Mr WATTS:** While the member for Pine Rivers might want to interject with 'Oh please', maybe the member for Pine Rivers should listen up and then she would understand what her job is in this place.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Krause): Order! Member for Toowoomba North, you will direct your comments through the chair, please.

**Mr WATTS:** Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I appreciate your comments.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Toowoomba North, do not reflect on the chair, please.

**Mr WATTS:** The key purpose is for the executive to explain to the rest of the parliament what they are doing and for the rest of the parliament to analyse what they have done with the money, what they have done with their policies and what has happened. What I find fascinating is the process. Once



we get into the room a ministerial statement is read, which is great and we appreciate that. Then we get to ask some questions. Our chair did a good job of making sure he was fair and balanced. To be honest, our questions were answered well for the most part.

However, what is frustrating in the process is that we then get Dorothy Dixier questions to which the minister reads the answers. That is just a waste of the parliament's time. It is a charade that we do not need to have. It is not analysing anything. The minister knows the question is coming. He reads the answer that was typed up prior to the preparation of the question. It is a complete and utter waste of everybody's time. Not only is the public frustrated by that charade; they become very despondent about whether the government is actually open, transparent and accountable.


There were a few questions that I would have liked to have asked if only we had more time and were not listening to more and more ministerial statements in answer to Dorothy Dixier questions. One of my questions would have been: could Acland get approval? There is nothing stopping the government from approving the Acland coalmine and giving people back those jobs, which would give the economy just to the west of me a massive and significant boost. Coalmines have been opened up in other parts of the country but clearly they do not influence the Green voters of Brisbane, or their preferences, in quite the same way. I ask the minister to look at that.

I would have liked to ask the transport minister more particularly about passenger rail. I asked a question about passenger rail. The federal government has given several million dollars for an investigation. The people of Toowoomba are desperate for a public transport option such as used to exist back in the sixties. You used to be able to catch a train from Toowoomba to Brisbane. Now you can do it only once a week. Railmotors used to run in our area. There is a great opportunity to pull ourselves forward, out of the late 1800s when the railway line was built, and upgrade it just a fraction. After 150-odd years maybe the minister could invest some money in a tunnel for inland rail and passenger rail could possibly be put on that line. It might be a revelation to him, but the people of Toowoomba have been calling for that for about 100 years. Hopefully, he will be listening.

Inland rail needs to be built. We need to make sure that the minister and all the wheels of government are very comfortable in saying, 'Okay, we've done the investigation, we've done all these things, it is all approved and it just needs to be built.' The feds have put the money on the table. I do not really care how it arrives at the Brisbane port. We need to trust the experts and the engineers. We just need to get on with building that project.

In my electorate the tunnel will go right near Boundary Street. We have asked several questions about this. Boundary Street could be connected with Old Goombungee Road to give connectivity to the people of Highfields and Wilsonton into the future, stopping the massive congestion that we see on the New England Highway as we come into town. That is an obvious project. We should be securing the corridor, we should be doing the business plan and we should be making sure that we protect those kinds of sites for the future.

Those are just a couple of issues but, again, time is short because we all know that this parliament operates under a guillotine so that the dictatorship opposite can rule without any transparency and without any accountability. The things that are missing in this parliament are transparency and accountability. We need to make sure that things such as the estimates hearings function much better for the people of Queensland.

 **Mr McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (11.45 am): I acknowledge the work of the committee and, in particular, the excellent work of the chair, the member for Kurwongbah. I also acknowledge the Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen in delivering a record energy budget for Queenslanders that will deliver more jobs through cleaner, cheaper power for our homes and businesses. However, the LNP just do not get it. It is clear from their statement of reservation that they neither support nor comprehend the enormous opportunity that renewables and hydrogen represent for Queensland. They raised questions around our 50 per cent renewables target, energy storage, investor confidence and broader energy policy, all of which were answered comprehensively during the estimates hearing but clearly did not sink in. I am happy to clear it up for them again.

We are delivering on our 50 per cent renewable energy target by 2030 and we are making remarkable progress, made all the more remarkable given that in 2015 when we came into office there was almost no operational large-scale solar or wind farms in Queensland after the LNP had cut off our renewables industry at the knees and were planning to sell our energy assets. Today there are more than 3,200 megawatts of large-scale operational renewables across our Sunshine State. Already renewables have delivered around \$10 billion in investment and supported 7,000 jobs in construction alone. With the highest uptake of rooftop solar in the world also generating 3,600 megawatts, we are well on the way to reaching our 50 per cent renewable energy target.

Those figures will continue to grow rapidly because the Palaszczuk government is working in partnership with industry and communities towards a renewable future. Through our signature \$2 billion Queensland Renewable Energy and Hydrogen Jobs Fund, we will support government owned businesses and expand ownership of renewable energy generation and storage, fund projects to develop our hydrogen industry domestically and create local jobs, and create even more jobs by exporting Queensland's sunshine and wind to the world as well as expanding our publicly owned renewables in a way that drives local manufacturing jobs. We have already invested \$145 million in our Queensland renewable energy zones and we have had more than 60 gigawatts of clean energy projects in the pipeline through them, with 192 projects already registering their interest. That includes wind and solar projects as well as batteries, pumped hydro storage and hybrid sites. Our renewables industry is now worth over \$8.5 billion and this incredible additional interest is a huge vote of confidence from business to invest in our supercharged renewable future.

We also have a plan to turn our abundance of renewables into job-creating new industries such as hydrogen. Stanwell plans to construct a 3,000 megawatt export-scale renewable hydrogen facility on 236 hectares at Aldoga, west of Gladstone. I am very proud that CleanCo will kick off work to establish a future energy and hydrogen project at our local Swanbank Power Station. We are investing \$1.5 million to develop a concept-level design to establish the precinct and create jobs. The project will look at renewable hydrogen production and refuelling facilities, an onsite solar farm and modifications to feed renewable hydrogen into the existing high-efficiency low-emission gas power station. This will bring more jobs and more industries through cleaner, cheaper energy and put our local community in Bundamba at the forefront of hydrogen energy technology and jobs.

Finally, the LNP in their statement of reservation stated—

... business and environmental groups, have been calling for certainty on the future of the Queensland Energy market.

...

Dr Kerry Schott from the Energy Security Board has described the current energy market as anarchy.


When we actually look at the quote from Dr Kerry Schott, which is from an article in 2018, we see that it was in relation to the failed National Energy Guarantee of the federal LNP government. The article, headed “‘I haven't left anger yet’: NEG architect slams policy “anarchy””, states—

Energy Security Board chairwoman Kerry Schott said she remained bitter over the dumping of the signature energy plan when Malcolm Turnbull was deposed as prime minister in late August.

‘I'm still going through the stages of grief, and I haven't left anger yet,’ ...

The LNP have been caught out in their report.

*(Time expired)*

 **Mr SAUNDERS** (Maryborough—ALP) (11.50 am): I rise to speak to the estimates report of the Transport and Resources Committee. Firstly, I thank the chair and the ministers. I particularly like the cufflinks the chair is wearing today. They are absolutely brilliant.

All we are hearing from those opposite is negativity. In my role as Assistant Minister for Regional Roads I have been on some trips recently. I have travelled thousands of kilometres around regional Queensland, and I can say that the people in regional Queensland are very happy with the Palaszczuk government's investment of over \$17 billion over the next 3½ years in regional roads. In places like Longreach, the council has never had so many graders on the workforce. The workforce is happy; they have projects right up to 2024 and continuing beyond.

We drive on roads around regional Queensland. I was born and bred in Longreach. I never thought I would see a bitumen road from Cramsie to Muttaborra. Guess who is delivering that? We hear crickets from the other side of the House. There is plenty happening under Labor: Barcaldine to Aramac and Jericho to Blackall.

Then what do we see? We see the opposition leader go on a road trip. Who wears a suit and tie on a road trip in Western Queensland? That is how out of touch those opposite are with regional Queensland. Everywhere I travel they say, ‘Who? It is good to see you blokes out here. You're the only people we see in regional Queensland. You're the only government that is delivering for regional Queensland.’

While I was travelling up the Bruce Highway the other day, I called in to the electric vehicle charging station at Miriam Vale. I talked to the people there who were charging their cars. They were saying how great the Electric Super Highway delivered by the Palaszczuk Labor government is. They were talking about how they can get in their electric cars and go right up the Bruce Highway. That is being delivered by the Palaszczuk Labor government.

All we hear from the other side is 'the estimates this' and 'the estimates that'. What about the member for Callide? I was out in his territory the other day. Talk about being MIA! No-one knows him. When you ask, 'Where is the member for Callide?', particularly in Biloela, Monto and other places, they do not know him. He is talking about running for the federal seat of Flynn. I really am worried for the people of Flynn if he is elected because he is doing nothing as the member for Callide. All he is doing is worrying about trying to get into federal parliament.

We are delivering in spades right around regional Queensland. The transport industry is very happy. Councils are more than happy with what this government is delivering in regional Queensland. As I said, I have been doing a lot of kilometres travelling around. When the minister and I get out and talk to people, we are engaging with the public and asking them what they want. We are spending over \$17 billion on roads in the next 3½ years in regional Queensland, creating a lot of jobs.

What a great job the member for Springwood has done working with the foundry people and addressing electricity prices. He has kept alive the foundry in Maryborough, saving 122 jobs in Maryborough. It is absolutely brilliant. I cannot thank the minister enough on behalf of the workers at the foundry in Maryborough and the people of Maryborough city. This is what this government does. This is a traditional Labor budget—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Krause): Member for Maryborough, could you resume your seat, please. Unfortunately for you, the time allowed for this debate has expired.

Report adopted.

### **Legal Affairs and Safety Committee, Report**

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Krause): The question is—

That the report of the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee be adopted.



**Mr RUSSO** (Toohey—ALP) (11.54 am): I rise in the House to support the proposed expenditure, as detailed in the Appropriation Bill 2021, for the following areas of the committee's responsibility: justice and Attorney-General, women and the prevention of domestic and family violence, police, corrective services, and fire and emergency services.

Consideration of the budget during estimates allows for public examination of the responsible ministers and the chief executive officers of agencies within the areas of responsibility as outlined above. The committee's recommendation is that the proposed expenditure for the committee's areas of responsibility, as detailed in the Appropriation Bill 2021, be agreed to by the Legislative Assembly without amendment.

On behalf of the committee, I thank the ministers and their staff, and the officials from the relevant departments for their attendance and for providing detailed answers to questions from the committee during the estimates hearings. I also thank the secretariat staff, the Hansard staff, the parliamentary broadcasting staff and all of the other parliamentary staff for their assistance.

I will now speak about some of the important aspects of the estimates hearing as highlighted by the ministers. The Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence informed the committee of the government's significant and broad reform program being delivered to keep Queenslanders safe and foster a fairer and more inclusive society.

The heads of jurisdiction, led by the Chief Justice, responded rapidly during the COVID lockdowns to ensure Queenslanders continued to have access to justice. Audio and video links in courts and allowing various documents to be signed and witnessed electronically by video link are just two of the temporary measures used during both COVID lockdown waves. Online technology solutions were developed and implemented, with work underway to make some of these measures more permanent.

We know it is the border closures that have kept Queenslanders safe, but this has resulted in an unprecedented demand for assistance from government by Queensland consumers. The Office of Fair Trading received a 21 per cent increase in demand for their service, compared to the previous financial year, and they processed a record 17,482 complaints, 1,400 of which related to COVID-19.

The investment in justice includes an additional \$7 million for QCAT, which is one of Queensland's busiest jurisdictions. Almost \$5 million has been invested in coronial services and the implementation of reforms in response to the 2018 Queensland Audit Office report. The minister


advised the committee that the government will establish a second coronial registry within the Coroners Court of Queensland, and that the Sentencing Advisory Council has been asked to review the sentencing of offenders convicted of serious violent offences.

The government's commitment to advancing gender equality and respect for women and girls across the state is as strong as ever. The current Queensland Women's Strategy has helped us make significant progress towards gender equality, and work has begun on the new strategy to find solutions to the ongoing impacts created by this pandemic as well as continue to look at ways to eliminate the harassment of women in the workplace and in broader society and to address the gender pay gap.

The committee welcomed the Minister for Police, who informed the committee of the government's investment in policing. First the minister informed the committee of the tragic death of Senior Constable Dave Masters, who was killed while doing his job keeping Queenslanders safe. I offer my condolences to his family.

These are historic times for the Queensland Police Service. The Queensland Police Service is going through an unprecedented period of reform, underpinned by yet another record budget, a massive infrastructure program and the biggest investment in police personnel in three decades. Queensland will have a police service that is bigger, more efficient, better resourced and more agile than ever before.

The pandemic has demonstrated, like never before, the key role the Queensland Police Service plays in maintaining public safety and supporting government administration. Police officers are on the borders, in our airports and in our quarantine hotels keeping the community safe. The Queensland Police Service is world class, and that is without dispute.

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (11.59 am): This year's estimates process again highlighted the reality that there is very little time for a thorough investigation of the expenditure of over \$1.13 billion in the portfolio areas of Attorney-General, justice, women and the prevention of domestic and family violence. I have no problem with the chair of the committee. I thank those members of the committee from the non-government side who afforded me the opportunity to ask questions. Within the agreed time limits there was only the odd interruption to my questions by government committee members and, quite frankly, they were easily dealt with.

The reality is that it is an extremely limited time for the examination of all the statutory bodies of which, as the committee sets out, there are more than nine. Included in those nine are: the Public Trustee; the CCC; Legal Aid Queensland; the Queensland Human Rights Commission; the Legal Services Commission; the Queensland Family and Child Commission; and the Electoral Commission of Queensland. There are quite a number of bodies. Time allowed for questions of these bodies was 90 minutes and that time was divided equally between non-government and government questions. Again, I acknowledge the chairman was fair and reasonable in his allocation of the time for questions. In effect, we had 45 minutes to question those bodies, some of which have had serious questions over their operation and activities and consequent expenditure of public funds. That is obviously very limiting.

The second session was similarly limited, as it had to be, because of the need to deal not only with the Attorney-General and justice aspects of the minister's portfolio but also with the important portfolio areas of women and the prevention of domestic violence. My colleague the member for Whitsunday will address those issues. By any measure, this is extremely limited and means a substantial amount of the expenditure in this vote is not scrutinised as it ought.

As a result, we directed our questions to expenditure and operations of the Crime and Corruption Commission. Regrettably, answers to some questions were incomplete, including the CCC expenditure on the investigation into the Logan City Council and the Moreton Bay Regional Council. Questions taken on notice to be answered at a later time unfortunately could not, according to CCC, adequately explain the expenditure on those investigations. The chair of the CCC could not update the committee on investigations underway into the appointment of former under treasurer Frankie Carroll, one assumes due to sensitive operational issues. We await the outcome of that investigation, hopefully in the near future.

We also learned during the course of the examination that the CCC's purchase of the Nexis case management system is plagued with delivery problems and notice to suspend the contract has been sent to the vendor. There is \$2 million plus tied up in that system. It seems this is another instance of IT systems promising much, delivering far less and causing more wasted money on the part of taxpayers.

Of necessity and due to time limits, important questions to other bodies could not be raised. That, as I said previously, is unfortunate.

In the second session I sought details of the costs of the failed prosecutions in the needles in strawberries case, the Logan City Council councillors case and the Moreton Bay Regional Council case. Somewhat incredibly, it seems that the DPP cannot quantify how much has been spent on these failed prosecutions—a situation that would be absurd in any private practice. This has been a substantial expense involving many hundreds of hours of DPP time and resources. It seems remarkable that there is no reliable estimate of costs.

It is important that this expenditure is accounted for because the waste or misuse of public money means it is not going to other services that are needed. In this regard, it is apparent that the government has no plan to deal with what has been described as the crisis in legal aid funding, especially for private practitioners. The Attorney was unable to offer any reassurance that rates for legal aid, which have not changed since 2018, will be reviewed. The danger in this is that fewer private firms, barristers and expert witnesses will offer their services and that will increase the burden on the hardworking officers of the Legal Aid office and, importantly, it will limit access to justice.

Having said that, I joined with the Attorney-General in commending the work of the courts and the department in ensuring the courts have continued to function quite effectively during the current pandemic. There are two exceptions. That is the delays being reported in the Coroners Court. While funding for the triage team has been extended and there is an additional registry team, there is no doubt the delays are continuing and the Attorney could not give any reassurance that those delays will be relieved any time soon. QCAT is similarly operating under a substantial burden of underfunding, although the announcement of extra funds to appoint additional members is welcome. The reality is that a jurisdiction set up to resolve matters quickly and inexpensively is hamstrung in its ability to do so. In passing, I note the retirement of His Honour Justice Daubney as president of QCAT and thank him for his service.

The Attorney-General admitted that her ministerial staffer being used as part of the Premier's private TV station, while not affecting funds in the department, is regrettable.

*(Time expired)*



**Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (12.04 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee's 2020-21 budget estimates report. It was my privilege during this year's estimates hearing to talk to the exceptional work being done across the justice system and the important work that the Palaszczuk government continues to do to keep Queensland women and children safe. The ongoing safety and welfare of Queenslanders is a key priority of this government. We make no apologies for investing in areas that protect Queenslanders.

That stands in stark contrast to those opposite. Their statement to the committee report and their line of questions during the hearing speaks volumes on their inability to support and protect Queenslanders. If the member for Maroochydore does not understand the operational details of the CCC can I suggest she write a letter to the CCC instead of wasting valuable time during a hearing—after all, she is the shadow minister for integrity. The member for Clayfield was quick to jump up and down, suddenly concerned about funding for Queensland's justice services like Legal Aid Queensland. I am not sure I need to remind him that he was the treasurer when the LNP were last in government and they cut funding to Legal Aid—and not just Legal Aid; they cut funding to the CCC, the OIC and Victim Assist Queensland.

It was the LNP that abolished specialist courts. It was an LNP-led government that cut 507 full-time jobs from the Department of Justice and Attorney-General. It is a bit rich for those opposite to feign concern for Queensland's justice system. The former attorney-general, the member for Kawana, could not even manage to arrive at the hearing on time to ask a question. It was quite a bizarre appearance, I have to say.

The statement from the opposition included in the committee's report does reek a little of desperation. I would remind those opposite that it is not an admission to say that the DPP and the CCC are always looking at how they can improve their processes. In fact, that is a basic tenet of responsible government.

I know that the member of Whitsunday was not a part of the LNP government, but she asked about domestic and family violence at the hearing. I take the opportunity to remind her and the House of the LNP's record. It was those on the opposite side of the House who slashed funding to critical frontline domestic and family violence services. This included: \$150,000 cut from the Domestic Violence Prevention Centre on the Gold Coast; \$40,000 cut from DV Connect; \$68,000 cut from North Queensland Combined Women's Services; over \$50,000 cut from the Ipswich Women's Centre Against

Domestic Violence; \$51,000 cut from Family Emergency Accommodation Townsville; over \$38,000 cut from the Cairns Regional Domestic Violence Service; \$33,000 cut from the Centre Against Sexual Violence; \$40,000 cut from the Domestic Violence Resource Service in Mackay; almost \$30,000 cut from the Logan Women's Health and Wellbeing Centre; and \$38,000 cut from the Migrant Women's Emergency Support Service.

The member for Whitsunday also raised concerns about a lack of pet friendly refuges. Again, I take the opportunity to remind the member that it was this government that opened the first new refuges in Queensland in over 20 years. It is this government that has invested in and upgraded refuges, including the recently opened Macleod Refuge on the Gold Coast that now has several pet friendly apartments so women can keep their pets with them in times of crisis. We are investing \$160.9 million to provide housing and specialist homelessness services for vulnerable people, especially older women.

The member for South Brisbane wasted valuable time complaining about not having enough time to ask questions yet it seems she was asking the wrong minister questions about housing policy. She had to repeat that question the next day at a completely different committee, wasting even more valuable time.

There are two members I have not mentioned yet—two members who were sadly missed due to their absence. I should say that the member for Glass House was present however could not even be bothered to ask me or my officials a question, so he probably should have stayed home. Then there was the member for Mudgeeraba, the shadow minister for women. In typical LNP fashion—the party that has such a long way to go in terms of women representation—the shadow minister for women did not even show up to ask a question about how we are putting women front and centre of our economic recovery.

I want to thank the committee chair, who did a fabulous job as always, and all the committee members for their contributions during this estimates hearing—


**Ms SIMPSON:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I think the minister should know about the convention of not referring to members who were not present because they can have very valid reasons for not being present.

**Ms Pease:** In the chamber.

**Ms SIMPSON:** It extends also to the committees, so it is an abuse of that convention.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, member for Maroochydore. I will take some advice on that. Minister, there is a convention against referring to members' absences from the House. Some would argue that that also extends to members' absences in committees. I ask you to refrain from further reference to that.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I also acknowledge the secretariat and the parliamentary staff who did a fantastic job operating under the circumstances of COVID-19. It would not be easy to make sure that so many people were socially distanced, and I thank them for all their work. I commend the report to the House.

 **Ms CAMM (Whitsunday—LNP) (12.10 pm):** I rise to contribute to the budget estimates report of the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee. While I note the trip down memory lane that the Attorney has just shared with me given that I was not a member of this House back in 2012, I would like to equally remind her that it was in fact the LNP government that instigated the *Not now, not ever* report and initiative, which has now been adopted and implemented by the Labor government. What a great piece of work that was, led by Quentin Bryce, which went a long way in supporting women across our great state.

I would also like to outline that the \$25.6 million that was contributed by the Scott Morrison coalition government in response to COVID-19 and domestic and family violence was very much welcomed by our state of Queensland. It was disappointing that the Queensland government co-contributed only \$7.5 million as part of their COVID response to domestic and family violence. In comparison, the Victorian government contributed \$20 million, which equated to an 65 per cent proportion of the federal government's contribution, leaving Queensland's contribution at only 29 per cent. I think we still have a long way to go before we can be lecturing other sides of the House about how we are funding domestic and family violence equally across the states in this nation.

I would also like to highlight that, since 2016, under the current Labor government there has been no increase to core funding which services across the Queensland domestic violence service network have been advocating for. It was pleasing to hear the director-general outline that in the current negotiation of service agreements they would consider looking at the reporting methods, including


outputs and the increased administration burden that is being felt by services that are under enormous pressure on the back of COVID-19 and the impacts of continued lockdowns and uncertainty. In particular, Cairns has seen an increase of 200 per cent in demand for women's legal services on the back of those impacts.

I would also like to outline that the angst felt amongst the service sector—in particular on the back of the \$7.5 million in COVID additional funding—was very challenging during the budget process. When the government announced the \$7.5 million would continue, the department neglected to communicate that formally with individual services across our state. The consequences of that led services across our state to make HR decisions and project decisions because of the level of uncertainty delivered from this Labor government. It was noted that decisions were made on notifying services of the extension of their funding in the last week of the financial year. Many of those services—non-government and not-for-profit organisations that operate with volunteer boards—deserve a high level of respect from this Labor government and an understanding that they are dealing with significant demand for services, not just on the back of COVID-19 but, at the government's own admission, due to population growth across our state.

I would also like to highlight that, while we welcomed investment in refuges, it has taken almost six years for the minister, along with the housing minister, to convene a housing crisis round table for women and children fleeing domestic violence across this state. In relation to the housing round table, the minister was not able to outline what outcomes were to be achieved, what goals were set and any time frames for deliverables. We continue to watch that space.

Without a doubt, in terms of the housing crisis, domestic and family violence is having significant impacts on women's economic security across our state. We know that the displacement of families, and in particular children, is the most contributing factor for homelessness. Just on the pet-friendly refuges, while the minister did outline and confirm that this government has invested \$100,000, it does not compare to the \$500,000 that we see New South Wales contribute, nor does it compare to the \$1.3 million that we see Victoria contribute.

We fall behind our state counterparts when it comes to investing in women, children and the prevention of domestic and family violence. I certainly hope that through the national partnership agreement the government can make a greater contribution to what is a significant need across our community.

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (12.15 pm): I start by acknowledging all the participants in this year's estimates process—members of parliament, committee members, departmental representatives from the agencies for which I have portfolio responsibility and Hansard staff. As members know, estimates is a very thorough and detailed process and a lot of work goes into it. From the outset, I want to acknowledge all those contributions.

In this year's estimates we heard in the portfolio space of police, corrective services, and fire and emergency services about our record investment in each of those portfolio areas. We heard about the record investment in the Queensland Police Service—more than 2,025 extra police personnel over five years. We heard about the record investment in Queensland Corrective Services, delivering hundreds more staff but also a massive investment in infrastructure, including a big new custodial correctional facility at Gatton—the 1,000-bed therapeutic model correctional centre in the Lockyer Valley. We also heard about the record investment in Queensland Fire and Emergency Services. It is a record operating budget for the fire and rescue service, a record budget for the Rural Fire Service and a record budget for the State Emergency Service—all of them up this year. Our historic investment in Queensland Fire and Emergency Services will deliver 357 extra firefighters over five years.

These are watershed investments and prove what we say every single day—that is, Labor governments are good for frontline public safety agencies. We invest in the front line, we invest in more personnel, we invest in the resources they need and we deliver the laws that those public safety agencies need to keep our communities safe.

Mr Speaker, if you listen to those opposite, the first thing they always whinge about is not having enough time. In this year's budget estimates we had another record—that is, record time for those opposite. Sixty-five per cent of the time available for questioning was used by the opposition—almost double the time for non-government members to ask questions. Of course we did not really have many good questions anyway. We always had excellent answers but not many good questions at all.

There was a 'gotcha' moment for the member for Kawana. He thought that he had 'got' us when we were speaking about kids in watch houses. He ran off to the media gallery and said, 'I've got the government. I've caught them out.' What the member for Kawana did not appreciate was that young


people have always been in watch houses for normal processing times. That is always the process. For a member of parliament who used to be a minister responsible for youth justice not to know that it is a normal part of processing arrests that people are held in watch houses is a bizarre conclusion for that member to reach.

We also saw some bizarre moments from the member for Burdekin. He was taken by surprise by a few things. They are a little bit confused about youth justice laws. Let me make something very clear for them: recently, in fact only last week, we heard from the Queensland Police Service—we always take advice from the Queensland Police Service—about the laws they need to keep the community safe. What did Assistant Commissioner Cheryl Scanlon say? When she was asked whether she thought breach of bail would assist with helping to keep the community safe she said, 'No, I don't. I have been policing for well over 30 years ... but that,' breach of bail, 'is not the fix for the issues we are faced with here. She went on to say, 'The reverse presumption of bail'—that is what the government has done; we listened to the police—is a very tough measure and we're seeing that actually taking effect.'

Youth justice senior executive director Michael Drane said, 'The changes to the bail legislation are the toughest in the country. There's no doubt about that ... there is no tougher legislation.' That is what this government is delivering because we listen to the experts and we provide our frontline public safety agencies with the resources they need.

Another interesting thing is I was talking at estimates about our investment in youth justice and I was talking about the specialist youth justice prosecutors. I even spoke about the one in Townsville. Only a week or so later the member for Burdekin said, 'We want one of these in Townsville!' He was quoted in the newspaper. Only a week earlier I talked about it in estimates and said there was already one in Townsville. He had to go on to say, 'You caught me out on that.'

There is record investment in our public safety agencies because this government believes in community safety. We believe in our public safety agencies, and we will continue to support them and back them in with the tough laws they need.

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (12.20 pm): I rise to speak to the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee's report into the 2021-22 budget estimates. I thank the committee for granting me leave to appear at the hearing. I certainly want to put on record my appreciation of the respective commissioners for their candour and willingness to answer the questions we asked at the hearing. What that estimates process did, however, was raise more questions than answers, particularly when it came to those crucial areas of police, fire and emergency services and corrective services.

Given that estimates hearings are about questions, Queenslanders have a right to expect answers. Instead, we saw more examples of Labor's failures, more attempts by the minister to deflect blame and, more importantly, issues that have been overlooked. No statement illustrates more perfectly this government's lack of care for victims of crime than the Minister for Police interjecting over the Commissioner of Police to advise that the value of property in vehicles stolen in Townsville by juvenile offenders is 'irrelevant to these proceedings'.

The very reason we have a Police Service in this state is to protect members of the community and their property. Our Police Service is funded for that reason: to protect people and their property. Regardless of the proceedings, Queenslanders expect their police minister to put their safety and the safety of their property first. Police is a massive portfolio—

**Mr RYAN:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I find the imputation in the member's statement offensive and I ask for that statement to be withdrawn.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Krause): I will take some advice.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. My understanding under the standing orders is that for one to take offence and ask for a member to withdraw, the imputation has to apply to the individual. The police minister was not mentioned. I heard the comment 'police is a big portfolio'. I do not see how one can take offence at that when it has not been directly responded to. I cannot see the point of order.

**Mr RYAN:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on the point of order. The member specifically mentioned me and said that I do not take these matters seriously. Of course I do. The inference in that is personally offensive and I ask for it to be withdrawn.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Burdekin, it would aid the passage of this debate in the House if you were willing withdraw. Unfortunately, on this occasion both the Clerk and I are not in receipt of what was precisely said. If you could please aid the House in this respect?



**Mr LAST:** Certainly, Mr Deputy Speaker. I withdraw. Police is a massive portfolio, and the fact that we only managed to get through half a dozen questions demonstrates how flawed the budget estimates process has become.

Turning to Corrective Services now, the estimates hearing revealed yet another deception by this government and the current minister. This time the deception is aimed fairly and squarely at the brave men and women who work in our correction system. While our prisons remain overcrowded due to this government's lack of planning and staff assaults continue to be more than triple the target, this government has not only short-changed staff but has tried to deceive them. While budget documents state there will be an additional 344 staff, the commissioner confirmed there is in fact only an additional 104 staff. Then, of course, we have the \$8 million worth of bunk beds in high-security correctional centres. I have no doubt that Queenslanders were shocked to hear that at best this will provide a bed for an extra 250 prisoners, with each additional bed to cost taxpayers \$32,000 each.

Queenslanders will be appalled to hear that, almost five years after recommendations were made and accepted by this government, victims of domestic violence and other serious crime still do not have the protections that the Sofronoff review recommended. We still have no ironclad commitment that they will be implemented by 30 June next year when the funding runs out.


Moving on to Fire and Emergency Services, we saw the continuation of this minister's usual approach of withholding reviews such as the report into the Townsville Stronger Communities Action Group. I note that up to today it has still not been released, and it should be released in the interests of transparency. The Townsville community deserves to see the results of the review into the actions of that particular group. The SES review has still not seen the light of day despite being finalised 18 months ago. Maybe things will be different when the KPMG review of the QFES structure, which was announced in December 2020 and commenced seven months later, is made public. I guess we will just have to wait and see whether that actually occurs. Perhaps the most concerning issue when it comes to Fire and Emergency Services is the almost \$7 million in cuts to the QFES capital expenditure program and the fact that, despite the actual appropriation revenue for the last financial year being more than double the budget amount, this year's appropriation revenue is almost 46 per cent lower.

Estimates is a process where we ask questions of the minister and we ask questions of the government. I would have loved to have had the opportunity to ask questions around youth offending rates; around the road toll, which is on track to be the worst in history; around the service realignment program; recruitment targets; and of course the Blue Water Review, which is going to have a significant impact on our volunteer marine rescue and coastguard units across the state. Despite the government's attempts to keep the facts hidden from Queenslanders, the estimates hearings proved once and for all that this government is deceptive and disingenuous and that this minister is more about withholding information than being open and accountable—

**Mr RYAN:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I find those remarks personally offensive and I ask for them to be withdrawn.

**Mr LAST:** I withdraw.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Krause): I assume that concludes your contribution, member for Burdekin.

 **Ms BUSH** (Cooper—ALP) (12.27 pm): I too rise to support the committee report. I would like to begin by thanking the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, the Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence; the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services; and the departmental officers for their cooperation in providing information to the committee throughout the process. I would also like to acknowledge the member for Toohey, who was a wonderful chair, and the members of the committee for their valuable contributions. I would also like to thank the committee secretariat and other parliamentary service staff for their assistance on the day.

I was thrilled when I was informed that I would be on the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee. Observing and contributing to how the criminal justice system operates and functions has really been quite a large part of my career and a big part of my life now for over 20 years. Importantly to this debate, I have worked alongside hundreds of people working within the criminal justice system, including: frontline responders; the QPS Child Protection Investigation Unit; victim liaison officers with the ODPP; youth workers in BYDC; and magistrates who preside over critical judgements. I share this to illustrate

the weight with which I entered the estimates inquiry process. I know that preparation for estimates is a process that our public servants also consider seriously; accordingly, I would like to acknowledge them today.

That was, unfortunately, in stark contrast to those opposite on the day who, quite frankly, to my surprise came across as quite disorganised, unprepared and chaotic. Is it any wonder that they were so distracted when we see the events that are occurring this week—with mass exodus and increasing investigation. Having strong oversight and scrutiny is so important to this process, so it was very disappointing. I have to say at one point I looked up and thought we had gained a member of the government to ask some questions, but it was in fact the member for Burdekin. I do not know which line of questioning he was going down but I thank him for his questions.

I would like to acknowledge the work of our fire and emergency services portfolio and corrective services portfolio. I particularly want to acknowledge the new QCS commissioner, Paul Stewart, who I think did a phenomenal job in estimates on the day. It was his first estimates I believe. He did a wonderful job. In the time I have, I would like to speak to some of the investment highlights in the specific areas of police, justice and women.

Debate, on motion of Ms Bush, adjourned.

## WORKING WITH CHILDREN (INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES) AMENDMENT BILL

### Introduction



**Mr KATTER** (Traeger—KAP) (12.30 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities (Justice, Land and Other Matters) Act 1984 and the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 to allow for particular persons to provide services involving children in particular indigenous communities. I table the bill, the explanatory notes and a statement of compatibility with human rights. I nominate the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee to consider the bill.

*Tabled paper:* Working with Children (Indigenous Communities) Amendment Bill 2021 [\[1309\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Working with Children (Indigenous Communities) Amendment Bill 2021, explanatory notes [\[1310\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Working with Children (Indigenous Communities) Amendment Bill 2021, statement of compatibility with human rights [\[1311\]](#).

This is now the third time we have offered this bill to the House. I stand here proudly with my colleagues today after we have discussed issues around this bill. We have received so many complaints, probably like many in this House, about the impact of blue cards in communities. I believe I have had a pretty strong exposure to the unintended consequences of blue cards since their introduction and as they apply in the communities of our First Australians.

This bill is about providing a pathway of prosperity for these communities. It certainly involves the safety and security of the children. With the benefit of hindsight and looking back on the impact of this, I think we are really talking just as much about the prosperity of people in these communities. By that I mean that the unintended consequence of this has been an overreach so that too many people are getting captured in this net and it is raising the bar too high for fragile people with a fragile demeanour who are trying to re-engage.

At the outset, we need to acknowledge that the first thought about this is that it is about child sex offenders, but the blue card's reach gets anyone with a drink-driving fine, a home-brew offence in Mornington Island, DVs and assault charges. That makes it much more complex when considering the impact of this bill. It is very easy to dumb this debate down to its lowest common denominator and say, 'We've got to keep the children safe.' Of course we do—who would not think that—but we need to acknowledge the unintended consequences and I would argue that the situation is a lot more complicated than that.

I would like to go through the application of the bill and what we are trying to achieve. The bill is limited to Indigenous communities around the state. It is not every town and it is not every city; it is Indigenous communities. The genesis of this bill for me was when a friend contacted me through Education and said, 'Rob, can you do something about the blue card?' They had a lady in the community with four or five foster kids at home but she had to be sacked from her job at the school because she could not get a blue card. That really seems ridiculous. We do not know all the ins and outs of that case so it is difficult to judge, but I have heard that story over and over again.

I can scarcely touch foot inside any of those communities—and it is not even discrete communities; I am talking about Normanton and Burketown as well—without someone approaching me and saying, ‘Can you help me out? I’m trying to get back in the workforce and move ahead, but my wife and I can’t get a job.’ They are trying to get jobs as a groundsman at the school or as a builder with the state government to go in those areas but they cannot get jobs.

This came up also in Mornington Island. They were looking to do a locals card to get more focus and more local autonomy in some of the decision-making. Mornington Island has a prohibition so there is an alcohol ban, and they wanted to manage it more locally and bring some autonomy in. That is where it grew for me. I could not have been a lightning rod for this issue; like I said, I think most people must get touched by it. I cannot imagine how you cannot if you are involved with Indigenous communities because it seems so pervasive. I have had three mayors say they have had problems with blue cards. They have had councillors who cannot get blue cards. There are so many people in those communities who cannot get blue cards but the majority of the jobs in those areas are government jobs that require a blue card.

The fundamental principle of the bill is about the decision-making for the judgement calls. This does not apply to all of the calls as we are not challenging the disqualifying offences on the blue cards. This is about the judgement calls. They should not be made by someone in Brisbane who does not know them, does not know their history, does not know their journey and does not know where they are at the moment. They need to go back to the local justice groups in the community. If those local justice groups do not have the maturity to make those decisions, then they had better learn.

I think it is quite paternalistic and condescending to think they cannot make those decisions because it is their kids we are trying to protect, not ours. I think it is very condescending to think that an officer in Brisbane would make a better judgement call on who should be allowed to work with their kids. They should be given the right and power to make those decisions. We also think that should be done in consultation with the local police and magistrate who can help navigate through some of those family problems when making those decisions.

That is the main principle of the bill. I know throughout the course of the debate and the committee hearings we will hear the same argument—that we are compromising the safety of the kids—but I disagree with that. I disagree that it will compromise the safety of the kids and I will tell the House why I think that. Firstly, most of the issues we face in the communities are alcohol related and in some cases drug related. Alcoholism prevails where there is an absence of meaningful work, hope and prosperity in their life. That is where we have the bad outcomes in the home. The best way to make that home safer is to get mum and dad into meaningful work. These people are probably the biggest risk of bringing harm to their kids, but when they want to turn their life around and try to move ahead, we are increasing the barriers for them to get into the workforce. I acknowledge that the government has attempted to improve the process, but I have to say it is really just tinkering at the edges. It is way off the mark in terms of a practical and meaningful change that makes some difference to the way these people can access work.

Another practical thing that needs to be acknowledged is the timing on blue cards. An example would be when someone has taken themselves off the drink and said to their family that they are going to turn their life around and go for a job as a teacher aide or a student attendance officer at a school. When they present there, the first thing they are told is, ‘Mate, you haven’t got a blue card. We’re going to have trouble with this but just hold on. We can appeal and we’ll try to rush through the appeal process.’ I have literally had this happen to me a number of times. We have gone into bat for them and we keep ringing down here, but it takes six months and they have floated by that stage. People lose heart; I would lose heart. They are trying to break out of this cycle so the timing needs to be made shorter.

Again, honourable members could say that puts the kids at risk. It might, but the only chance of these kids being safer in the long term is fixing the family unit and fixing these communities. That means access to meaningful work; that has to be a focus as well. If the parents are engaged in the workforce, they will be pulled out of that low point in their life. That must run hand in hand with keeping the kids safe. I know of people’s fears; I would fear it as well if I was the decision-maker or if I was the minister presiding over this issue in government. The fear is the risk that the media will go after them as soon as there is a problem with the kids. I get that, but honourable members must load up their conscience on this with the fact that they are making this impractical and so difficult.

Like I said, there would now be hundreds of comments, conversations and stories of people who have been bitterly disappointed with the way that the blue card has impacted their life. For me, this legislation does not go anywhere near far enough. This legislation is only applying to Indigenous

communities, but I am sure we all have similar stories of people in our communities. There was a young bloke in Mount Isa who was involved in a fight 10 or 15 years ago and he did not even know it was recorded. He went to take the kids away. We were ecstatic that we had someone to take the kids away to the footy carnival in Townsville. However, he could not go. The trip was off because he could not get his blue card. People might say, 'Yeah, but it saved heaps of kids.' Has it? Has it saved a lot of kids? I will come back to that point. The point is that that story can be multiplied a thousand times, and what is the negative outcome of this?

Again, this is well-intentioned policy, but we have worked out, especially in the Traeger electorate, that it does not work. It is doing more harm than good in the way it has been rolled out. We need to modify it—not throw it out; you do not throw the baby out with the bathwater. I am not proposing to throw it out but to modify the policy so it is purpose-built for different communities. Who is going to sit in this House and argue that dealing with these laws on Mornington Island is the same as dealing with them in Brisbane? That is what was said last time, 'You cannot have two sets of laws.' That is garbage. There are two sets of laws. Mornington Island has a prohibition now. That is a separate law. People there cannot walk around the streets having a beer or walk into a house on Mornington Island and have a beer; but you can in Mount Isa and you can in Brisbane. So people should not say there cannot be two sets of laws; there already are.

Kyle Yanner, the Mayor of Mornington Island, has come to Brisbane for this. It meant so much to him and his community, and I have to acknowledge that this journey started on Mornington Island. Personally, he has dealt with it himself and with friends. One of the comments that rings true for me was when Kyle was saying, 'The elders in our community'—and we thought this is best captured by the local justice group—'they will know. They have watched us grow from this to this. They know what our challenges have been and they can put that decision in context so when there is an element of subjectivity to the decision making it goes to the people who have known us and they know the risks.' Like I said, that can create a safer outcome for the kids because they will know whether or not that person really is a risk despite their record. I would say in all cases they are in a much better position to make that decision. In most cases, that will mean those people who do deserve a pathway to go forward will have that opportunity.

The statement from Mayor Yanner from Mornington Island that really impressed me was, 'Robbie, it takes the fire out of their bellies.' That must rest on the conscience of people. There are people who are struggling. They are crying out for help. To be honest, they have given up waiting for help from someone in government. Perhaps I am part of that problem; I am not saying it is all the government's fault. I am the local member of parliament for that area. I think they think, 'We can't change this. It is just how it is now.' However, there is nothing worse than destroying people's hope when they are trying to turn their life around. They might have done some time. They might have made some silly decisions. Some of these offences we are talking about could be related to home-brew or drink driving.

There are some pretty high rates of violence and criminal activity in these communities. If that were the case in most other communities, people might think, 'That is abhorrent,' but we have to put things in context. There are people who want to break out of that cycle and are trying to make life better, but this just seems to be making it harder and harder for them to break out of that cycle. That is exactly the opposite of what they need. I think most people want to do that. Obviously, the barrier is being called out as being soft on crime, 'We must save the kids.' Again, that is just too simplistic an argument to deal with this issue and all the inadvertent effects of this policy.

What we are trying to propose is for people to consider their prior criminal history and be up-front with that. That can include stealing, violence, burglary, unlawful entry of a vehicle—they are sections in the Criminal Code—as well as offences under the Drugs Misuse Act such as trafficking and supplying dangerous drugs. The disqualifying offences are the ones that are sacrosanct; they cannot be touched. Again, someone might say the alarm bells are raised when it comes to drugs. They might say, 'If that person had something to do with drugs we can never give them a blue card, they should never be near kids.' Where is the threshold on redemption? When do these people get to turn their life around? We have all done silly things in our life, but at some point we need to start trying to enable them. People could say that there are mechanisms in this act that do that or there should be consideration of that, but I can assure them whatever is in place already is not working; I can say that with some certainty.

There are questions that have to be asked during consideration of this bill. Obtaining a blue card is a formal process for people who go to the schools to coach the kids at footy, who are active at the PCYC, who are a builder going onsite to do work for the government at the hospital or at the school, or

who work in the council because most of the jobs in these communities require some exposure to kids. Bravehearts identified the fact that in 70 to 90 per cent of cases the offender is someone the child knows personally. Furthermore, the Australian Bureau of Statistics safety survey indicated that for participants who had experienced sexual abuse before the age of 15, 13.5 per cent identified the abuse came from their father or stepfather, 30 per cent another male relative, 16.9 per cent a family friend, 15.6 per cent an acquaintance or neighbour and 15.3 per cent by other known persons. That is saying that the vast majority—85 per cent—of people are known to the children and their family in similar connections. They are people who never needed a blue card to get access to kids. Obviously there is still 15 per cent of people for whom the system would work in preventing them access to kids if they were a risk to kids. I am not saying the blue card system is completely useless. However, the blue card is not a fail-safe system. It becomes more relevant in the remote communities where interaction with the family has proven to be a much bigger risk than going to the school or the PCYC, which is where the blue card comes into effect, and I gave that example earlier of the lady who had foster kids at home but could not get a job as a teacher aide at the school.

There needs to be some practicality. It is going to take some courage from the government. I am aware of the risks of the government being labelled as not doing a good job of protecting the kids. I expect we will hear ad nauseam as counterpoints to what I am saying that child safety is paramount. All I can say is that is a gross oversimplification of the problem. The problem is much deeper and more complicated than that. If we are all here to try to improve on policy that has real outcomes for people, I think this is what we should be focused on.

I would like to talk about how this policy change can work on youth crime. Anyone in North Queensland—certainly my colleagues are—would be patently aware of the impact on the community of the rise in crime and the unbridled activity that seems to be going on at the moment. We are deeply concerned about that. It seems to be getting worse and worse.

I think I say this rather bravely, but when constituents come to my office and ask, 'What are you doing about youth crime?' one of the first things I say is 'blue cards'. They say, 'What the hell does that have to do with blue cards?' I say, 'The kids are on the streets because it is not safe in the home. Ninety per cent of the time it is a dysfunctional family situation. The best way to make the family more functional is to give them something purposeful in life.' Ninety-nine per cent of the time, that is meaningful work. Most of those people who go to get meaningful work invariably cannot get a blue card. If we are trying to improve the family unit so it is safer at home so the kid can get off the street, that is how we attack it. We must start there. It might get a bit ugly. It is not a perfect solution. There will always be gaps in any legislation and parts of it will be bad, but there is way too much bad with this policy. It is doing so much damage through good intentions. We have to suck it up, take a look at it and modify it to make it more purpose-built for the different types of communities around Queensland.

We as a state are so diversified. It is now a bit of a KAP catchcry that Queensland is way too big for one set of rules. We have to be a bit more mature in the way we apply these policies. I am sure that a lot of officers working in this space will be feeding information to the government—and perhaps the opposition—that this makes their life hard. I acknowledge that judgement calls are hard and that this whole space is fraught with risk, but the government is paid the big bucks to make those decisions.

I want to talk about Mornington Island. I am probably labouring the point, but I think it is highly valid: there are two sets of rules. The policy may have the best intent, but we have to sit back and say, 'Okay, that did not work.' Alcohol management on Mornington Island is the perfect example. When I was first elected, QPS and the hospitals would say, 'Oh no, Rob. You can't touch the AMPs up there. You have to keep the alcohol ban on Mornington Island. It has done a great job.' Within a couple of years they were begging me to try to get the rules and policy changed, but nothing has been changed. There has been a slight change, but it is a real blight on the government that nothing substantial is changing, because home-brew and drugs got on the island and it made the situation infinitely worse. I would not have foreseen that. I would have thought it was probably a good thing to try at the time, but we have to step back and say, 'All right, that did not work'—it certainly did not work on Mornington Island—'so let's try something else.' The bitter irony is that one of the greatest offences up there relates to home-brew. Magistrates, lawyers and even locals say that court hearing days are full of people appearing for home-brew offences. Subsequently, a lot of people cannot get blue cards for work because we have applied this law. You can see how people up there must be so frustrated.

I will give a real-life, working example. Someone rang me from one of the small gulf towns in my electorate about a gardener at the local school. They said, 'He's a good fella. He's turned the corner. Everyone in town likes this guy.' We tried. It took six to 12 months. The minister's office was very helpful

in trying to push things along. It was not through lack of effort, but the system let this bloke down. He actually got the blue card but the school could not hold the position any longer and employed someone else, so that bloke is unemployed. That is just a revolving-door situation. Unfortunately, because the offence did not happen in an Indigenous community that bloke would not have been captured by this legislation. Like I said, I would like this legislation to go much further, but we need to take small steps. We need to try to give something back to these communities.

We have created these situations for people and we need to look very deeply at some solutions, because there are some pretty confronting statistics and stories in these communities. There are some good people trying to break out of those cycles, and we need to think of meaningful ways to get that going. Saying that we will just put in a cultural program to help people get more comfortable doing the blue card process or send some people up there to pre-empt people's entry back into the workforce in terms of a blue card is nice, but it falls well short of any practical outcome that will really work.

I will always default back to the principle—I think it is true and trumps anything else that will come up in this debate—that the empowerment must go back to those communities. If we really care about the welfare of those kids in the long term and the short term, those judgement calls, outside the disqualifying offences, are much better made by elders in the community than by someone in the Public Service down here. That must create a better outcome. A lot is said in state and federal parliaments about closing the gap and millions of dollars are thrown everywhere to try to fix things, but here is something very practical and real that really does mean something to people up there. People know what it means to get into meaningful work and they know whether you are serious or not. If you are giving them a six-month contract to do something, they know you are not serious. If you are really invested in giving them some autonomy and empowering decision-making, that is when people are grateful and believe you are there to help them.

I ask members to consider that in the way that this bill is approached. We have discussed it. We are always open to looking at amendments and at better ways it can be done. The KAP is not here to try and own this issue; we just want an outcome. It is desperately needed. This is a cry for help from people in communities who are desperate for some beacon to draw them out of unemployment, the cycle of violence and alcoholism. I assure members that those problems just keep getting worse. It is quite safe to say that the worse they get, the worse it will get in Mount Isa, Townsville and Cairns. If people are playing up in a community, they will go down to Mount Isa. If they are playing up in Mount Isa, they will go to Townsville. It plays a very big part in the whole process. We have to really think about going back to the heart of these problems and how to resolve them.

Despite this being the third time this bill has come before the House, I hope that the government and the opposition can think about making some meaningful change in these communities by doing something that will deliver some hope. We need to give them a bit of a leg-up in terms of a right to prosperity and a right to empowerment—something that can at least set us back on the path, because at the moment it is getting worse. They are desperate for help.

**An opposition member:** Not closing the gap.

**Mr KATTER:** We are not closing the gap; it is getting worse. We have to look for solutions. I ask members to go and talk to people in the communities, not just one person. I ask members to go up there and make their inquiries. I have never found anyone on the cape or in the gulf who says that this is a bad idea or that this is not a big problem. Most of those people have been touched by this issue, whether it is they themselves, a family member or a friend. I ask members to please do some consultation. I know this is the third time around, but I am really asking that the bill gets good airtime and that members go to the communities and talk to people. I do not need to be a part of that conversation. I am confident that members will get the required response. Please, let us get an outcome from this.

### First Reading

**Mr KATTER** (Traeger—KAP) (12.59 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

## Referral to Legal Affairs and Safety Committee

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

Sitting suspended from 12.59 pm to 2.00 pm.

## APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL


### APPROPRIATION BILL

#### Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)

#### Appropriation Bill

#### Legal Affairs and Safety Committee, Report


Resumed from p. 2356.

 **Ms BUSH** (Cooper—ALP) (2.00 pm), continuing: Of note at the hearings, we heard of the ongoing impact that COVID is having on the relevant departments. The Queensland courts have achieved a real feat in redesigning their service delivery model to operate during and despite lockdowns. Our recent investment of \$7.4 million to expand and upgrade existing audiovisual capacity in the justice system, including videoconferencing in custody appearances and the permitting of various documents to be signed and witnessed electronically via video link, has allowed the legal system to respond with strength to announced lockdowns. A further \$13 million over four years will strengthen access to justice for Queenslanders, including an additional \$7 million for QCAT and \$5 million for coronial services. This is in addition to the \$1.4 million allocated this year to support the coronial investigation and inquest into the tragic deaths of Hannah Clarke and her three children. We heard of the impending establishment of a second coronial registrar within the Coroners Court of Queensland.

The government continues to prioritise funding to victims of crime. This budget will see an additional \$4 million over four years for Victim Assist Queensland, an organisation that I am proud to declare I have been employed with, to continue to provide timely and targeted financial assistance to victims of crime and to their families. I want to give a shout-out to the current team at Victim Assist Queensland—to Julie Webber, the acting director, to the many assessors, the case managers, the link-up officers, the regional team. They do phenomenal work and I know that this additional funding will help ease their workforce pressures.

We have invested more than any previous Queensland government to strengthen justice responses to domestic and family violence. During the pandemic service providers experienced an increase in demand and an immediate funding boost of \$7.5 million was announced in response to that. The Queensland Police Service also remains dedicated to enhancing its responses to people experiencing domestic and family violence. A national first new online domestic violence reporting tool, specialist police domestic and family violence coordinators across the state, high-risk teams and improved access to frontline technology with mobile QLITE devices now enabled with police protection notices to be issued are some of the proactive policing measures that we were updated on during estimates.

The Palaszczuk government's strong commitment to advancing gender equality and respect for women and girls across the state continues. Our current Queensland Women's Strategy has helped us make significant progress towards gender equality. We heard from the minister during estimates that work has begun on the new strategy which will be informed through comprehensive engagement with government agencies, industries in Queensland, women and girls. The need for a modern and responsive policing and justice system continues to be a priority for Queenslanders and a priority for this government. I commend the Palaszczuk government, the ministers, the staff, the departments, the government's budget and the report to the House.

 **Mrs GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (2.03 pm): Yet again estimates has revealed a Palaszczuk Labor government budget that fails Queenslanders, fails to deliver for the Currumbin electorate and fails to provide local families with hope of a better future. As the deputy chair of the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee, let me take this House through some of the failures LNP opposition members and shadow ministers have uncovered as part of the estimates process this year.

Estimates revealed the expenditure of over half a million dollars of public money to poll Queensland residents on the Labor government's response to COVID-19 and its border policies. The government tried to justify this expenditure on polling as communication and sentiment testing, but that is complete rubbish. The chair of the CCC was asked during estimates whether the use of public money to conduct polling would be a matter the CCC would consider investigating if it was used for a purpose other than an appropriate public purpose. The chair of the CCC responded that that is not currently under investigation but that the chair of the CCC does not necessarily need a complaint in order to open an investigation.

Here is what I think: it is an inappropriate use of public money and instead of this government spending taxpayer money on polling to get itself re-elected it should have spent that money supporting the community that is being asked to bear the burden of these border closures, the community that has been left devastated by these border closures without any targeted financial support.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mrs GERBER:** The estimates process has also established that the Labor government still refuses to reinstate breach of bail as an offence for juvenile offenders.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mrs GERBER:** Rather than introducing breach of bail as an offence, the Labor government legislated to allow monitoring devices on juvenile offenders.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Hart): Pause the clock. Ministers on my right will cease their interjections or they will be warned.

**Mrs GERBER:** Guess how many of these monitoring devices have been issued to juvenile offenders?

**Mr Stevens:** Zero!

**Mrs GERBER:** I take the interjection from the member for Mermaid Beach; the answer is zero. That is correct—zero. Queenslanders do not have faith that this Palaszczuk Labor government can deliver a safe Queensland.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order, members! No more interjections, please, or I will start warning both sides.

**Mrs GERBER:** In my electorate of Currumbin I have been inundated over the past year with messages from frustrated locals affected by juvenile crime—locals who have had their homes broken into and property destroyed. These young offenders know the law, but they also know that the courts cannot hold them. They are taking advantage of decisions made by a Labor government weak on crime. My community is angry and this behaviour cannot be allowed to continue.

Just yesterday I was contacted by Kendall, who lives in the suburb of Currumbin. She has been broken into several times. She has had her car stolen. Kendall is not alone in this experience. Several of her neighbours have also been the victims of youth crime. To add insult to injury, the criminals—some as young as 14—posted videos of themselves in Kendall's stolen car driving at extreme speeds through our local streets. Kendall reports that these young hooners have previously been arrested, but they are already back on the streets continuing their rampage. Our pleas have fallen on deaf ears and our families and friends continue to be targeted by juvenile offenders because instead of reinstating breach of bail as an offence public money has been spent on a failed policy of monitoring devices.


The estimates process also saw serious concerns raised that this state Labor government is incapable of managing prisoner numbers. This gross inability is harmful and is resulting in overcrowding and assaults in our prisons. It is not good enough that Queensland correctional facilities are currently at 125.8 per cent capacity. During estimates the commissioner said that they do not want anyone sleeping on the floor, yet with a capacity of 125.8 per cent there are reports of inmates sleeping on mattresses on the floor. This paints a clear picture that this state Labor government is not fit to keep Queenslanders safe. It is weak on crime and, just as disturbing, this government fails to be transparent.

During estimates the commissioner advised the committee that several measures have been introduced, including OC spray, load-bearing vests and body worn video. When asked on how many occasions the OC spray was used, my LNP colleagues and I learnt the answer was unknown. Currently, this data is not kept. The commissioner revealed that the government was only now in the process of



establishing mechanisms to record OC spray usage. This is not good enough, especially considering that OC spray is a category R weapon. These mechanisms should have been implemented simultaneous to the introduction of the spray.

Continuing the state Labor government's failure to be transparent, the commissioner was also unable to provide details on what assaults on correctional staff remain unresolved or not finalised. Currumbin constituents and indeed Queenslanders across the state deserve so much more from this state Labor government.

 **Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (2.09 pm): Transparency and accountability matter. There are serious deficiencies in the way the Right to Information Act, the RTI Act, is operating in Queensland. There are more and more examples emerging of abuse. During estimates I raised the issue of a specific matter where an RTI officer within the QBCC chose not to release certain documents. I table an email pertaining to that.

*Tabled paper:* Email, dated 23 March 2021, from the Queensland Building and Construction Commission titled 'Request for invoices—Norton Rose Fulbright' [\[1312\]](#).

What is worse is that it was acknowledged that the Office of the Information Commissioner would have released more if the matter had been appealed by the applicant and gone to external review. Serious questions need to be asked about the impartiality exercised by some RTI officers. It makes me wonder how many other examples there are where RTI officers are working to protect the department and the government rather than follow the law with impartiality and independence. RTI officer decision-making must be impartial—it should be under the law—but as that document just tabled indicates, there are major questions about that. Their purpose is not to protect the government.

The community deserves greater access to information and equal access across all sectors of the community to prevent and detect corruption, maladministration and systemic failures. All these matters hurt Queenslanders. They have a right to know and the law should be applied impartially. There are major questions about that not occurring. I did write to the CCC about this matter. I heard the Attorney-General make some smug comment about that. I will table my correspondence and also their response. Disappointingly, the CCC was not interested in this QBCC matter and they have refused to investigate it claiming it is out of their jurisdiction, which is in addition to another recent matter.

*Tabled paper:* Letter, dated 16 July 2021, from the member for Maroochydore, Ms Fiona Simpson MP, to the Chairman, Crime and Corruption Commission, Mr Alan MacSporran QC, and letter, dated 10 August 2021, from the Executive Director, Integrity Services, Crime and Corruption Commission, Ms Elizabeth Foulger, to the member for Maroochydore, Ms Fiona Simpson MP, regarding non-disclosure of information by the Queensland Building and Construction Commission [\[1313\]](#).

**Government members** interjected.

**Ms SIMPSON:** I hear the government members laughing. There is more than just a bit of smoke and fire around the QBCC.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mrs Gerber): Order! Pause the clock. Members in this chamber will cease their interjections. I cannot hear the member on her feet.

**Ms SIMPSON:** The QBCC is at the heart of major concerns about maladministration. It is not the first time the CCC was not interested in a QBCC matter after the CCC refused to investigate a five-year delay to resolve serious misconduct allegations about the QBCC. The QBCC is clearly facing its own integrity scandal with more than 20 senior players at the regulator having left over the past 12 to 18 months.


There are ministers and their minions who think failures with the right to information legislation and the way it is operating is a laughing matter. I have experienced this with a minister's office where they denied documents existed when the RTI officer, who in this case was trying to do their job, asked for them. The minister's office did not give those documents over to the RTI officer. In fact, it was Minister Bailey's office. After nearly 12 months of failing to get a response from the minister's office, it was only after I went to external review through the Office of the Information Commissioner and made it quite clear I knew those documents existed that, surprise, surprise, they turned up.

There is a systemic failure here. It should not be the case that an RTI officer or a ministerial officer not being bothered to go and look for something blocks people's right to information. That is a corruption of the process. It is a systemic failure. It needs to be called out because transparency and accountability matter, be it preventing or detecting corruption, maladministration or systemic failures, because they all equally affect Queenslanders. Whether it is accessing a hospital bed or accessing justice, they are being denied by this arrogant and smug government that just laughs it off.

I want to talk about the State Archives, another statutory body. This has a connection with right to information legislation. While the Public Records Act is administered by a different minister, there is an overlap. We need official records to be secure. We know that there has been a stoush going on with this government trying to resist formal government records being stored. Once again we have examples of that, be it with Minister Bailey or other ministers who were resisting handing over emails that the State Archivist believed should have been captured under the Public Records Act.

**Government members** interjected.

**Ms SIMPSON:** Once again those opposite think this is a laughing matter, but it ties in with transparency and accountability. The State Archivist maybe is a statutory position but they are without the powers they need to resist the fact that there are more senior officers in the department who can deny them, I believe, access to independent legal advice. There are some major questions that still need to be answered but were not because of the limited time in estimates. These include why these roles are not able to act free of interference from government ministers who seek legal advice to press back and refuse to hand over their private emails or other records that should have been official state records. The disrespect for the position of State Archivist has shown that this government does not want to be accountable and it is pressing back against transparency and hiding in the dark.

 **Ms BOLTON** (Noosa—Ind) (2.15 pm): The COVID disrupted estimates hearings of 2021 again highlighted improvements that could be implemented within our committee process. I think there are also improvements that could be made in this chamber from what I have just seen. Previous requests have included a change to the way that questions can be asked, increased time allocation—I know there has been a lot of toing and froing, but I will go into that later—for opposition and crossbench members, the setting of time constraints for questions and answers and providing a segment for non-budget related questions. Research on the way that unicameral parliaments in other jurisdictions, such as New Zealand, Scotland and Canada, operate compared with Queensland was conducted by two of our parliamentary interns and I table the research and practical solutions papers.

*Tabled paper:* Report by Genavieve Beaumont, titled 'Report on the context of parliamentary committee reforms in New Zealand, Scotland and Quebec and research findings' [\[1314\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Document, dated 5 May 2020, titled 'Research Findings: Table 1: Gaps, Opportunities and Recommendations' regarding the committee system [\[1315\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Document, undated, titled 'Panel notes—Current issues with the parliamentary committee system' [\[1316\]](#).

Detailed research shows what we can tweak to have truly effective representation that affords all members equal opportunity to represent their constituents and hold the government to account on their policy and monetary decisions. This includes ensuring that committees can make amendments to legislation, access additional resourcing and layperson expertise and be provided additional allocated chamber time. In addition, bipartisanship, which would allow non-government members to chair committees, either proportionally as New Zealand does or on a rotation of chair between government and non-government members with no casting vote.

Parliament and estimates could benefit by a review of how time is allocated in this chamber. Recommendations utilised globally include limiting ministerial statements and Dorothy Dixers and providing extra opportunities in the first session every day for non-government members to contribute. Previous requests to the Premier and the Committee of the Legislative Assembly to review procedures have been unsuccessful.

In my statement of reservation I have outlined further recommendations that cover issues raised over the last three years which would ensure this House and the estimates process is comprehensive and fair. I table those recommendations.

*Tabled paper:* Document by the member for Noosa, Ms Sandy Bolton MP, regarding recommendations relating to the estimates hearing process [\[1317\]](#).

In relation to the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee budget 2021-22, domestic and family violence and its impact on victims and communities is a key focus, especially as Noosa is underresourced for emergency housing for those fleeing domestic violence. With competing needs across the state, prioritising emergency and affordable housing must be dominant in our efforts. We must also ensure that funding packages to refugees and organisations is increased to deliver targeted services to the children of victims. Even though how funding is spent is determined by the organisation—which was a response from the minister—there has been no increase above CPI over many years to accommodate children in the provision of support services. This is concerning in efforts to break the intergenerational cycles. I welcome the Attorney-General's generous offer to work closely with me on this to provide what is sought by these families and organisations.

With the limited time allocation there were a number of questions that could not be asked. While everyone is saying, 'You have got plenty of time over there', as a member of the crossbench in many of the sessions we had five minutes. That was squeezed between three parties and one Independent, which are so diverse. Sometimes two questions are divvied up between four. That is not an easy feat. One question I could not fit in is about the provision of housing for perpetrators, where appropriate, to allow victims and their children to stay in the family home instead of facing the trauma of relocating to housing, which in my community does not exist. I also wanted to ask about funding for the Electoral Commission of Queensland to ensure the privacy of voter information and the misleading practices used by political parties to obtain voter information. We need this addressed.

Likewise, a review of electoral boundaries is long overdue and needs to be considered in next year's budget to ensure that there is consistency of representation and resourcing for all Queenslanders. Regarding much needed additional police resourcing, including at Teewah Beach, with increasing domestic violence being experienced my community looks forward to being included in the promised extra personnel. I thank Minister Ryan for that. Bushfire resources, training for SES personnel and volunteers, and dealing with youth crime have shown up as deficits. Current and future budgets must be adapted to provide the increases needed and, yes, we have to make sure that we have pilots for the LAT, the large air tanker.


In conclusion, I thank our chair, fellow members of the committee, and the hardworking and tireless secretariat. I thank all of the ministers, their staff, departmental officers and everyone else. Their work is very much appreciated in COVID times. I send my deep gratitude to all workers on the front line. They are just incredible in all ways.

Report adopted.

### **Community Support and Services Committee, Report**

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mrs Gerber): The question is—

That the report of the Community Support and Services Committee be adopted.

 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (2.20 pm): I rise to speak on the Community Support and Services Committee's report on the 2021-22 budget estimates process. The committee made one recommendation: that the proposed expenditure be agreed to. I acknowledge the member for Mansfield, who is currently on leave. She is the chair of the committee and did a fantastic job chairing the committee at the estimates hearing. I am acting in her role at the moment. I also thank all other members of the committee: the member for Cook, the member for Nicklin, the member for Scenic Rim, the member for Burnett and the member for Maiwar. I thank ministers Leeanne Enoch, Craig Crawford and Leanne Linard for their hard work and valuable contributions. In this House we are very fortunate to be supported by fantastic committee secretariats. I thank the secretariat of this particular committee and all of the departmental officers who give up so much of their time during estimates and who do a great job supporting us.

The Community Support and Services Committee has responsibility for the portfolio areas of communities, housing, digital economy and the arts; seniors and disability services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partnerships; and children, youth justice and multicultural affairs. Boosting Queensland's housing supply and increasing housing and homelessness support to Queenslanders has been a major feature of this budget. As part of our Housing and Homelessness Action Plan, a massive \$1.9 billion has been budgeted over four years, which includes \$1.8 billion to increase our social housing supply and \$94.9 million to support the housing and homelessness service system. Across Queensland it is exciting to see this budget funding translated into tangible housing outcomes. For instance, in my electorate I have seen firsthand how Aunty Jill Davidson's Place, a new social housing complex in the Ipswich CBD that was completed at the beginning of the year, has changed people's lives for the better. I thank Minister Leeanne Enoch for coming to Ipswich to officially launch Aunty Jill Davidson's Place a few months ago.


This budget also builds on our government's goal of supporting the arts and cultural services in Queensland, including \$61.7 million over four years to support the preservation of the heritage listed Queensland Cultural Centre. There is \$21 million over four years to support cultural tourism outcomes and regional arts delivery through the World Science Festival, and investment in the Regional Arts Services Network. The arts and cultural network in Queensland is a thriving and adaptable sector. However, over the past 18 months COVID-19 has had a severe impact on the livelihood of artists, performers and live music venues. That is why this government has set aside \$7 million in this budget to extend the Live Music Venue Support program. I know that program has helped a number of live

music venues doing it tough, including, for instance, Banshees Bar & Artspace in my electorate of Ipswich. Recently, Banshees received \$43,000 through the Live Music Venue Support program. That has been a lifeline for them and enabled them to stay open. Banshees services many people and it is great that we can still have live music happening here in Queensland.

We are also committing \$2.7 billion to support the vital work being done in the service areas of seniors, disability and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partnerships. That includes establishing a \$300 million Path to Treaty Fund, one of the most significant actions to promote reconciliation in our state's history. An additional \$20.87 million in funding is to be provided to deliver key initiatives including remote Indigenous land and infrastructure programs, support for the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Foundation scholarship program, programs protecting seniors against elder abuse and disability service initiatives including support for advocacy and peak bodies.

This is a budget that delivers on building safe and thriving communities in Queensland by providing a total of \$472.6 million in increased funding over five years to continue supporting the service areas of child and family services, youth justice services and multicultural affairs. To respond to the increasing demand and growing complexity of cases arising from the child protection system, \$282.6 million has been budgeted over two years for out-of-home care services and \$76.6 million has been budgeted over four years for 154 additional frontline child safety workers. In addition, we have committed \$95.7 million over four years to youth justice services, including \$77.3 million to help target serious repeat youth offenders through the youth justice strategy. We have listened to the community when it comes to repeat youth offenders and this budget placed a heavy focus on helping young people to stop reoffending.

In closing I again thank all of the committee members, the ministers involved, the directors-general and CEOs who do a fantastic job and who all gave valuable contributions to the estimates process. I commend this report to the House.

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (2.25 pm): As the Liberal National Party's shadow minister for the arts, I rise to address the Appropriation Bill 2021 and the budget estimates hearings that were held on the proposed expenditure by the Palaszczuk state Labor government as examined by the Community Support and Services Committee. I begin by acknowledging Queensland's artists and performers as well as businesses such as performance venues and artistic institutions that have had to endure immense disruption and significant impacts throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Our state's rich and diverse arts and cultural sector has been impacted like no other in Queensland. From the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Palaszczuk state Labor government has consistently failed to provide comprehensive and timely support to Queenslanders as well as Queensland businesses and organisations that are impacted by the mandated lockdowns, restrictions and public health directives. This failure by Labor well and truly extends to our arts sector, with the Palaszczuk state Labor government seemingly unable and often unwilling to respond and provide meaningful and prompt support when it is certainly needed the most. Despite the rhetoric of the Palaszczuk state Labor government, those in the industry know the truth, which is that when they needed support from their state Labor government it was not there and whatever support eventually did come was merely the Palaszczuk state Labor government playing catch-up.

Before the estimates hearings, the Palaszczuk state Labor government went to South Bank to provide an update on the new performing arts theatre at the Queensland Performing Arts Centre. What Labor failed to announce on that day and in their press release is that the project will cost \$25 million more than what was first announced in 2018 and, in fact, it may not be delivered until 2023. In 2018 the Premier, the then deputy premier and Labor's Minister for the Arts declared that the Palaszczuk state Labor government would deliver a new \$150 million arts theatre at QPAC. In the same statement the Premier also said that the new performing arts theatre would be fully operational from 2022. In Labor's update made last month and the subsequent press release that was issued, this has become a \$175 million infrastructure project that the Premier now tells Queensland will be open in 2023.

Labor simply cannot be trusted to deliver vital infrastructure projects on time and on budget. That is particularly evident for residents in my own electorate of Moggill where infrastructure projects are set to be delayed, not delivered on time and not delivered on budget. At the last state election held on 31 October 2020, the then Labor candidate for Moggill promised residents that Labor had identified suitable solutions and potential locations for a new community and neighbourhood centre. Nothing has been progressed by the Palaszczuk state Labor government. Even worse, after the 2020 state election this Labor state government indicated to residents of Kenmore and more broadly the electorate of Moggill that they have a low level of need for a new community and neighbourhood centre. The Palaszczuk


state Labor government should have the courage to come and tell that to the leaders of the many community organisations with which I regularly meet. They continue to tell me how desperate they are for a dedicated and properly funded community and neighbourhood centre.

Finally in relation to infrastructure in the electorate of Moggill and the Kenmore roundabout in particular, we know that flawed designs have been released by the Labor government that would actually make traffic congestion worse. Labor's Minister for Transport and Main Roads needs to consult with the community and get this right. He should have consulted with the community before releasing the designs, because the consultation has been tokenistic at best and locals have very serious concerns about delays with the project, which is why the Labor Party always blocks the Kenmore roundabout. Similarly, without comprehensive and integrated planning and meaningful consultation, the same outcomes await potential upgrades to the Centenary Highway and the Western Freeway under this state Labor government.

Again, when considering the detail of the Appropriation Bill 2021, local residents in the electorate of Moggill do not see an investment in a new school hall at Kenmore State High School. I encourage the Minister for Education to certainly look at this infrastructure.

In relation to community infrastructure that is vitally needed across Queensland, there certainly is not adequate investment. Support still needs to be provided to seniors and those in our disability services. Again, in the current Labor state budget there is still not enough support being provided to seniors and those in disability services right across Queensland.

In conclusion, this is a state budget that does not sufficiently invest in the arts sector here in Queensland and does not provide the vital ongoing support that is needed for community organisations, for seniors and for those in the disability sector right across Queensland.

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Alger—ALP) (Minister for Communities and Housing, Minister for Digital Economy and Minister for the Arts) (2.30 pm): Firstly, I would like to offer my thanks to the members of the committee, parliamentary staff and officers from the Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy who supported the estimates process this year. I welcome the committee's recommendation that the proposed expenditure be agreed to.

The Palaszczuk government has a clear vision for Queensland's COVID-19 economic recovery. In my portfolio we support some of Queensland's most vulnerable people. There is no greater demonstration of this commitment than our record \$2.9 billion investment, including the establishment of the \$1 billion Housing Investment Fund for more social and affordable housing.

Under the new Queensland Housing and Homelessness Action Plan 2021-2025, \$1.9 billion will be invested in more social housing, supporting vulnerable Queenslanders and helping end homelessness. The new Housing Investment Fund will drive current and future supply of new social housing in partnership with community housing providers, non-government organisations and the private sector.

We know that there are vulnerable Queenslanders who need a home. That is why the Palaszczuk government is fast-tracking more housing. We will commence 7,400 new social and affordable homes across Queensland over the next four years. There is also \$40 million over two years for 1,000 head leases to get more Queenslanders into homes faster.

Despite this significant investment, which should have been the subject of scrutiny during the committee's budget estimates hearing, it was incredibly disappointing to see the behaviour of the member for Everton. During questioning around the housing register data, the member made a huge fuss, arguing that he had asked for 2020-21 data, which he knows is not yet publicly available, when in fact *Hansard* shows that he did not ask for 2020-21 data. The LNP have been so arrogant about this interaction that they even mentioned the member for Everton's mistake in their statement of reservation. Instead of acknowledging that the error was in the question that had been asked, they tried to blame others. I guess if you are caught making a mistake, the LNP playbook says that you have to back it in and spin it the best you can.

I have written to the committee chair about my concerns that the member for Everton has breached the Code of Ethical Standards and offended the standing orders by attempting to mislead the committee about the nature of this questioning, and I will await the committee's deliberation on the member's actions. It is important that this House be made aware of the appalling manner in which the member for Everton reflected on the director-general of my department and the unprofessional way he conducted himself during this part of the committee hearing. The member's shirtfronting, standover, aggro style is really wearing thin, and his aggression, particularly toward women, is a concern.

The poor behaviour of the member for Everton was almost matched by the dreadful behaviour of the member for Maroochydore, who seemed to revel in verbally attacking the director-general of my department. This attitude towards public servants is appalling but not—

**Ms SIMPSON:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I know the minister cannot play the gender card against me, but I take offence. It is untrue and offensive—

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mrs Gerber): Members, I will hear the point of order in silence.

**Ms SIMPSON:** It is untrue and offensive and I ask that it be withdrawn.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The member has taken personal offence. I ask that you withdraw.


**Ms ENOCH:** I withdraw. This attitude towards public servants is appalling but not unexpected from the LNP, given the way they cut and sacked public servants last time they were in government.

During the remainder of the hearing, the committed noted that COVID-19 has had a lasting and widespread effect on our communities. The state budget includes \$11.3 million this financial year to continue key services through the pandemic, such as the 134COVID, 13HEALTH and community recovery hotlines and the state government's dedicated COVID-19 website. The Check In Qld app and border pass are crucial tools in our fight against COVID-19 and have been developed by my department in concert with Queensland Health to keep Queenslanders safe.

Queenslanders also know that the arts and cultural sector has been hard-hit by COVID-19. The Palaszczuk government has committed \$79 million since March 2020 to support these vital sectors through this pandemic. This includes the \$22.5 million Arts and Cultural Recovery Package and a further \$7 million for the state's live music industry. This is a sector that injects some \$8.5 billion into the state's economy and supports more than 92,000 jobs for Queenslanders. The Palaszczuk government is a strong supporter of the arts, and that is why we have committed \$287.6 million to the arts portfolio in 2021-22.

This budget also recognises the importance of cybersecurity measures, with an investment of \$11 million over the next two years. This is in addition to the \$20.3 million already allocated from 2019-20 through to 2022-23.

I am absolutely proud to stand here and again demonstrate the Palaszczuk government's commitment to investment in services that Queenslanders need and that support our communities, create jobs and boost our economic recovery as we respond to COVID-19. I am particularly proud of the largest concentrated investment in social and affordable housing, with our \$2.9 billion investment over the next four years and the establishment of the \$1 billion Housing Investment Fund, the first of its kind in this state. I thank the committee for its report and I commend the report to the House.

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (2.36 pm): What a stroke of good fortune to speak straight after the minister and to correct the record as well! There is one key performance indicator that matters with regard to social housing and that is the social housing waiting list. It is very clear. I remember that when I was minister we knew those figures month by month, because they were the greatest KPI. That was the most effective KPI there was: how many people are on the social housing waiting list. This minister refuses to provide those latest figures.

If there was a mistake made in the estimates hearing, why did the minister have to come back later and correct and clarify what the figure was and the date it was effective from? The minister knew quite clearly the information that we wanted and that the public deserved to know. They will not provide those figures because they are bad. Actually, they are really bad! What we want to know, and what the people of Queensland want to know, is how bad they are. How bad are they?

The figures that we do have, from October last year, are atrocious, with 26,000 households on the social housing waiting list. That has increased dramatically. Those in very high need are around about 16,000, an increase of 82 per cent in 18 months. It is no wonder this minister does not want to provide those figures, the most basic key performance indicator of the department.

This minister gets up and crows about how great this government is in social housing. Let's look at their record. After six years in government, the increase in social housing has been less than one per cent. Population has increased by 10 per cent over the last six years. Had they kept up with that, we would have 5,000 extra houses in social housing. They talk the talk; they do not walk the walk. They cannot answer questions. A \$1.9 billion package—

**Government members** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mrs Gerber): Pause the clock. The minister is continually interjecting and using the word 'you', not putting her comments through the chair. Minister, I ask you to cease your interjections and put your comments through the chair.

**Mr MANDER:** I will just correct that statistic. There has been a three per cent growth in social housing with a 10 per cent growth in population. There would be hundreds and hundreds of extra social houses if they had kept up with their rhetoric.

The figure of \$1.9 billion—that is the great headline. They could not answer the question about how much of that \$1.9 billion 10-year program announced four years ago has already been spent. Do members know why? I think it is a significant amount. All they have done is repackaged and re-announced things that they have announced in the past. That is always their practice and something they think they do so well.

The final galling thing is that we are lagging so far behind with regard to getting money from the National Housing Finance and Investment Corporation—a body backed by the federal government to loan money to the community housing sector. South Australia has accessed \$125 million. Victoria has accessed \$662 million. New South Wales has accessed \$1.3 billion. This is to put towards the creation of community housing. What has happened in Queensland? Our figure is \$5 million. That is nothing.

Why is that? That is because our community housing sector is not valued by this government and it has not been provided with the opportunity to access that money. This is unlike all the other states, even Labor states, which have realised that the best way to see social housing results is to transfer the management—not sell—of social housing to the community housing sector that can provide a much more efficient and holistic service. This government is stuck with its philosophy and will not do it. Who suffers from that? It is vulnerable Queenslanders who suffer.

Give us the figures for the social housing waiting list as at the end of last financial year. We will see that the numbers have skyrocketed. They do not want us to know the truth.



**Hon. CD CRAWFORD** (Barron River—ALP) (Minister for Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (2.41 pm): I might bring the volume down a little bit. As the Minister for Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships I start by expressing what a privilege it is to represent these three particular groups of Queenslanders. I am proud to stand up for our First Nations peoples who make up the rich tapestry of our cultural heritage and nearly five per cent of Queensland's population, for the almost 900,000 older Queenslanders from whom we inherit a proud legacy and we owe a debt of gratitude, and for the more than 938,000 people in this state who live with disability and the many more who care for them. At the heart of everything we do in government is our sense of humanity, and this portfolio is all about caring, dignity and respect for those who are some of our most resilient and yet vulnerable.

I would like to thank the Community Support and Services Committee for presiding over my department's budget estimates for the 2021-22 financial year on Friday the 13th—lucky for some. The committee has recommended that the proposed expenditure, as detailed in the Appropriation Bill 2021, be agreed to by the Assembly without amendment.

The estimates hearing gave me the opportunity to share some of the many achievements that have occurred within the portfolio during the reporting period. Of course, estimates is where we are expected to provide a report to the Queensland community about how our budgets are used to deliver on our commitments. We are committed to building age-friendly communities that are accessible to everyone. We continue to provide support for eligible older Queenslanders through discounts and rebates, we have made an annual investment of \$4.8 million to deliver legal and social support and financial protection services, and we provided \$800,000 to continue funding the Elder Abuse Prevention Unit and Elder Abuse Helpline.

We continue to deliver our annual investment of over \$2 billion in the NDIS and significant operational achievements have included the commencement of the full scheme bilateral agreement for the NDIS and the introduction of a new worker screening system to strengthen safeguards for people with disability. We have delivered on the Meriba Omasker Kaziw Kazipa recognition of Torres Strait Islander traditional child-rearing practices with the appointment of the commissioner and the opening of his office, and we have continued to engage as a key partner under the National Agreement on Closing the Gap.


We are proud to be progressing one of Queensland's strongest reconciliation actions in the state's history in progressing the Path to Treaty. This government's commitment to a \$300 million Path to Treaty Future Fund is the foundation for the treaty-making process in Queensland, and we are working with the Treaty Advancement Committee and Treasury to firm up the arrangements regarding

the fund. My department champions change for seniors, people with disability and Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The Queensland government is committed to creating strong inclusive communities where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

We have so many positive achievements to celebrate, but, unfortunately, the opposition was more interested in who sits in what chair within our department. As I advised the committee during the hearing, the appointment of directors-general and associate directors-general is the responsibility of the director-general of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. The Palaszczuk government's priority is not on who wears what hat but to ensure Queenslanders, of all ages, abilities and cultures, have the opportunity to succeed culturally, socially and economically.

I note that during the hearing an issue was raised from a constituent about the use of the Check In Qld app and challenges for older people or people with disability around phones. I appreciate that not every Queenslander has a smartphone, and it is not just the elderly. I am aware that, as part of the check-in process, businesses must facilitate taking the details of those who do not have the technical capability. For those with disability, NDIS packages also have the capacity to support the provision of technical supports for those whose plan identifies those needs.

I want to thank the committee for its work. We were pushed out a week because of the lockdown. I thank the parliament, committee members and everyone else who managed to put that together. It worked quite well in the Undumbi Room. It was good to be able to complete estimates here. I am sure if we were in some of the southern states that would not have happened. I acknowledge the committee's work and thank the parliament for its work as well.

 **Ms CAMM** (Whitsunday—LNP) (2.45 pm): I too acknowledge the work of the committee. In particular, I acknowledge the chair, the member for Mansfield, who was fantastic on the day. I certainly felt like I had adequate time to ask questions and that it was fair and reasonable. I acknowledge the work of the committee members.

I highlight that the amendments to the Youth Justice Act 1992 that took effect on 30 April 2021 have not significantly decreased crime across our state when it comes to youth offenders. During estimates it was also uncovered that GPS monitoring devices have not been utilised since that legislation was reintroduced and endorsed by this House. For four suitably assessed youth the courts made GPS monitoring non-conditional so we have seen zero GPS monitoring devices utilised across our state. We see that 92 young people have committed more than 30 offences whilst out on bail. This only reinforces the opposition's call for breach of bail to be reintroduced not just for the communities in Townsville and Far North Queensland but also in South-East Queensland where the community is in support of the opposition's call.

Within youth justice we saw \$7.7 million allocated over four years for drug and alcohol services, including a 10-bed residential facility. While I welcome that funding and support—because we know that drug and alcohol contributes greatly to the complex needs of young people—I made it clear to the minister that there is an expectation that regional and rural placements would be made available for young people across the state.

In the child safety budget we saw 20 per cent of the budget or almost \$309.2 million allocated to foster and kinship care. With over 12,000 people in out-of-home care that figure barely goes far enough. Some 87 per cent of high-risk children are being cared for by foster and kinship carers, of which 20 per cent have a disability. Access to services, the bureaucracy and the challenges that I am hearing about from foster and kinship carers—that is, the paperwork, the paper trail and the permissions needed—when they are trying to access care and support for children who need it desperately needs to be reviewed by the department. I urge the minister to take that up with the director-general. This was pointed out when engaging with foster carers in Townsville recently.

There has been an increase in representation of Indigenous youth requiring protective orders of 5.4 per 1,000. It has increased from 52.4 to 57.8. The minister so rightly acknowledged that there is more to do. I think for our First Nations peoples there is far more to do. Right now this government has let them down when it comes to COVID vaccinations. We continue to see increased demand when it comes to children and families with complex needs across our Indigenous communities.

Never will I ever stop saying this young child's name—Mason Jett Lee. We say it so we remember and we ensure that that tragedy never, ever occurs again. The LNP asked questions of the minister about the recommendations which came out of that coronial inquest where the Coroner determined that the department had failed Mason. As a result, the Public Service Commission ordered that a review be conducted into the disciplinary decisions of the department which did identify grossly inadequate misconduct.



The Public Service Commission mandated that the department seek independent legal advice from Crown Law on complex disciplinary matters for the next two years. I will continue to ask the question about how many times the department needs to seek Crown Law advice. The director-general was able to confirm that in the last 12 months advice was sought on five matters. The department of child safety will be monitored by another entity when it comes to these matters. This has demonstrated the need for us always to uphold process, to ensure transparency and to ensure that young people—our most vulnerable—are always protected.

The LNP will continue to stand up in a respectful bipartisan way for our most vulnerable in our communities but also hold this government to account to its investment and to its responsibility as guardian of these young people.

 **Hon. LM LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (2.50 pm): I would like to start by equally thanking the members of the Community Support and Services Committee for their report and for their work on the day to support the estimates process. I would like to acknowledge the parliamentary staff for the vital work they do each year and acknowledge the committee chair, the member for Mansfield, for her professionalism. She always does an extraordinary job.

Estimates is only as constructive as the members who participate in it. I would equally like to acknowledge the member for Whitsunday, who was respectful to all of the departmental representatives who were there at the hearings. I know that this is not the tone that everyone experiences at estimates, but I am very appreciative that that is the tone taken in regard to my departmental leaders, and they are equally appreciative.

Estimates provides an important platform of transparency, but it also provides a platform to speak about the vital work carried out by my department in often—and we could safely say always—challenging circumstances. In the past nine months since being appointed the minister, I have travelled extensively across the state to meet with our department's dedicated staff, carers, young people and service providers. Again, I would like to take this opportunity, as I do every opportunity, to thank them for their tireless work and to place my sincere appreciation on the record.

My department's budget for this financial year is \$1.86 billion, continuing our government's record investment in child and family services, youth justice and multicultural affairs. I would like to reiterate my commitment, and my department's commitment, to keeping vulnerable children safe, to investing in programs and infrastructure to prevent and reduce youth crime, and to ensuring the cultural diversity of our state is supported through policies and investment.

We continue our ongoing reform in child protection as we enter the eighth year of our 10-year reform program, Supporting Families Changing Futures. The Queensland Family and Child Commission and our contracted partners are evaluating these reforms and will use their findings to inform future strategy and investment.

We recognise the over-representation of First Nations people in the child protection and youth justice systems and acknowledge that, while much has been done, there is still much to do to address it. Through the delivery of the Our Way strategy and action plan, we are working hard to eliminate the disproportionate representation in the system within a generation. We know that initiatives under this strategy—such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Family Wellbeing Services and the delegated authority trial for Indigenous community controlled organisations—are making a real difference in Queensland communities. We know it will take courage to continue on that path. We faithfully walk with our colleagues our First Nations leaders in that work.

We also continue to make significant investment in change and reform in youth justice to curb offending and reoffending to give our young people positive choices for education, training and jobs and to keep the community safe. The Working Together Changing the Story: Youth Justice Strategy, our five-point plan, and the targeting of serious recidivist offender work is reducing youth offending and is focused on keeping Queenslanders safe.


Coupled with today's announcement about the Townsville Stronger Communities Action Group, our government is resolutely focused on public safety and community confidence. Since coming to government, we have invested more than half a billion dollars in new youth detention centre beds, staffing and early intervention programs to reduce reoffending. We have invested another \$98 million to target serious repeat offenders—the 10 per cent who commit almost 50 per cent of offences. We have legislated changes to strengthen the youth justice bail laws and improve information sharing.

Our amendments to the Youth Justice Act make it clear to the courts that we must keep our communities safe. We have established a youth crime task force, which the department and QPS are co-leading under Assistant Commissioner Cheryl Scanlon and the department's Senior Executive Director, Michael Drane. Results are encouraging, with a reduction in the number of offenders and offences committed by 10- to 17-year-olds.

With respect to multicultural affairs, August was our dedicated multicultural month. This year's theme was 'Inclusion in action'. COVID disruptions notwithstanding, there have been some wonderful and vibrant celebrations across the state from Mareeba to Mount Isa and across the south-east, and I look forward to the return of many more next year.

This year we are also vitally increasing our support for the Asylum Seeker and Refugee Assistance Program, which will be even more important in the times ahead as we see traumatised individuals coming from Afghanistan.

In the time I have left, I acknowledge all of the senior executives across my department who continue to work to support Queensland's most vulnerable children, young people and families.

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Scenic Rim—LNP) (2.55 pm): In talking to this estimates report today I want to touch on the contribution from the member for Everton in relation to housing. He had so much passion for the portfolio. I almost feel like giving him my five minutes so he can keep going, because I know he had a lot more to say and there are a lot more things that need to be explored in the housing portfolio.

**Mr Mander:** Just move a motion.

**Mr KRAUSE:** Maybe we should later on to get you back up on your feet, member for Everton. Thank you for that contribution in relation to housing.

I just touch on the issue of the performance of the committee chair, the member for Mansfield. No doubt the member for Mansfield did a reasonable job of chairing the committee. I certainly do think that she did a better job than some other committee chairs, especially the member for Logan when he was chairing the Economics and Governance Committee. Still in the estimates process in our committee we failed to have a chair who made sure that ministers answered questions properly and that they stopped engaging in needless filibustering and wasting time, which was basically deliberately winding down the clock and trying to take away time for legitimate scrutiny. That is what we need from committee chairs on all committees. I might disagree a little with what the member for Whitsunday said about the member for Mansfield, but she was certainly better than some of the other performances in this estimates season.

**Mr Mander:** It's all relative.

**Mr KRAUSE:** That is right; it is all relative. I want to touch on a couple of issues, and that is in relation to the housing waitlist, which I think the member for Everton spoke about. We do not even know at this point in time what the waitlist was, and it could not be produced to the estimates committee. Serious questions need to be asked about whether that is either a cover-up or sheer incompetence on the part of the minister and the department. After six years in office they cannot go from one year to the next and give us those numbers.

The other thing that was touched on during the estimates hearing was in relation to the marketed \$1.9 billion investment in the 2021-22 budget and whether that was actually new money or just repackaged funds. In life, and in politics as well, something that often sounds too good to be true is too good to be true because it is not true. That is the case with this \$1.9 billion package. There are still questions about whether it is new money or not. When the member for Everton at estimates asked the director-general some plain direct questions about this money, we got an answer from the director-general. Then we got an answer from the minister as well, seeking to editorialise further about that particular question—again, wasting time and winding down the clock.

The process is meant to be members ask questions of the minister or officials. We get the answer and then go on to another question. We do not need to have time wasted by ministers backing up their bureaucrats when the answer has already been given. In fact, quite often we get better answers from the bureaucrats than we do from the ministers. We actually get some facts every now and then rather than just spin that comes out of the political mouths of the ministers. That is why we need to reform the estimates process.

The other point we want to mention is the National Housing Finance and Investment Corporation. The point made in our statement of reservation, signed by the member for Burnett and myself, is that Queensland is lagging well behind other states—especially South Australia, Victoria and New South Wales—when it comes to accessing Commonwealth funding for housing projects. They have actually

only accessed \$5 million worth of that Commonwealth funding to put in place new public housing compared to \$125 million in South Australia, \$662 million in Victoria and \$1.3 billion in New South Wales. It is a complete indictment on the state that we are not accessing that money which could do more for vulnerable Queenslanders.

The estimates process does need to change. It needs a complete change in approach from the government and the chairs of these committees to allow it to function as it should, where ministers are required to answer questions, to get rid of the niggles, to get rid of the filibustering and the interference from committee chairs, especially the member for Logan in the Economics and Governance Committee. It was a disgraceful performance in winding down the clock and interfering with the ability of ministers to actually answer questions.


**Mr POWER:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I take offence. Firstly, I gave much more time to the opposition. The other thing is—

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mrs Gerber): You have taken personal offence? Member for Logan, take your seat. Your point of order is that you have taken personal offence?

**Mr POWER:** I take personal offence at this disgusting—

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mrs Gerber): Member for Scenic Rim, the member for Logan has taken personal offence.

**Mr KRAUSE:** I withdraw. If we concede that a change of heart is not likely, we need structural changes to estimates, we need independent chairs, and we need to have equality of numbers and a process that goes all year round to hold the government to account.

 **Ms LUI** (Cook—ALP) (3.01 pm): I rise to speak on the 2021-2022 budget estimates. The committee has recommended that the proposed expenditure as detailed in the Appropriation Bill 2021 for the committee's areas of responsibility be agreed to by the Legislative Assembly without amendment. I acknowledge and thank our ministers: Minister Enoch, Minister Crawford and Minister Linard, committee chair Corrine McMillan, members of the committee, committee secretariat, Hansard and all those involved to make the estimates process a successful one.

Queenslanders have lived with the challenges of COVID-19 for the best part of 18 months now. The reality of the situation, entering uncharted waters, gave us no guarantee what was in front of us let alone what Queensland would look like 18 months from the onset of our very first case. I want to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank our Chief Health Officer Dr Jeannette Young and our Premier for standing up for and with Queenslanders during the pandemic. What Queenslanders needed in this time of uncertainty was compassion. Our CHO and Premier brought with them compassion banded together by world-class expert medical advice and strong leadership. They never once strayed away from their commitment to keep Queenslanders safe, and today we are in a better place for it. I am proud to say that we have the best of the best in our corner in our Chief Health Officer, Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk, Deputy Premier Steven Miles, health minister Yvette D'Ath, all cabinet ministers, every single member of this government, our health and all frontline professionals, and government and non-government agencies. This government proved that a strong health response early in this pandemic has put Queensland in a strong position towards economic recovery. I am a firm believer that when you invest in people first you invest in the economy.


The Community Support and Services Committee estimates hearing was initially scheduled for 5 August but was pushed back to 13 August because of the COVID induced lockdown that affected 11 LGAs in SEQ and the three-day snap lockdown in Cairns and Yarrabah in Far North Queensland. The lockdown in FNQ was needed. It gave us valuable time to get on top of any community transmission and prevent a potential outbreak in the region. Thankfully, there was no community transmission. This government has proven once again that fast and hard measures absolutely work. When you go hard and go fast the results show in what we see now: the ability to move freely in our communities.

As we continue to work through the challenges of this pandemic, there is no denying that it is placing huge pressure on people's social and emotional wellbeing. Having support structures such as NGOs, neighbourhood and community centres, and homelessness service providers helps deliver vital services to those most in need in our communities. I am particularly proud of the Palaszczuk government's housing investment as we continue to work towards addressing homelessness by delivering safe and affordable homes in Queensland. The \$2.9 billion announced underpins the new Queensland Housing and Homelessness Action Plan 2021-2025, and \$1.9 billion will enable us to fast-track and deliver 7,400 new social and affordable homes.

I will never forget how the federal LNP government wiped their hands clean from delivering safe and affordable homes in remote discrete communities with absolutely no future funding committed. The 2021-22 Queensland government state budget includes more than \$317 million to improve housing outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across the state, with \$212.4 million to improve social housing and deliver housing services in discrete communities, reaffirming our commitment to closing the gap for First Nations people across the state.

Prior to walking into parliament I worked for an Indigenous organisation overseeing the child protection unit that delivered family support to vulnerable children and families throughout FNQ. If there is one thing I would love to see, it would be a decrease in the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and youth engaged in the child protection and youth justice system. The \$124.4 million investment to deliver family support is critical to prevent children from entering statutory child protection, and our family wellbeing services are seeing high levels of success in de-escalating risks and addressing needs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families. This government investment to address the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and youth engaged in the system gives me hope for the future that, as a government, we continue to address the over-representation of First Nations children and youth in Queensland.

We are doing so much in the multicultural affairs sector as well as the arts. It is all about creating opportunities for an inclusive society for all. I stand with this government in all that we are doing to create a safe and inclusive society for everyone here in Queensland in working with those who are most vulnerable. I commend this report to the House.

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (3.06 pm): I rise to make a contribution on the estimates report of the Community Support and Services Committee. In doing so, I want to start by sincerely thanking all of the parliamentary staff and the countless public servants who stand behind the ministers and directors-general in preparing for estimates. I have been in their shoes and I know how much work goes into preparing for estimates, and I am deeply grateful for that.

We cannot overlook the fact that this year estimates had all of the same problems it did last year, the year before that, and every time I have seen it. The work of those public servants is wasted because we are simply not given enough time. That is the core of all of these issues with estimates. Government members, whether they are committee chairs or members, refute this time and again. They claim it is good enough that non-government members get a majority of the time for questioning in these hearings, but it is simply not enough time overall. Look at our hearing: we had one hour and 15 minutes for the whole of seniors and disability services; an hour and 15 minutes for the whole of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partnerships; less than two hours each for youth justice and children; and less than two hours for housing and communities and the digital economy. When you take away all of the government time, all of the Dorothy Dixers, it is still not enough time.

I raise this issue time and again because the crossbench in particular misses out every single time we get to estimates. This was laid bare this year where we had caps on the number of people in the room. It made it absolutely clear how little time we get. There were sessions where there was five minutes, seven minutes allocated for crossbench members to ask any questions. There might only be two of us Greens in here, but we represent 10 per cent of the voters in Queensland. It is absurd that we are given so little time, along with other crossbench members, to ask questions on behalf of our constituency and on behalf of those people who vote Greens and want to see the government held to account on the issues that are important to them.


We have heard chairs tell us that we need to ask better questions, but when you know you have half a second to ask a question, when you know you are going to get cut off, you have so little time, it affects the way you ask questions. It limits the scope to conduct a constructive line of questioning. You cannot provide context, so you necessarily load that into a preamble that then gets you pulled up on spurious points of order. The crossbench in particular inevitably finds itself choosing between asking a follow-up question to get a real answer or asking another question on a different topic.

Going to those points of order we have seen so many times, they were as absurd this year as they have been every other year I have seen estimates. It does not really seem to matter what the question is. If it is going to elicit an uncomfortable answer, one they do not want to give, then the chairs or the members of these committees are ready to misconstrue the standing orders and call a point of order. I think we need to give a little training in what a hypothetical is. It seems that members of these committees do not understand what a hypothetical question is. Simply asking a question is not asking an opinion, but a number of times these were thrown up at us to effectively slow down the questioning, to chew up time and make it easier on ministers. It is a shocking indictment on the way the government runs these sessions.

The Clerk gave us some really important evidence in the first of the hearings this year. He made it absolutely clear that most of the cost of estimates is a sunk cost. The bottom line is that it will essentially cost us nothing more to run estimates for longer. There is no reason not to extend the amount of time we spend in estimates hearings. For the government to continue to do so shows their complete disinterest in accountability and transparency. It will cost Queenslanders nothing more to get the accountability and transparency they are so desperately calling for. If we want people to have faith in government and governance here in Queensland, we need to allow that kind of scrutiny and to allow some additional transparency.

I am not one to rush to the defence of the member for Everton but I did think the response to his question on social housing was a pretty shocking example of this. He asked for the social housing waiting list numbers on 30 June and was given the numbers for last year. When someone asks me what I did on Saturday, I do not tell them what I did Saturday a month ago. The implication was clear. The minister stands in here now and says that the numbers are not publicly released. If only there was someone who was in a position to make those numbers public! Imagine! It is an absolute joke.

My time is short but the point has been made clear. We have to get rid of Dixers, we need independent chairs and we need to give everyone a chance to ask the questions that need to be asked.

 **Mr SKELTON** (Nicklin—ALP) (3.11 pm): I rise to speak in support of the budget estimates for 2021-22 as detailed in the Appropriation Bill 2021. The opposition and the crossbench have commented on the time allocation in estimates and how my chair acted in the committee, but I want to say that I think they are grossly wrong.

I welcome the report by the Community Support and Services Committee, of which I am a member. I acknowledge the work of the chair, my colleagues on the committee, the secretariat, Hansard, the departments and the ministers. I must also thank the Parliamentary Service for supporting the estimates process in difficult circumstances.

Before I give some highlights, I am going to concur again with others on this side of the House over my disappointment in the behaviour of some senior members of the opposition who were granted leave to ask questions. It is regrettable that these few have such a lack of respect for the process, the ministers and the hardworking public servants of the three relevant departments. I paraphrase US President Theodore Roosevelt, and this is for a lot of people: to see a problem without offering a solution is called whining. I implore those opposition members to reflect on that.

**Ms Bates** interjected.

**Mr SKELTON:** Yes, you are doing a great job. Through the chair, I take that interjection. As the member for Nicklin, I am pleased to be part of a Palaszczuk Labor government that is committed to the state's largest investment in social housing since World War II. This is evident in my electorate in Nambour, as work is nearing completion on 16 social housing units in the heart of town. Eight will be platinum and eight will be gold, and they are designed for our most vulnerable Queenslanders.

There is \$1.9 billion—that is billion with a 'b' for those opposite—that will be invested over the next four years to increase the state's supply of social housing and upgrade existing stock. This will be supported by the establishment of a \$1 billion Housing Investment Fund. This is a long-term fund that will drive new supply to support current and future housing needs and it will be administered by the hardworking personnel at the Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy and Queensland Treasury. This will bring the total investment to \$2.9 billion—the largest concentrated investment in social housing in our state's history.

With our great state being the envy of the country and the gold standard in dealing with COVID-19 outbreaks, we have experienced a huge influx of new residents eager to experience our relaxed lifestyle and exemplary health services, but it is putting stress on our capacity to ensure everyone has a place to call home. Our investment will see an additional 7,400 homes built over the next four years, easing stress on the system and providing homes for potentially tens of thousands of people. I also note that locally there is additional funding for IFYS, which operate youth at risk housing; for Refocus, which operate the Gunyah of Wellness in Currie Street; and for our Nambour Community Centre.

To quote Gandhi, a society is judged by the way we treat our most vulnerable. I congratulate the Palaszczuk Labor government for their ambitious, forward-thinking plans. I would like to thank the Department of Seniors, Disability Services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships. I note the additional \$300 million funding provided to support the Palaszczuk Labor government's Path to Treaty Fund, with returns used to support Path to Treaty actions and the government's response to the Treaty Advancement Committee report expected later this year. This is an important step as we walk with our First Nations communities on the Path to Treaty and meaningful reconciliation. In addition, there is support for our seniors and different ability Queenslanders.

I note the Palaszczuk Labor government is providing an extra \$76 million to the Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs to hire an extra 154 additional frontline child safety workers, which will reduce case load and boost services to provide better outcomes for Queensland's most vulnerable children and families. This is in addition to the extra \$77 million provided by the state government to deal with serious recidivist offenders and the continuation of broader support programs.

It is pleasing to see ABC news reports quoting QPS Assistant Commissioner Scanlon stating that the new youth justice laws brought in by the Palaszczuk Labor government after the last election are having their intended effect—that is, preventing serious repeat offenders from being on the street and doing harm to the community. This is a plan put forward by a government that is committed to getting things done for the people of Queensland—something that those opposite would not know anything about. I recommend that the expenditure as detailed in the Appropriation Bill 2021 be agreed to by the Legislative Assembly without amendment for the committee's area of responsibility. As such, I commend this bill to the House.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Bush): Before I move on, I remind the member for Buderim that we do actually hear a lot up here. I heard your comment earlier which was unparliamentary and I ask that you withdraw.

**Mr Mickelberg:** I withdraw.

Report adopted.

Clauses 1 to 4, as read, agreed to.

Schedules 1 and 2, as read, agreed to.

### Third Reading (Cognate Debate)



**Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Investment) (3.17 pm): I move—

That the bills be now read a third time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bills read a third time.

### Long Title (Cognate Debate)



**Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Investment) (3.17 pm): I move—

That the long titles of the bills be agreed to.

Question put—That the long titles of the bills be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

## MOTION

### Suspension of Standing Order



**Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (3.18 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—

That standing order 87 be suspended to enable clauses 24, 50, 51, 53 and 54 of the Public Health and Other Legislation (Further Extension of Expiring Provisions) Amendment Bill 2021 to be considered.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

## PUBLIC HEALTH AND OTHER LEGISLATION (FURTHER EXTENSION OF EXPIRING PROVISIONS) AMENDMENT BILL

Resumed from 16 June (see p. 1871).

### Second Reading



**Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (3.18 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

I would like to acknowledge the work of the Economics and Governance Committee in conducting its inquiry into the bill and finalising the report, which was tabled on 6 August 2021. I would also like to thank the many stakeholders who made submissions and appeared before the committee. The committee made one recommendation: that the bill be passed. While non-government members of the committee tabled a statement of reservation, all members of the committee supported passage of the bill in the interest of giving the government the necessary powers to deal with any upcoming emergency situation caused by a further COVID-19 outbreak in Queensland.

I do not need to remind members that COVID-19 is one of the most significant health crises of our generation. In late February this year, the World Health Organization reported that over 111 million people had contracted COVID-19 and over two million people had tragically died from the virus. Only six months later, these figures have doubled to 211 million confirmed cases and 4.4 million deaths. In this global context, our success is stark. Currently, there are 23 active cases in Queensland and seven Queenslanders have lost their lives to COVID.

Let me be clear about how significant this achievement is. The United Kingdom has recorded over 130,000 deaths from COVID-19. If Queensland had the same proportion of deaths relative to our population, 12½ thousand people would be dead, not seven—I repeat: 12½ thousand. Instead of taking the disastrous approach of international jurisdictions, Queensland took a different approach. We went hard and we went early. To date, we have been able to suppress and control COVID-19. The outstanding response of our health system has ensured that we have been able to stamp out clusters before they lead to widespread community transmission.

The success of Queensland's health response in limiting the entry and spread of the virus continues to be the envy of many countries across the world. Queensland's swift and effective response to COVID is made possible by a range of extraordinary legislative measures. On 30 January 2020, the former minister for health and minister for ambulance services, Steven Miles MP, declared a public health emergency to activate powers for Queensland's emergency officers to respond to COVID-19. This was followed by the Public Health and Other Legislation (Public Health Emergency) Amendment Act 2020 in March 2020 to give our Chief Health Officer, Dr Jeannette Young, the emergency powers she needed to respond to the COVID-19 emergency in a quick and decisive manner.

In addition to addressing the immediate risks of COVID-19 to public health and safety, the Palaszczuk government introduced a wide range of measures to protect the health, safety and welfare of Queenslanders, mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in the community and facilitate the continued functioning of Queensland's institutions and economy. This enabled us to provide regulatory relief to individuals and businesses to minimise disruption to ordinary activities and facilitate the continued functioning of Queensland's institutions and the economy to the extent possible during the public health emergency. Collectively, these measures have facilitated a whole-of-government approach that has been successful in responding quickly and flexibly to a range of things disrupted, caused or affected by the pandemic.

Recent events have been a strong reminder that this pandemic still has a long way to run. The virus we are dealing with now is very different to the one we were dealing with for most of the pandemic. Dr Young stated to the committee that COVID—

... is so different ... because we are getting these variants of concern. You do not normally see that. They are happening so rapidly. We are getting mutations in the spike protein that is making these viruses become more infectious.

We are having to learn and modify our response and then modify it again.

In late July, we identified the highly virulent delta strain in a high school student in South-East Queensland. This case led to the most serious outbreak experienced in Queensland. Consistent with Queensland's 'go hard and go fast' approach to COVID-19 transmission events, which has now been supported by national cabinet, South-East Queensland entered the strictest lockdown experienced to date. An initial three-day lockdown was put in place on 31 July to immediately reduce the movement of people within, into and out of Greater Brisbane to allow for comprehensive contact tracing to occur. As the situation evolved, with a fast-growing number of positive cases, close contacts and exposure sites, it became apparent a three-day lockdown would not be sufficient and the lockdown was extended five days.

In the meantime, a new case emerged in Cairns involving a taxidriver who was infectious in the community for about 10 days. Given the high risk of transmission posed by this situation, a three-day lockdown was put in place for Cairns and Yarrabah to reduce movement of people within and in and out of these areas and to allow for comprehensive contact tracing to occur. The lockdowns were lifted on 8 August, together with the safe easing of restrictions. On 20 August, following no new cases of

community transmission for multiple days, restrictions were further eased for South-East Queensland and were lifted entirely for Cairns and Yarrabah. Restrictions were lifted for South-East Queensland on 27 August 2021.

Throughout the pandemic, Queensland's approach to easing restrictions, including lockdown conditions, has been gradual. This time has been no different. Heightened restrictions remained in place in affected areas until we were confident that community transmission was well under control. This is even more important as we deal with the highly virulent delta variant. We know that rapid and strict lockdowns are effective against this virus, as was evidenced in South-East Queensland and several jurisdictions across Australia in recent months.

If we are to respond to an unpredictable and evolving threat, we must have the flexibility to act quickly in a way that is responsive to the circumstances. The temporary legislative framework introduced in response to COVID-19 gives us this flexibility. The power of the Chief Health Officer to issue public health directions has made it possible to take prompt, preventive measures, such as restrictions on movement and gathering, and to continually tailor and revoke these measures as appropriate so as to minimise adverse impacts on individuals, businesses and the Queensland economy. This framework has made it possible to revoke or ease public health restrictions as soon as it has been safe to do so, ensuring that restrictions are only applied for the shortest period of time necessary to address the public health risk.

It is critical that these measures are available to allow us to respond rapidly before one case of COVID-19 becomes an outbreak that we can no longer contain. To protect the health of Queenslanders and support Queensland's continued functioning, the bill extends these measures until 30 April 2022. The extension until April next year is considered the least restrictive time frame to ensure that the emergency measures are available to protect Queenslanders but do not continue for longer than necessary. The bill also seeks to support the efficient and responsive management of Queensland's quarantine system by amending the Public Health Act to facilitate prepayment of quarantine fees and clarify that quarantine directions may be served electronically.

I should note that I understand the opposition will be moving amendments in relation to that time frame. My comment is this: we all want this to be over as quickly as possible. We do not want these powers and the emergency declaration to be in place any longer than is absolutely necessary. However, this is not going to be over in September or October or November. In fact, we have seen announcements recently in New South Wales that their schoolkids are not even going back until November. That being the case, to suggest that we can lift these powers in December—

**Mr Bleijie:** You can review them again.

**Mrs D'ATH:** However, if there is a need, that means for us to decide whether we need to extend those powers past December we have to make those decisions basically in the next four weeks to get another bill before parliament and have it before committee for six weeks and then be back here for debate before the end of the last sitting week in the year.

**Ms Camm:** A bill like we have done in the past.

**Mrs D'ATH:** That means that decision needs to be imminent. Everyone knows that the circumstances over the next two months are not going to improve. New South Wales themselves have actually stated publicly the worst is yet to come. Their hospitals have not peaked yet. Their numbers have not peaked yet. There will be more deaths and there will be more cases. Irrespective of vaccines, New South Wales is saying the situation there is going to get worse.

Victoria is acknowledging that their cases are growing and the ACT has just announced another two-week lockdown. So I do not understand how those opposite could think that in the next four weeks we are going to be able to determine—

**Ms Camm:** That is what we have parliament for.

**Mrs D'ATH:**—whether we need powers beyond December or not. I will leave it to the opposition to try to explain how they are going to figure that all out in the next four weeks. Clearly, they have information that national cabinet, every chief health officer around the country and our own government does not have access to, but I am sure we will hear from—

**Ms Camm:** If you released the health advice we would know what you're talking about.

**Mrs D'ATH:** I will take that interjection. If you release health advice—oh my God! Sorry, we are 19 months into a pandemic. Four million people are dead globally. What do you not know about this virus yet? How ignorant do you have to be? 'Can you please provide us with some evidence to tell us



whether this is deadly or not? Does it kill people? Does it spread? How quickly does it spread? What might it do if people caught it?' The evidence is there. The evidence is clear for everyone to see. Anyway, I will come back to this in my reply.

I inform the House that I will be moving amendments during consideration in detail as well. Some submissions to the committee raised concerns about the privacy of data collected through the Check In Qld app. Proactive and effective contact tracing is absolutely critical to preventing widespread community transmission of COVID-19. The Check In Qld app plays an important role in providing relevant and timely information to support contact tracing. The amendments I will move during consideration in detail will ensure personal information obtained through the Check In Qld app, or any other app prescribed by regulation, can only be used or disclosed for contact tracing or closely related purposes, such as investigating or prosecuting an offence under the Public Health Act 2005 related to the COVID-19 emergency. For example, the information could be used for an offence of failing to comply with a public health direction or a quarantine direction notice. These privacy protections will also apply to information collected by a business in paper form in the limited circumstances where the app is not available, such as in a remote location or during an internet outage.

The provisions will ensure this personal information cannot be used for law enforcement purposes and is not admissible in other criminal or civil proceedings. These amendments will reassure Queenslanders they can check in using the app, knowing their personal information will be protected. This will help to maintain public confidence in the use of the app and any other compliance apps that may be utilised in the future. The Check In Qld app is a critical pillar in our response as it ensures contact-tracing information can be accessed swiftly and easily during an outbreak. Privacy advocates and the community have been calling for these changes, and the government has listened.

I will also move amendments to the Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011 and the Public Health Act 2005 to facilitate the appointment of more than one deputy chief health officer to support the Chief Health Officer in performing their functions. The COVID-19 pandemic has required an unprecedented response from our public health officials. To keep Queenslanders safe, we have been nimble and flexible even as the pandemic has grown in scale and complexity, and we must continue to do so.

The ability to appoint multiple deputy chief health officers means Queensland Health will be able to draw on officials with different medical specialties and experience to oversee distinct aspects of the response. For example, one deputy chief health officer may focus on our operational response in hospitals and hotel quarantine while another focuses on the public health responses in the community such as contact tracing. These changes will also bring Queensland into line with other jurisdictions with multiple deputy chief health officers. For example, the Commonwealth has four deputy positions, South Australia has three deputies and Victoria and Western Australia each have two deputy chief health officers.

The amendments I will move to the Holidays Act 1983 formalise the announcement made by the Premier and Minister for Trade on 17 August 2021 to move the Royal Queensland Show public holiday to Friday, 29 October 2021 to create a people's weekend. This new date will allow close to 1.8 million residents across the local government areas of Brisbane, Moreton Bay and the Scenic Rim to get out and explore our wonderful state. It will also provide a much needed boost for our tourism industries, which have been doing it tough during the pandemic. A minor change is also proposed to the Industrial Relations Act 2016 to ensure the public holiday is recognised for industrial relations purposes.

The bill is of significant interest to the community, with 588 submissions to the committee inquiry. Many submissions noted that the emergency powers to respond to COVID have been in place for 18 months now. A common theme in submissions was the impact the emergency powers are having on people's day-to-day activities. Some submissions shared personal stories with the committee about how they, their families and immediate community members were affected by lockdowns.

I am grateful to every person who has tirelessly contributed to the success of Queensland's response to COVID-19 over the past 18 months. These are our frontline workers, our healthcare professionals, our emergency services workers, our retail workers who have continued to stock our shelves, our truck drivers, our public transport workers and everyone who has continued on the front line and worked behind the scenes to ensure our communities continue to have the services they need.

I also want to thank every Queenslanders who has done their part by maintaining physical distancing, wearing masks, staying home when unwell and all the other practices that we have in place to minimise the risk of transmission. Queenslanders have been overwhelmingly cooperative with temporary restrictions to their everyday activities, despite personal inconvenience. This shows real community spirit and care for our neighbours.

This pandemic has proven unpredictable. New variants of concern continue to emerge, demonstrating that we can never become complacent. Let me assure the House that this does not mean the emergency powers will be extended permanently. The Public Health Act requires me, as the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services, to declare the end of the public health emergency if I am satisfied there is no longer a significant risk to public health from COVID-19. If that declaration is made, the emergency powers will come to an end from the time the declaration is made. Not one jurisdiction, including the Commonwealth, has named the date that it is going to end. No-one has been brave enough to make that commitment because we do not know what is around the corner.

**An opposition member:** That is what parliament is for.

**Mrs D'ATH:** I take that interjection. Parliaments should decide when a pandemic is going to end, irrespective of the health advice?

**Mr Bleijie:** God forbid members stand up for their constituents!

**Mrs D'ATH:** We all acknowledge the pain and distress that this pandemic has caused. Let us be clear: it is not these powers that have caused the pain in our community; it is the pandemic, the virus. There are two ways to deal with that: you put in place the powers to try to reduce that pain, that anguish, that death and the long-term health conditions it can create if you have tested positive; or you let it run through your community and just accept it is part of what we have to live with and accept many deaths.

We on this side of the parliament will choose to save as many lives as we possibly can. We understand that the pain, anguish, heartache and pressures on every part of our society would be far greater if we had tens of thousands of people dying and hundreds of thousands of people getting infected with this virus. I ask Queenslanders to continue to show patience and to do their part by washing hands regularly, keeping distance with people where possible, getting tested and staying at home if sick. Critically, if people have not been vaccinated and have not yet signed up to receive the vaccine I ask them to do so immediately. Our best path forward to permanently easing restrictions is widescale vaccination against COVID-19.

The fact is: all of us in this chamber are able to go to cafes, restaurants, theatres and sports events and gather together for weddings and funerals. We can go to outings publicly outdoors without any limits. We can have 100 people in our household. Other than the limit of one person per two square metres and having to wear a mask, we have the lowest restrictions in this country. There are many countries, including some states in the US, where kids are only now going back to school after more than 16 or 18 months.

**Ms Camm:** Are they vaccinated?

**Mrs D'ATH:** Are they vaccinated? It does not change the fact that for 18 months—

**Ms Camm:** This is a topic that the Premier has now raised, scaremongering—families, mothers, children.

**Mrs D'ATH:** An extraordinary interjection from those opposite. I really look forward to the debate on this bill. I want the public to hear the debate on this bill. I want to hear the alternative of those opposite. What would they do? They would removing these powers—no border restrictions, no other restrictions, just let it go. If that is not what they would do and in fact they would follow the health advice, as the Leader of the Opposition has from time to time claimed he would—I think just before the election he said, 'Oh, I'd follow the advice of the Chief Health Officer.' The fact is that members opposite continually talk down the Queensland response, even though we have managed to keep people in this state safe.

From the beginning of the pandemic we have put the health of Queenslanders first and will continue to do so. Queensland was the first state in the country to declare a public health emergency in relation to COVID-19 when those opposite were saying we were overreacting. Since 29 January 2020 Queenslanders have stepped up and followed the advice of our public health experts to ensure we do everything possible to stop the spread of this highly contagious virus. This bill represents the Palaszczuk government's continued commitment to supporting the health and safety and the economic future of all Queenslanders. I commend the bill to the House.



**Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (3.39 pm): Today I rise to make a contribution to the Public Health and Other Legislation (Further Extension of Expiring Provisions) Amendment Bill 2021. The primary focus of the bill is to allow the government to respond to COVID-19 outbreaks through enabling Queensland Health to undertake the following: one, increase the powers for emergency officers and the Chief Health Officer to limit, or respond to, the spread of COVID-19 in Queensland, including by

issuing directions to require physical distancing, restrict movements and gatherings, require persons to quarantine or self-isolate and implement other containment measures; two, authorise the sharing of confidential information for contact tracing; three, encourage compliance with quarantine requirements, border restrictions and other public health directions by providing appropriate penalties for contraventions; four, increase the period for which a regulation may extend a declared public health emergency from seven to 90 days; and, five, enable fees to be charged for costs associated with the mandatory quarantine of persons in government provided accommodation.

In essence, this bill allows the government to continue with its strategy to manage its response to the COVID-19 crisis. It is for this reason that the LNP will not oppose this bill. First and foremost, the LNP wants to protect Queenslanders from COVID-19. The LNP understands that the extension of these provisions will enable the Chief Health Officer and emergency officers the necessary powers to limit, or respond to, the spread of COVID-19 in Queensland. This bill and the others which have gone before it, sharing similar titles, are arguably some of the most impactful laws which this chamber has and will debate for some time. Their implications are far reaching and are felt in every corner of this great state. They impact every Queensland family and every Queensland business. All of us in this place must remember that.

The last time similar laws were debated was in the first quarter of this year. Some things are still the same, but many have changed. The position which Queensland now finds itself in is very different to when this House last debated similar provisions. At that point in time the vaccine rollout here in Queensland had yet to begin in earnest. The experiences and lessons learned internationally from other countries that had begun their vaccination effort were not yet known. Soon enough in Queensland we will have access to an ever-increasing supply of vaccine which will be supplied from three different pharmaceutical manufacturers. I want to take a moment to remind Queenslanders that the vaccine offers our ticket out of this situation. It is safe and it is proven to work and I myself am now fully vaccinated. I urge anyone who has not had theirs to take action. Now is the time. Ring your GP. Visit the pharmacy. Make an online booking through Queensland Health. Roll up your sleeves and get the jab. With that said, Queensland now has its opportunity to transition away from how we have been living for the past 18 months. The vaccine offers us that opportunity.

Without taking our eye off the ball, now is the right time for Queensland to start looking to the future. It is the responsibility of the government to provide a step-by-step road map grounded in expert advice that shows Queenslanders the path out of this pandemic. We have long been told that we are all in this together. If we are, Queenslanders should know what the plan is. If the advice the state government is receiving differs from the national plan, then Queenslanders ought to know. That is not controversial; that is fair and proper and most will agree.

Given these changing circumstances and with our access to the vaccine, the LNP will move a number of key amendments. The LNP will move a series of amendments which would see the extraordinary powers given to the government and Chief Health Officer expire on Friday, 10 December 2021. At the outset, let me say that that does not mean that they cannot be extended if the situation requires it. Another amendment to the bill proposed by the LNP would see the expert health advice received by the state government which is used as the rationale for implementing public health directions released publicly. The amendment would see that the medical advice is published on the Department of Health's website.

The government will cry foul and make this sound like the LNP is trying to defy the health advice and that we do not listen to medical experts. That could not be further from the truth. These amendments are not about that at all and if those opposite try to peddle that view then they are denigrating the public discourse on this issue. The amendments put forward an aspirational target for the transition away from restrictions. They also seek to increase the level of transparency in government decision-making so that all Queenslanders can understand why certain restrictions or mandates are imposed.

The date of 10 December 2021 has been chosen as it will provide the Queensland parliament with the option and the flexibility to extend the powers if circumstances dictate that that is what is required. The final parliamentary sitting week of 2021 runs from 30 November through to 2 December. This would allow the parliament to debate and pass a new bill allowing for an additional extension prior to the provisions expiring if expert medical advice determined it was necessary. Let the parliament come back and extend these powers if necessary. Let the parliament do its job. After all, as elected representatives that is our job and that is what these amendments are all about. It is not extreme nor is it wrong for these laws to be debated again before the year's end. It would be fair and proper to review


the powers as our state moves towards an 80 per cent vaccination rate in December. Another check and balance by the Queensland parliament is not an assault on these powers. It is responsible and appropriate oversight which all Queenslanders expect of all members in this chamber.

I want to take the time to acknowledge the sacrifice of Queenslanders up and down our state. The LNP understands that when elements of these provisions are enforced the social and economic impact can be devastating, and it is. As I touched on earlier, the consequences have been far reaching, and that point is not lost on us. By extending these powers, it means loved ones and friends are separated. It means that businesses can be left without customers, without income. It means livelihoods are lost and sometimes, tragically, lives. We do not want to see these restrictions last a second longer than they need to, and it is not because the LNP defies the health advice. If those opposite try to peddle that view, it is shameful. Rather, it is because lives and livelihoods depend on these laws receiving constant attention and review.

We have heard heartbreaking stories of businesses going to the wall, families separated, staff retrenched. We know the seriousness of the threat that COVID-19 poses, but we must also consider the consequences—the consequences on our economy, on our people's personal finances, on the social fabric of Queensland and, most importantly, on the health and in particular on the mental health of Queenslanders. To not even talk about them and to not even debate them would be wrong, and that must be acknowledged. There are people who have suffered for the greater good and their voices should be heard.

Finally, I want to talk about transparency. It is incumbent on the government to be more transparent and to better communicate when new rules are enforced. Releasing the advice that the government receives will allow Queenslanders to know why hard decisions are being made. It means that businesses and families can also plan ahead. The LNP has long advocated for the medical advice to be released, for communication to be improved and for the decision-making process to be more transparent and consistent.

Without a transparent and consistent process, people are left confused and uncertain. Look no further than the NRL entourage coming to Queensland this week. We need to restore confidence. That can be done by letting Queenslanders know how and when decisions are made. That is why the LNP will move an amendment stipulating that the health advice is released. I have circulated the amendments proposed by the LNP in my name which I have touched on throughout this contribution. I look forward to those amendments being discussed during the consideration in detail of the bill.

 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (3.49 pm): On 16 June 2021—which seems a long time ago with the events now occurring in New South Wales—the Public Health and Other Legislation (Further Extension of Expiring Provisions) Amendment Bill was introduced in the Legislative Assembly by the Minister for Health and on 18 June 2021 the bill was referred to the committee for detailed examination. We reported back on 6 August. On the date of introduction of the bill many Australians were beginning to hope that we faced a different challenge. On 16 June there were no reported cases in New South Wales. However, the very next day the New South Wales government reported two cases. Steadily, cases increased in New South Wales and New South Wales, using its powers under its own act, attempted to use contact tracing to control the outbreak. The government also called on the people of New South Wales to be careful. However, these measures proved insufficient and now, from just this one case, there are over 10,000 cases in just the last 10 days. Our thoughts are with the people of New South Wales. We urge them to act collectively and to get onto the outbreak. We have seen deaths nearly every day. The entire Economics and Governance Committee—indeed this House—sends our thoughts and prayers to the families that are suffering this sudden loss.

Many Queenslanders, some at the urging of the member for Mirani, wrote submissions to us that were obviously put in before the New South Wales outbreak saying that no health measures were required at all. Some now looking at the results in New South Wales probably regret that they put that submission in to the committee. Today 116 people in New South Wales found out they have COVID-19. Unfortunately we know that there almost certainly will be other undetected cases amongst the people of New South Wales. However, other submitters, despite the cases in New South Wales, continue to be convinced that COVID is not something the government should be involved in and taking action to prevent.

At a recent by-election I took the time to have longer conversations with people who handed out for the antivaccination, antimask party to better understand their views and where they were coming from. I read the submissions from many opposed to the continuation of the health orders. Very few, it seems, had read the bill or our report to recognise that most of the provisions of the bill are actually not

about restrictions—and those restrictions in the emergency powers are in the original Health Act and its history goes back over 100 years—but about suspending existing regulation to enable Queenslanders to continue to do normal activities in a safe way. The submission of the Law Society recognised this and made commentary about the potential continuation of some of those issues.

Many submitters made clear they felt the government should never use lockdowns as a tool to reduce COVID-19. I want to make it clear that the committee, indeed every member of this House, does not want to have lockdowns. We try to not have them. Equally, I am proud our government has had the strength to act early, firmly and to keep lockdowns as part of the toolkit for keeping cases down. It has not only reduced infections, hospitalisations and deaths, but has meant a quicker bounce back to the Queensland economy and this is especially true for the small businesses of Queensland. Queensland business can have confidence their government can take the measures necessary to protect their businesses, their families and their communities. By acting early we have had fewer lockdowns than other states that have relied solely on testing, QR codes and contact tracing alone. Many submitters objected to testing, QR codes and contact tracing as an invasion of privacy. I note that the more sensible parts of those objections are being responded to by the Minister for Health who respects that this is an unusual measure that is for the health of Queenslanders alone.

For people who do object to these measures, can I put it simply: if you are going to visit your mother or grandmother this weekend, would you not want health tracers to tell you as soon as possible, rather than wait till Monday, that you were actually at an exposure site? Would your mother not prefer that? Would not the small business that you might also have visited want this done as efficiently as possible? Some said we should rule out lockdowns and they nominated areas like Texas and Florida as states to follow. They said they admired open borders and the governor trying to make local school mask mandates illegal, effectively telling residents the impact and danger of COVID was over in Florida. Their policy was a disaster for Florida families and it would be a worse disaster for Queensland families. I hope that those who wrote advocating for the Florida-style policies would not choose Florida as a model now. In that state, that had stabilised at the time of submissions, their own government is reporting over 21,000 cases a day and, very sadly, 246 deaths a day—that is 1,700 families a week losing a family member. This is more than the peak of cases they had last winter. Florida has had over 44,000 deaths. When I wrote the first draft of our report there were 42,000 deaths. I looked it up again and it is now 44,000. That is 44,000 grieving families profoundly and permanently damaged by an untimely, difficult and often lonely death. The sad truth is that in some of these cases a family member may have even been the one who brought the disease to their doorstep. Would they not want to know as soon as possible so that they could have prevented it?

Our state remains under pressure from international arrivals. We have no control over the federal government allowing people into our state from overseas well above the cap the federal government agreed to. This has created an overload on hotels that set up quarantine for international arrivals. We recognise the federal government decision has created this extra strain on domestic travellers coming back to and moving to our state. It is good to hear that from Saturday some of this load will be relieved and we can once again safely quarantine domestic travellers. This is a priority for all Queenslanders. I recognise the difficulty this presents for those who have travelled within areas of New South Wales that the New South Wales government has restricted and we thank them for what they have to endure to keep their fellow Queenslanders safe.


Some submitters have also called for the current COVID vaccine to be stopped. The committee has carefully examined the facts on the COVID vaccine. I agree with the member for Mundingburra, who made a quite eloquent plea after examining the evidence, that we fundamentally disagree with the antivaccine lobbyists and advocates and that all Australians should take the advice of their doctor and get a vaccine. I am proud that I am helping to protect Logan and protect myself. I am even prouder of my mother who acted as early as she could after speaking with her doctor to do her bit to protect herself and the community.

I note from a question in question time today that the member for Mirani discourages the currently approved and available vaccines for another yet-to-be approved vaccine simply because it is being developed in Australia. This approval process is being managed by the federal government. I say this not to blame them. I think they are doing a great job doing this carefully. I went to the COVAX-19 website which says they have done the early immunogenic studies in mice, monkeys and ferrets and they are beginning some trials, but it is not quite as Australian as the member thinks. The secondary trials will be completed in Iran and then they are hoping that the vaccine will be produced by the CinnaGen company and renamed SpikoGen and manufactured and rolled out in Iran. We hope that this is a

fantastic vaccine and another part of our armoury and we very much support both the federal government and the university in South Australia that developed it, but we are taking this carefully because that is right for the people of Queensland.

The Economics and Governance Committee recommends to the parliament that the parliament pass the Public Health and Other Legislation (Further Extension of Expiring Provisions) Amendment Bill. It contains vital measures to keep Queenslanders working safely and gives us the best chance to prevent the disasters that are currently engulfing Sydney and growing parts of New South Wales. What we can say with certainty, whether in relation to delta, international arrivals or the difficulties in quarantine, is that there are uncertainties to face in the future. That is why we need to be responsive and have these powers in order to keep Queenslanders safe.

The Premier reminded us this morning that Queensland is the only state on the eastern seaboard of Australia not under lockdown. We know that if every Queenslanders gets vaccinated and follows the basic guidelines our Chief Health Officer has given us we are more likely not to need lockdowns in the future. I am proud of a government that says if we need to act firmly and quickly to prevent a major outbreak then we should have the ability to do that. This legislation gives us that ability. I am disappointed that some in politics would provide false hope about where we are going. Unfortunately, and with great regret, we see how serious the outbreak in New South Wales is, how debilitating it is for their economy and small businesses. This government has a plan. The plan is to do everything we can with the best advice we have to keep Queenslanders safe, to keep small businesses open and to fight every day for the health of Queenslanders.

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (3.59 pm): I rise to address the Public Health and Other Legislation (Further Extension of Expiring Provisions) Amendment Bill 2021. From the outset I indicate that, as the Liberal National Party's state member for Moggill, I will not be opposing this bill. The Liberal National Party accepts that the unique and continually evolving circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic warrant a comprehensive and ongoing public health response in order to keep Queenslanders safe from the COVID-19 virus and its mutant viral variants, including the delta strain. However, there is no doubt that many Queenslanders, including senior medical and health professionals, are growing increasingly concerned about the lack of transparency with respect to certain health decision-making processes, as well as an apparent opaqueness in relation to the accountability of those decisions with an apparent lack of broad and comprehensive input into state government decision-making processes and what that means for all Queenslanders, as well as for democratic government in our state.

As Emeritus Professor Rob Stable, a former director-general of Queensland Health, has previously stated in submissions to the Health and Environment Committee, in our state a multidisciplinary and broad Queensland health protection committee would be of significant benefit in delivering confidence and transparency in health decision-making processes. I continue to be concerned by the way in which the state Labor government has seemingly acted without openness and transparency. There has also been a lack of consistency, compassion and common sense by Labor with respect to the individual circumstances of many Queenslanders, including those requiring the management of complex chronic health conditions such as cancer and tertiary hospital surgical procedures, and those residents needing to either return to Queensland or have the support of essential health workers from other states.

There are also the significant mental health burden aspects and economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, which are profound. Recently, the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists, in their 2021-22 advocacy and policy priorities submission to the Queensland state Labor government, indicated that our state requires an additional investment of \$700 million per year into the mental health system.

I am also gravely concerned about the reports that I am receiving from medical specialist colleagues about the increasing prevalence of mental health conditions that are being seen in emergency departments, mental health services and within primary care and specialist general practice, as well as more broadly across our community. Many of those are existing conditions that have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Prior to being elected I was the deputy chief medical officer for UnitingCare Health. With the creation of additional deputy chief medical officer or deputy chief health officer positions, apart from those created to assist with COVID tracing and also management issues in our hospitals, one of those positions could have a portfolio of mental health. Certainly that is what the federal government has done in relation to one of their deputy CMO positions.

The Queensland state Labor government must publicly release the clinical advice relied upon when fundamental democratic rights are impacted upon or removed when responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. My constituents in the electorate of Moggill and all Queenslanders have made incredible sacrifices and endured much over the past 18 months. I want to particularly thank local residents in the western suburbs of Brisbane for their sacrifice and strict adherence to the public health measures, including during the recent Indooroopilly outbreak. However, what was clear during the recent Indooroopilly outbreak was that the state Labor government was not adequately prepared for implementing additional COVID-19 testing sites.

As a result, I urgently phoned the Deputy Premier and the Chief Health Officer, officially sent correspondence to the Queensland health minister and worked quickly with my colleagues the federal member for Ryan, Julian Simmonds, and the councillor for the Pullenvale Ward, Councillor Greg Adermann, to get the required additional testing facility established at the Moggill District Sports Park. I thank QML Pathology and, in particular, their Continuous Improvement Manager, Kevin Thomas, and all staff, for their work to establish this facility so promptly in collaboration with Queensland Health and the Brisbane City Council.

I note that amendments in the legislation will also address the rescheduling of the Ekka public holiday to 29 October 2021. At the time of this announcement it was absolutely clear that the Minister for Education had failed to adequately consult and communicate with school stakeholders, given the substantial impact the new date had on the well-established Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority's external assessment timetable. How do I know this?


**Ms Grace:** Absolute rubbish. You are making it up.

**Dr ROWAN:** I hear the minister interjecting from the other side of the chamber. I know it because on the day of the announcement my phone did not stop ringing as teachers, parents and school leaders were all completely blindsided by Labor's lack of consultation and communication. That is what was happening at my office.

**Ms Grace:** Absolute rubbish, rubbish, rubbish.

**Dr ROWAN:** I know the Minister for Education is interjecting, but she knows the truth. They were phoning. Even the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority were caught off guard as they were unable to provide concerned parents and teachers with an update on what would happen to students across Queensland who had no idea when their exams would be rescheduled to. Those parents, teachers and staff deserve better from the Palaszczuk state Labor government.

In conclusion, the further extension of expiring provisions as they relate to public health are necessary, but so too are the amendments to be moved by the LNP. I take this opportunity to encourage all Queenslanders, if they are eligible to have the vaccine, to be vaccinated. The vaccines are clinically efficacious and effective. They have gone through all the regulatory processes. I encourage all Queenslanders to take up the vaccine at the earliest opportunity.

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (4.05 pm): I rise to speak to the Public Health and Other Legislation (Further Extension of Expiring Provisions) Amendment Bill 2021 being led by the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services and, in particular, the amendments to the bill that relate to the appointment of the people's long weekend holiday on Friday, 29 October 2021 for the City of Brisbane, Moreton Bay and Scenic Rim local government areas. Thanks to the decisive action taken by our Premier, on the advice of the Chief Health Officer, and because of the tremendous efforts of Queenslanders, we have been able to contain the COVID-19 delta outbreak and stop it from sweeping across our state. The extensions contained within this amendment bill will further enable us to keep Queensland safe.

However, as has been the case for so many of our community and family events, the Royal Queensland Show—the Ekka—was cancelled due to the recent COVID-19 outbreak and lockdown in South-East Queensland. Thankfully that lockdown was not prolonged, unlike what we are now seeing in New South Wales and Victoria, and our thoughts are with them. On Wednesday, 4 August, following the announcement that the 2021 Ekka would not go ahead, the government announced that the Ekka holiday for Brisbane, which was scheduled to take place on Wednesday, 11 August, would be repealed and a new public holiday would be scheduled on a later date in 2021, with that date to be determined by the government. We acted very swiftly.

Sixteen local government areas also have a show holiday linked to the Ekka. We wanted to ensure those LGAs were provided with the opportunity to reschedule their show holiday. My department liaised with those councils, asking if they would like to proceed with their existing show holiday or join

the City of Brisbane and move their show holiday to a later date. Of those councils, the Scenic Rim Regional Council and the Moreton Bay Regional Council took up the invitation to move their show holiday and adopt the new public holiday.

On Tuesday, 17 August, only a few days later, the Premier announced that the replacement public holiday will be held on Friday, 29 October 2021, making it a people's long weekend in the City of Brisbane, the Scenic Rim and the Moreton Bay local government areas. This gave ample opportunity for people to plan. When looking at the school holidays that end on 5 October, the examination period that finishes on 16 November and then schoolies, in all of the discussions that we had we saw only a small window of opportunity for a Monday or a Friday and we took the path of least resistance. The date was carefully chosen. No matter how many times you say it, they make out that it was just plucked out of the air and decided upon. However, I have not heard one of them voting against it or voicing any objection to it. The economic boom that this will produce is incredible, exactly as we saw last time. However, all we hear from those opposite are allegations that are completely baseless. I challenge them to mention a date and I will give them 10 reasons why they cannot have it.

The date was carefully chosen after consultation with a range of stakeholders, including businesses and tourism industry operators. The new date was also the best option in terms of the school calendar. We were well aware of the year 12 exam period from 19 October to 16 November and took those important dates into account. That is why we chose one of the days with a minimal number of students undertaking exams. For example, on 29 October around 6,800 year 12 students were scheduled to take exams as opposed to nearly 27,000 year 12 students on other days. In some cases, those exams are two day exams, so that would have disrupted them for two-day exams.

As if we did not consider every single detail in making this decision! They are a joke. We are not a joke, because we make the right decisions. The three year 12 external exams that have previously been scheduled for 29 October have now all been rescheduled within the existing exam period. There are now no external exams on 29 October.

In New South Wales, schools are not even going back until 25 October. They are still closed. In fact, kids probably will not be back until 9 November. The school year is over. What have they done with their exam period? They have shifted the whole thing back—not one day but the whole thing. It is incredible. Did they go out and consult with all the schools, principals, teachers, students, parents and staff? No. They unilaterally said, 'You're not going back to school until 9 November and, guess what, your whole exam period is moving back.' Honestly, those opposite are a joke. It is, frankly, embarrassing when you hear them carping about things they know absolutely nothing about. Thank God they are not in charge. Could you imagine the chaos if they were?

Unfortunately, it is no secret that our tourism industry and small businesses have done it tough this year, especially after the Morrison government decided to axe JobKeeper. Creating this people's long weekend in October is just the boost Queensland businesses and the tourism sector needs. We are giving thousands of Queenslanders a chance to explore their own state or perhaps just take the time to catch up with family and friends in local businesses.

I am delighted to advise that there has already been extraordinary support for this announcement. Almost immediately, leading travel operators recorded massive spikes in their website traffic, with Queenslanders rushing to book holidays right across the state. Dozens of destinations have recorded huge jumps in booking interest. This trend is seen right across the state. Searches for Gold Coast accommodation were up almost 6,000 per cent. Where all are the Sunshine Coast MPs supporting this long weekend? Searches for Sunshine Coast accommodation were up almost 3,000 per cent. I have booked and, I tell you, you cannot get a booking for that weekend. Try to get a booking for that weekend, I challenge you. Yet those opposite come in here and talk absolute rubbish. Searches for Fraser Coast accommodation were up 2,000 per cent.

**Mr Bleijie:** Stay at my place.

**Ms GRACE:** Thank you for the invitation, member for Kawana, but I just might say no!

**Mr Bleijie:** I'll Airbnb you my spare room.

**Ms GRACE:** It is fantastic to see that Queenslanders are already looking to make the most of the newly created long weekend—I ain't that hungry, member for Kawana—but Queenslanders do not need to spend the night away to help support local businesses. Just getting out and about in your local community will help boost economic activity. Visit your local cafes, restaurants and retail outlets.




To make the necessary legislative change to provide for the 29 October people's long weekend public holiday for the City of Brisbane, Scenic Rim and Moreton Bay regions, the Holidays Act under my portfolio needs to be amended. The amendments introduced today in the Public Health and Other Legislation (Further Extension of Expiring Provisions) Amendment Bill give effect to the announcement by the Premier.

These amendments also provide that, by notice published on the department's website, as industrial relations minister I am able to substitute another day for the public holiday if it is considered necessary or desirable to do so, having regard to the COVID-19 emergency. A copy of that notice must also be tabled in the Legislative Assembly within 14 sitting days following this publication. I can honestly say that I hope 29 October does go ahead and we do not face a delta outbreak in Queensland. The amendment also includes a minor and consequential amendment to the Industrial Relations Act 2016 to ensure the public holiday is recognised for industrial relations purposes, such as for public holiday penalty rates and leave entitlements.

I take this opportunity to thank the RNA. This is a second year in the row that the Royal Queensland Show has been cancelled. We all love going to the Royal Queensland Show. It is one of my fondest memories as a child. The People's Day public holiday will remain on the Wednesday during any future Ekkas in Brisbane; the RNA have my assurances of that. We have taken this opportunity to reschedule because, unfortunately, we were in a lockdown and had to cancel that public holiday. The RNA were very supportive of that. I thank the CEO, the chair and all of the board members, who were very supportive of the move we have made.

This long weekend will be an outstanding economic boost. I look forward to it myself. I commend the bill to the House. I know that the 2021 people's long weekend will be a terrific long weekend in Australia's favourite holiday destination. Why would you want to be anywhere else but Queensland?

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Bush): Member for Kawana, I remind you to in future put your comments through the chair.

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (4.14 pm): It is unfortunate that the government has limited time for the debate of this legislation, given the extent of its impact on the lives and freedoms of honest Queenslanders. There is no doubt that there are many members in this House who quite rightly want to debate aspects of this legislation and its effects on their communities. Whether they are representatives of border communities affected by it, those in tourism destinations, or those who are in or close to the centre of Brisbane, they want to debate this legislation and the impact it is having on their families and their communities—communities that are looking for certainty and a plan from this government to end the need for this type of legislation. What we want, surely, as a parliament and as a community, is an end to this type of executive authority that seemingly arbitrarily curtails liberties and freedom to live our lives without the types of Big Brother controls far more typical of despotic regimes.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr NICHOLLS:** It takes a while for them to understand. Of course vaccinations are essential, and in this regard I fully support efforts to increase the vaccination rates, having successfully survived both AstraZeneca doses without even a sore arm—no hesitation, no excuses, no worry about the flu or a dog bite or a tetanus needle. Just get on and get it done.

**Mrs D'Ath** interjected.

**Mr NICHOLLS:** We hear the old anti-vaxxer over there who did not want to take one and only took one when the media said, 'What's going on here? Why hasn't the minister got the vaccination? They are telling everyone else to do it.' It was a case of 'do as I say, not as I do'. Then we had the Premier waffle on with the excuse about having to travel or the dog bit her or she was biting a dog or something—I cannot remember what it was. It was equally disbelieved by everyone.

**Ms Pease:** Come on, Tim. You're better than this.

**Mrs D'Ath:** You should be better than that.

**Mr NICHOLLS:** Taking advice about being better than anything from those opposite is the last thing anyone wanting to advance the cause of democracy in this state would want to do! This is a government that hides behind the veil of secrecy every time something goes wrong. How long did it take for the Griffin report to come out? Why are we still waiting for a report into Frankie Carroll? Why are we still waiting for a report into the Brisbane South State Secondary College and its process? This government hides behind secrecy. That is why the debate about the need for this legislation is so important.

Success in opening our borders depends vitally on increasing vaccination rates. Success economically for the longer term relies on the government having a clear plan as to when borders will open, when lockdowns will be limited, when our businesses can reliably plan for the future and when Queenslanders can be assured that they will be able to come home to family and loved ones. This government, so far, has no such plan or, if it does, it is again keeping it secret.

Given the opportunity twice in question time today, the Premier failed to tell Queenslanders the plan of this government. She tried diversionary tactics and she tried the fear campaign, but not once did she say, 'This is what our plan will be.' Queenslanders are not foolish: they understand that the plan might need to change—they understand that the virus is mutating and changing—but they want to know that there is a plan, that there is a future, that there is a pathway forward. They need to be assured they will be able to come home to loved ones and to family. All question time today revealed was a Premier and a Treasurer who have a cheap fear campaign and no plan for lifting restrictions.

We will support this bill, as the shadow minister has indicated. We understand variations of COVID strains are still emerging and that the threat of the delta variant still remains. It is still important to be able to respond in accordance with health advice and best evidence. But importantly it is necessary to ensure that the response is consistent, is fair and is seen to be responding to the actual threat and not a political plaything used to entrench limits on our communities that would otherwise be unacceptable.

In April this year when we debated similar emergency extension powers I made the point that while the LNP considered the extension of five months reasonable, and we did, and acknowledged that further extensions would need to be brought back to this House for debate, and they are, the government should not anticipate ready agreement to any further extensions. This in fact repeated a statement that I made in the emergency legislation debate in December 2020—the first bill this parliament considered. I pointed out that while the coronavirus is still with us, and it will be for many years, we must adapt to this reality. I also pointed out that emergency legislation is no substitute for proper legislative reform and there is no good reason not to progress with changes that have broad support and that make life easier, particularly in the portfolio areas of Attorney-General and justice.

Decisions under this legislation have torn families and businesses apart. Here are a couple of examples. Constituents of mine serving in the Army Reserve have been training in New South Wales for five weeks. They were due to return home last week when on the day of departure they were told of the ban until 8 September. They have jobs waiting for them that they need to get to and they have families who have not seen them now for over six weeks.

An elderly couple are tragically separated. Mrs He, the wife, is stuck in Sydney and despite being fully vaccinated cannot get a return flight because of the Premier's arbitrary decision to close Queensland to Queenslanders. A husband is stuck in New South Wales after his employment contract came to an end and has no guarantee of being able to return home to his family because of the Premier's arbitrary decision to close Queensland to Queenslanders. Meanwhile, these people are forced to watch a Rugby League entourage of 100 people fly in on a chartered aircraft. The hypocrisy is galling to them. The inconsistency is appalling. The lack of compassion is astounding.

This legislation, as we are seeing and hearing every day in our electorate offices, has the effect of fracturing our civil society. The amendments proposed by the shadow minister are sensible and reasonable. They support the legislation. They support effective action being able to be taken by our authorities in accordance with advice. They are no substitute for having a plan, for telling Queenslanders what that plan is and in the event that further action is necessary and a further extension is necessary this House can do what its members were elected to do and that is come back and if necessary extend the legislation for a further period. To do any less is to abrogate our responsibilities, to not hold this government and executive government to account and to not ask the questions that our communities and many people rightly expect this government to answer that it has failed to do.



**Mrs McMAHON** (Macalister—ALP) (4.22 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Public Health and Other Legislation (Further Extension of Expiring Provisions) Amendment Bill. As a member of the committee that considered this bill I would like to outline the context in which we considered it. It was introduced into the House on 16 June and referred to the committee on 18 June 2021. On that date Queensland recorded three new cases of COVID-19, all detected in hotel quarantine. New South Wales recorded two on that day. We held the public briefing on 5 July 2021. On that day Queensland had seven new cases, four of which were locally acquired. On that day New South Wales recorded 35 new locally acquired cases. By the time we got to the public hearings on 19 July Queensland was back down

to two new cases, which were overseas acquired, whilst New South Wales recorded 98 new cases. This report was tabled on 6 August. On that day Queensland had 10 locally acquired cases and New South Wales had 291.

In the space of that time, two separate outbreaks had occurred in Queensland and two separate lockdowns were instigated throughout South-East Queensland and other parts of the state. New South Wales has had the single ongoing outbreak with only partial restrictions and only recent lockdowns. Today New South Wales had 1,116 locally acquired cases while here in Queensland we had zero.

I outline these numbers because at the introduction of this bill there was a public perception that we were on the way out of this COVID pandemic and that there would be no need for the powers outlined in this bill beyond this year. I think very few would have considered that by the time we debated this bill we would have the numbers we are currently seeing in New South Wales and the lockdowns impacting other states.


The purpose of this bill is to extend the temporary emergency provisions through to 30 April 2022. I understand many commentators see this as an overreach and that the power should only be extended until the end of this year. However, that does not take into consideration the work that is done to consider such power extensions in advance. As a committee we considered this bill to the appropriate level of scrutiny. I would love to see those commentators' crystal balls that were so bold in predicting what numbers will come in December. I wonder if they saw today's New South Wales numbers in those crystal balls back in June when the bill was introduced. I know the member for Clayfield would like certainty during this pandemic, but I do not think there is anyone who can guarantee him that.

I understand that as we roll into the end of the year that the vaccination rate here in Queensland will increase with the assistance of the overseas countries that have helped boost our supply of vaccine. This vaccination rate will have an impact on the wellbeing of Queenslanders. I take this opportunity to encourage Queenslanders to get vaccinated. I am a proud fully vaccinated member of the Logan community. I exhort other members of the Logan community to get together and ensure we can fight this together.

I understand that the target is 80 per cent but acknowledge that that carries the caveat of the eligible population. Who is not eligible? Children under the age of 12. I hear the phrase, 'We must learn to live with the virus' and 'We need to acknowledge the sacrifice that people have made through these lockdowns.' I can tell members who does not say that. It is parents with children under the age of 12 and vulnerable members of our community—the ones who cannot be vaccinated.

I have three children under 12. When will they get their vaccinations? When will they be safe? I have a child with respiratory issues who struggles during a common cold and who is no stranger to ICU and the resuscitation unit. He only leaves the house to go to school and to go to his specialist appointments under his NDIS capacity building. How does he live with the virus? Every time the school calls me to tell me he has a cold we have to pick him up and get him tested. People do not know the trauma of getting an autistic child tested for COVID—all the people in their masks coming up to him to stick something in his body. He lives with that and we have no lockdown in Queensland.

Our community has many immunocompromised people, young and old. Explain to me how they will learn to live with the virus. As a mother and as an MP, I will feel more comfortable and confident in the safety of our community when we have included the entire Australian community as eligible. We have many things to consider in this House, but first and foremost is the safety of the Queensland community—the safety of my community. If it requires this bill being extended to keep the community safe I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (4.27 pm): I rise to address the public health and other legislation bill as a voice for the thousands of struggling small and family businesses across Queensland that have been abandoned by the state government in their hour of need. At the moment the financial burden of public health decisions like hard border closures is falling on small businesses and their employees. That is not good enough. Dealing with the COVID crisis should be a shared responsibility and the state government has not been upholding their side of the bargain.

With small and family businesses facing a crisis of which many will not survive, it is disappointing that the cries for help from small and family businesses have been largely ignored by the state government. I acknowledge that after months of advocacy from CCIQ, business owners, employees, lobby groups—

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr MICKELBERG:** I hear the chirping from those opposite. They do not like the truth. After months of advocacy from CCIQ, business owners, employees, lobby groups and the opposition, the government finally caved in and provided some financial grants to some businesses, but considerably more needs to be done.

There are over 450,000 small and family businesses in Queensland and many of those 450,000 businesses are struggling to pay their bills, with little or no income. Small business owners are racking up more and more debt just so they can keep going and keep their staff employed and in a job. Small and family businesses need greater certainty in the uncertain times they are currently facing. They are not getting that from the state government.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Hart): Pause the clock. Members, there is far too much noise in the chamber. I am going to start warning members momentarily. This is your final warning.

**Mr MICKELBERG:** What we heard today from the Premier, through her statements in question time, further eroded business confidence. Again, we see the Premier making misleading statements that are deliberately designed to inflame fear and statements that will force more businesses to make the difficult decision to close their doors for good.

This bill should contain provisions that require any expert health advice that the Premier and others so frequently rely on to be published so that all Queenslanders can understand the basis for public health decisions that are having such a considerable impact on all aspects of Queensland society. Such a course of action would allow businesses to develop a plan so they are better equipped to react to future public health directives which will inevitably impact their business viability.

Queensland small and family business owners deserve greater transparency from the state government. Small businesses and their employees deserve changes to public health directives to be communicated more clearly than they have been to date. It is not good enough that public health directives that implement a lockdown for more than three million Queenslanders are not publicly available at the time the lockdown comes into effect. For the more than 335,000 small and family businesses that will be shut down in a lockdown, the public health directive is not available for them to read in advance of the time the lockdown comes into effect. That is simply not good enough.

We are 18 months into this pandemic response, yet the state government still cannot get the basics right. Small business owners must contend with a seemingly well-intentioned but ineffectual Minister for Small Business, who on webinars recently cannot answer simple questions about what changed public health directives mean for small businesses, and she either cannot or will not deliver timely support for small and family businesses.

The state government seem more concerned about spin and the Premier's Twitter account than they are about ensuring that small businesses have the information they need to ensure that they can comply with public health orders. Queenslanders deserve better than that. Small and family businesses, their employees and Queenslanders everywhere deserve better than the lack of transparency, the lack of support and the inconsistencies that have been on display over the last 18 months. Queensland small and family businesses need certainty and support as we navigate these uncharted waters. They need actions, not words.

I call on the state government to support the opposition's amendments today which will seek to ensure that there is adequate oversight in relation to future extensions to these onerous but necessary provisions and which will seek to ensure that public and business confidence is improved by releasing expert health advice for the benefit of all Queenslanders.



**Mr TANTARI** (Hervey Bay—ALP) (4.32 pm): I rise in support of the bill before the House—the Public Health and Other Legislation (Further Extension of Expiring Provisions) Amendment Bill 2021. The public health and other legislation amendment bill amends health and other portfolio legislation by extending the expiry date of most of the temporary legislative amendments made to support Queensland's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The main features of the bill are designed to protect the health, safety and welfare of Queenslanders, mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in the community and facilitate the continued functioning of Queensland's institutions and economy as far as possible. The bill extends measures supporting Queensland's response to the COVID-19 pandemic until 30 April 2022, with two measures extended for an additional two months to provide a transitional period. Without these extensions, these measures will expire in September 2021.

Amendments to the Public Service Act will include issuing directions to require physical distancing, restrict movement and gatherings, require persons to quarantine or self-isolate and implement other containment measures. The measures also authorise the sharing of confidential information for contact tracing, encourage compliance with quarantine requirements, border restrictions and other public health directions by providing appropriate penalties for contraventions.

I note the public health and other legislation amendment bill went before the Economics and Governance Committee and, as a member of the committee, we reported back to the Assembly in report No. 11 in August 2021. The committee has indicated through its recommendation that the bill be passed.

During the examination of the bill, the Economics and Governance Committee received 588 submissions. There were written briefings on the bill from Queensland Health, and written advice was requested and received from Queensland Health on issues raised in the submissions. There was also a public hearing held with stakeholders so they could outline their views regarding the bill. Of note and interest to the committee, at the public briefing on the bill the Chief Health Officer, Dr Young, said—

At this point in time we are still learning and this is a very different pandemic to the normal pandemics that we have had over the last 100 years. It is so different to the one 10 years ago because we are getting these variants of concern. You do not normally see that. They are happening so rapidly. We are getting mutations ... that is making these viruses become more infectious.

We are having to learn and modify our response and then modify it again.

Here is the key. Dr Young said—

... if you are going to lock down you do it hard and fast, you do it early, as early as you possibly can so then you can do it for the least amount of time. You need to be able to respond really fast and just do it then.

Effectively what the Chief Health Officer is saying is, 'Don't open the borders to the virus. Cut off the source.' It could not be any clearer. Obviously this is something that the LNP does not want to, or just refuses to, understand.


This is why this bill is so important. It allows for rapid response to the ever-changing environment. What this bill is about is ensuring the government has the flexibility to be nimble in the face of an ever-changing environment to stay on top of COVID. This decisive legislation is about ensuring that business and industry in this state are protected from the ravages of COVID-19, about ensuring people's health is protected and about protecting the jobs of all Queenslanders including those in regional Queensland.

As I have gone around the electorate of Hervey Bay since the election—visiting community and sporting groups; attending functions, schools and retiree villages; and doing my mobile offices—I have been stopped by people from all walks of life, and the message is very clear: my community want a measured and controlled response to managing the virus. I get calls every day in my office saying we should keep the current directives in place and keep following the medical advice from the Chief Health Officer to ensure that COVID does not wreak havoc on the electorate of Hervey Bay, on our region and on our state.

People acknowledge that this comes at a cost—anything hard does—but my community say to me that the No. 1 consideration they expect from government is to manage their health and ensuring that our health system is strong, robust and able to manage when and if an outbreak occurs. They recognise the strain on our frontline workers who are fighting this battle every day—our vaccination staff, our nurses, our doctors and our contact tracers. They know that the Premier, with the advice of the Chief Health Officer, is doing the right thing. They know that the government's strong health response is not only keeping them safe but it sets the foundation for a strong economic recovery. They know we have a plan to keep Queenslanders safe during and beyond this pandemic. It is about ensuring that we show leadership, taking the necessary and tough decisions and not shirking responsibility, giving the community what it expects from a strong government. It is not about exposing them to a pandemic by asking for borders to be opened 64 times.

These amendments are about being considered and measured and, above all, staying ahead of the COVID-19 wave and ensuring that Queenslanders come out of this pandemic healthy and safe. Unlike those opposite, we on this side know what the most important issue at this time is, and that is keeping Queenslanders safe. It is also about ensuring that the state manages any further outbreaks quickly and with the authority of the appropriate legislation, and this bill does that. It is about keeping Queenslanders safe and delivering our COVID economic recovery plan and, in doing so, keeping the Hervey Bay electorate safe and strong. I commend this bill to the House.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Hart): Well done, members. That was nice and peaceful. Let's try to keep that going for the member for Kawana.

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (4.38 pm): Of course we are debating today the extension of the public health powers which are the extraordinary powers given to the Chief Health Officer for things like restrictions, lockdowns and border closures that we have seen. The concern I have is that the longer you give a government these types of extraordinary powers the harder it is for them to give them up. As has been indicated today, the opposition will support the extension of these powers, but we do not support the extension without raising the reservations our communities are having about the restrictions, the lockdowns and the double standards.

We also do not agree that these powers should be given to the Chief Health Officer and the government, as they want, until April next year. We are moving an amendment to say the powers should expire on 10 December. Why is that? Because I have read the road map the national cabinet signed up to. The road map says that when 80 per cent of the population is vaccinated there is an end to lockdowns, restrictions and the loss of freedoms people have experienced for the last two years. The road map also says that when we get to 70 per cent there will be limited lockdowns. That is why we are saying to the people of Queensland 'get vaccinated'. I am vaccinated with my first dose of AstraZeneca. Despite the fearmongering of the Premier and the Chief Health Officer, who said that an 18-year-old is more likely to die of a vaccination than COVID, I went and saw my GP and was vaccinated with AstraZeneca despite what the Chief Health Officer said and despite—

**Ms Boyd** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Hart): Pause the clock. Member for Pine Rivers, you are warned under the standing orders. I warn everybody else who interjects from here on in.


**Mr BLEIJIE**: I got the AstraZeneca vaccine despite the offer from the government that politicians could jump the queue, get a golden ticket and have the Pfizer jab. I went and talked to my own GP, but I also support those people who do not want to get vaccinated because I do not believe that if you do not want it you should get it. I want 80 per cent of the population to get vaccinated because the national road map, agreed to by our Premier, says that when 80 per cent of the population is vaccinated we can have an end to lockdowns and restrictions.

The people of Queensland need hope. They need to see the light at the end of the tunnel. Extending the Chief Health Officer's powers to April with no end in sight, no clear road map out of this, no clear pathway out of it, does not give people hope. It creates vaccine hesitancy because people wonder, 'What's it all for if I have to keep wearing this mask, if I have to keep my business restricted?' Yesterday I raised in the House that we have had businesspeople commit suicide. We have had businesspeople close their doors. We have had people financially ruined—not because of COVID, as the health minister said before—because of lockdowns, restrictions, the mental health anguish and anxiety put upon people. They are serious issues that we need to consider. That is why we are not just going to come in here and agree with what the government wants in terms of extending these extraordinary powers of the Chief Health Officer. We want to see 80 per cent of the population vaccinated by Christmas and an end to these extraordinary powers.

At some point, as all the medical experts are telling us, we have to learn to live with the virus. We have to understand that around the world no jurisdiction in the world, no country, is aiming for an elimination zero COVID strategy because they know they cannot. The community has seen the double standards. They see people visiting family members to attend funerals over the border. With two hours notice the Premier shuts the border to Queensland residents. That is what these powers do. People say, 'She kept us safe,' but the people kept themselves safe. The people have been wearing masks. The people have been restricting business activities and numbers of people.

With all her social media advisers, every time the Premier lifts restrictions she gleefully puts posts up, 'You can dance, Queensland.' 'You can take your mask off to have a drink at your local surf club.' For goodness sake, these are the freedoms that have been taken away from people. It is serious. They should not be treating it like the Premier is allowing people to dance on a Friday night now. They are serious; that is why we need serious debate on this. It is problematic that the government is not allowing proper debate on these laws, with only four hours of debate this week.

Can I conclude by saying this: the people of Queensland need to see a path out of COVID, a way forward out of COVID. We cannot continue to keep granting these extraordinary powers, particularly if we can reach 80 per cent. That is what concerns me today with the Premier's comments now. A member just made the comment that she wants to see the entire population vaccinated. If it is the Premier's goal now to see everybody in Queensland, 100 per cent of people, vaccinated before we end lockdowns, border restrictions, business restrictions and mask wearing, then we will never see the end of these extraordinary powers of the Chief Health Officer, and we will not support that.

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (4.44 pm): On 29 January 2020 the Queensland government declared a public health emergency under section 319 of the Public Health Act 2005 due to the outbreak of COVID-19 in China. The declared public health emergency was extended through regulation. Throughout 2020 the Legislative Assembly passed several pieces of legislation to amend the Public Health Act and the Mental Health Act to support the Palaszczuk government's response to COVID-19. Due to the rapidly evolving situation amendments were made either through urgent bills or amendments during consideration in detail, and sunset clauses were included so that the amendments were not permanent and could expire after a set date.

The Palaszczuk government has been a global leader in the health response to COVID-19 and we are the envy of the world. Queenslanders know that a large part of our success can be attributed to our Chief Health Officer, Dr Jeannette Young. By following Dr Young's health advice and giving her the emergency powers she needed, the Palaszczuk government has been able to respond to the COVID pandemic in a swift and decisive manner. If we did not provide emergency powers to the Chief Health Officer to issue directions to limit and respond to the spread of COVID I have no doubt that many more Queenslanders would have contracted the virus. This bill will allow the current legislative response measures implemented by the Palaszczuk government to continue. These powers have been critical to the success of the Palaszczuk government's health response, as they allow the implementation of requirements to restrict the movement of people and for people to enter hotel quarantine as and when necessary.

Ordinary Queenslanders have followed these guidelines. Each and every one of us has worked together, and I thank Queenslanders for that. Under the strong leadership of our Premier, the Hon. Anastacia Palaszczuk, we have followed the advice of experts and made decisions that, we acknowledge, are sometimes very hard; however, we Queenslanders know how to come together and do our bit for each other. Each and every day my baysiders come to me and say thank you. They ask me to say thank you to the Premier, Dr Young and the government for our response to this global pandemic.


Baysiders and I thank our amazing frontline workers, our emergency services officers, our health workers, our cleaners, our shoppies, our teachers and our school staff. Baysiders know how important it is for us to follow these guidelines. For example, yesterday Minnie Bowman popped into my office with a lovely big bunch of flowers to say thank you to the Premier. However, there is no thanks to the federal government. Baysiders see the Prime Minister's response for what it is: a dismal failure. Baysiders are coming to me to say they wish the Premier and Jeannette Young were in charge, because if they were we would not have a shortage of vaccines, our vaccination program would have been on track, and our quarantine facilities would have been built, providing a safe environment for returning Queenslanders and Australians.

**Mr Lister** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Hart): Member for Southern Downs, cease your interjections.

**Ms PEASE:** Do you know what? I agree. I encourage all baysiders and all Queenslanders—in fact, all Australians—to get vaccinated. I have had both of my AstraZeneca vaccinations; so have my husband, my daughter and my son. I think it is really important that we all go out and undertake a vaccination program, because I agree that through vaccination we can come through this together.

I am very disappointed to hear those opposite. I still believe from some of the commentary that they are COVID deniers. We have seen what is happening around the world, we have seen people ill and dying. Encouraging and supporting people who do not want to be vaccinated? Come on! We need to get ahead in our vaccination program. We all have to go and get our vaccinations as soon as possible. We need the ability to respond to COVID-19, to minimise the impacts on our lives and to protect our lives and our livelihoods. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr MINNIKIN** (Chatsworth—LNP) (4.48 pm): As has been noted, the LNP supports this bill; however, as the shadow transport minister I want to speak specifically on the Personalised Transport Ombudsman Repeal Bill. The minister seems to be rather preoccupied by the make and model of the car I drive and maybe would be best advised to concentrate on his job.

By way of background, the establishment of the Personalised Transport Ombudsman, the PTO, was legislated nearly two years ago—back in September of 2019—at the regional parliament up in Townsville. The PTO was intended to manage taxi and rideshare customer complaints. The problem was that stakeholders did not support the establishment of the Personalised Transport Ombudsman. It was said, amongst other things—and I will come to some quotes a bit later—that it would be pretty

much a toothless tiger. That was according to the Taxi Council Queensland. Consequently, the LNP did not support the bill. It did not have stakeholder approval at all. It was simply going to be just that—a toothless tiger.

The PTO was originally to be in place in March last year. However, in September 2020 it was announced that the appointment was to be postponed so that further consultation with the industry could occur—a real genius effort that! In June of this year the government announced that the act would be repealed, which is where we are today. Ridiculously, \$430,000 in costs have been incurred to establish the office. The Labor government will instead establish a mediation service through the Queensland government's dispute resolution services.

To be clear here, the government failed to listen to stakeholders and the LNP argued from the very beginning that the PTO would not have any real powers to deal with taxi and rideshare complaints. The Minister for Transport and Main Roads was warned by pretty much every stakeholder group that the creation of this position would be a complete waste of time. There was \$430,000 of taxpayers money used to set up the PTO. The costs included: office accommodation, \$115,000; information technology costs, \$211,000; communications planning costs, \$57,000; and there were recruitment costs, legal and depreciation costs, et cetera. If we were to add other internal project management staff labour costs plus on-costs, it probably would be close to half a million dollars.

The trouble is that the government might think, 'It's only half a million dollars,' but it is like anything. If you look after the cents, the dollars will look after themselves. If we were to say to every member here—all 93 members—'Here's a cheque for \$500,000. Could you do something in your local community,' I bet people would be bending over backwards to try to get a slice of \$500,000.

I want to make this a pretty quick contribution because there are other speakers on our side who want to zero in on some of the health provisions of the bill. I want to quote from some submissions just to prove conclusively that there was a complete lack of listening to stakeholder engagement. The Limo Action Group said—

It would have been more cost effective if Industry was listened to in the first place, as an Ombudsman would provide little to no benefit to the Industry or the community.

The Ride Share Drivers Association of Australia said—

When the draft legislation for the establishment of the Ombudsman was presented for comment once again RSDAA along with many other interested parties submitted that the proposed legislation was badly flawed and as well gave evidence at Committee hearings to that effect.

I reiterate what I said in regional parliament back in September 2019 when we met in Townsville. I quote from the *Hansard* at the time—

Today we are debating the Personalised Transport Ombudsman Bill and one of the great stakeholders in this entire debate, Taxi Council Queensland, simply does not support it.

To a large degree I think that says it all. It underlines the total failure of the minister to bring forward a bill into this chamber—wherever this great chamber may be physically meeting—that will meet the needs of the industry and consumers. As an example of stakeholder feedback ... the PTO presents as a 'toothless tiger'—

The bottom line here is this: at the end of the day, let us chalk this down to another failure on the watch of the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. We all know he was described as foolish by the CCC. This ridiculous backflip can be described as incompetent and an embarrassing waste of taxpayers' funds, particularly hardworking public servants. This can again be chalked up as another Minister for Transport and Main Roads fail.



**Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (4.52 pm): I would like to thank the Transport and Resources Committee for their consideration of the amendments to repeal the Personalised Transport Ombudsman Act 2019. I would also like to thank the chair of the committee, the member for Kurwongbah, for his leadership and hard work. The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted all industries across our economy. The last 12 months have been particularly tough on the personalised transport industry. That is a reality and a fact. Anecdotally, industry advised that during the height of the pandemic they saw decreases of up to 90 per cent in rank and hail businesses and an approximate 70 per cent drop in booked trips in Brisbane alone.

More recently, we announced that the taxi security levy will also be suspended in 2020-21 while a review is undertaken as part of our continued support during the pandemic. This will deliver savings of \$405 per taxi service licence this financial year. That is why the decision was made to defer the Personalised Transport Ombudsman Act 2019 in September last year to help the industry focus on their recovery from the impacts of COVID-19. Those opposite would like to imagine that COVID-19 is



not a reality—they have shown consistently that that is their reckless position—but we do not believe that to be the case on this side. We know it has to be considered, not just from a health point of view but in terms of its impact on industries.

The government used this time afforded by the deferral to review the role of the ombudsman to ensure that it met the requirements of the industry and government moving forward. To ensure industry continued to provide essential transport services during the pandemic, the Palaszczuk government stepped in to provide financial assistance packages to enable operators to stay afloat and so drivers could continue to work. A \$23 million package was announced last year which included one-off payments to taxi and limousine operators, wheelchair accessible taxi operators, taxi and limousine licence holders, and authorised booking entities.

This funding followed the \$54.5 million essential transport services package announced in April last year which saw targeted relief across the transport sector to help Queensland move through the pandemic. Now, almost a year later, the industry remains deeply impacted by the pandemic and the government considers industry recovery to be a priority for us. In this context, the government does not believe that the addition of new regulation is an appropriate response to the current circumstances, given the change in circumstances due to the pandemic. These views were also expressed by industry stakeholders consulted about the Personalised Transport Ombudsman.

Stakeholders representing the taxi, limousine and rideshare industries that were engaged did not support the ombudsman. I quote from the Taxi Council of Queensland, which said, 'I commend the Government on prioritising reducing regulatory burden for the industry'. Farcically, the opposition seems to be advocating for red tape here, but we are working with industry. Additionally, the Taxi Council of Queensland said that utilising the government's existing dispute resolution services and TCQ's experience in mediation makes much more sense than adding another layer of bureaucracy for the personalised transport sector. They did not consider that the office would usefully help to address the issues facing the industry, such as reduced patronage and driver shortages.

The Personalised Transport Ombudsman's role was conceived to provide services to investigate and facilitate resolution of personalised transport complaints in the pre-pandemic era. We have found that the number of complaints arising within the industry is significantly lower than anticipated when the Personalised Transport Ombudsman Act 2019 was enacted. As a result of that lower number of complaints—and we acknowledge that; it is a reality and we should respond to it—the Personalised Transport Ombudsman is no longer the most cost-effective way to deal with industry complaints. You have to respond to the evidence, and that is what we are doing. For the volume of complaints arising, this can be delivered through alternative means at a significantly reduced cost.

TMR is currently in the final stages of establishing a mediation service for the industry in conjunction with the DJAG dispute resolutions branch. My department is partnering with the Taxi Council to maintain and strengthen its existing mediation service to address issues specific to the taxi industry. This reflects the expertise in taxi industry matters that the Taxi Council has developed through many years as the peak representative body for the taxi industry. Both mediation services will be available at no cost to participants.

The government acknowledges that some costs have already been incurred to establish the PTO. Steps were taken to establish the ombudsman prior to deferral of the legislation so approximately \$430,000 has been spent to date. I might add that the decision of the government actually constitutes a saving of more than 90 per cent of its budget. That is not something that is highlighted by those opposite, but it is a fact. The \$5 million allocation is there and more than 90 per cent of that has been saved. Costs included network and project team costs to establish IT systems. Office accommodation was secured at 53 Albert Street in Brisbane and lease costs were incurred. There were a few other costs as well.

The committee recommended that TMR investigate the banning and recall of licence plates issues by Personalised Plates Queensland that misrepresent vehicles as limos or taxis. Distinct number plates are issued for taxis and limousines that enable passengers to identify that their vehicle is appropriately licensed. Information is published on the Queensland government website to inform the public about how to identify their personalised transport vehicle.

As a government, you have to respond to the circumstances and the changing realities, and that is what this is about. Those opposite might offer up their great wisdom based on their great transport record of ordering trains from overseas that were not disability compliant and of stopping train driver training and cutting 48 drivers, or even saying that public transport is going to be obsolete in five or 10 years time. That is the great wisdom of those opposite when it comes to transport matters.

We as a government will respond appropriately to the changed circumstances that we see, and we are working with the Taxi Council in this regard. They support this measure that will assist their industry. They are not back up to pre-pandemic levels at all at this time, and we want to help them and support them as partners in industry. The fact that the Taxi Council supports this part of the bill I think shows that we work very well with stakeholders. We also are happy to change our position when the circumstances themselves change. That is what responsible government is about. We take pride in the fact that that is what we do: we work with stakeholders. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Bailey, adjourned.

## MOTION

### Palaszczyk Labor Government, Ipsos Polling Data; Order to Table Documents



**Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (5.00 pm): I move—

That, in accordance with standing order 27, this House orders the Premier to table by 14 September 2021 all qualitative and quantitative results of community sentiment polling surrounding the pandemic undertaken by Ipsos Public Affairs on behalf of the government.

When Queenslanders are being asked to do so much, they deserve to be trusted with the truth. The government needs to be honest and accountable with Queenslanders. The Premier says the government decisions on COVID are guided by the health advice, so why is \$528,000 of taxpayer-funded sentiment polling even needed? Despite the Premier claiming decisions were only made on the health advice, she is keeping Queenslanders in the dark and is refusing to release either the health advice or the very expensive polling. If key COVID decisions are not being made on the polling, there is no reason not to release it.

The right to information request—RTI—sought by the *Australian* newspaper was initially blocked by the government, but eventually a scaled-back document was released titled 'COVID-19 key insights project' as well as 'additional waves' and 'Livingstone shire research'. The polling asked Queenslanders their views about the importance of the removal of special restrictions, what activity sectors should be prioritised for lifting restrictions, the lifting of restrictions on a region-by-region or sector-by-sector basis versus an all-of-Queensland basis—and there were many aspects to the questions about restrictions—and, curiously, a one-off targeted sentiment research study in the Livingstone shire, which is a marginal seat. It has never been properly explained why the government used more than \$40,000 of that half a million dollars to target that particular area, which was a marginal government seat. This research project also asked respondents how they would rate the performance of certain individuals and groups in responding to coronavirus and its associated effects. There were many subparts of that question.

I think the Premier has been far too cute about this. When we raised this in estimates last year and asked whether this polling had been shared with the Labor campaign, she refused to answer the question. When we have asked her to release the polling, she has refused to do so. Mind you, the Premier has form. When a colleague of mine asked the question this morning how much the Wellcamp quarantine facility is costing, she would not answer it, claiming commercial-in-confidence even though the Auditor-General reports would indicate the government should have a bias towards releasing information. I think the controls around aspects of confidence are made up by the Premier as a convenient way to not be held accountable because there was no commercial competition in that particular contract. Let the people have the information.

COVID-19 is a serious disease and it has turned our world upside down. It is only reasonable that the trust that the Queensland government is asking honest Queenslanders to place in them is repaid by trusting Queenslanders with the information that those decisions are based upon. It is interesting. In December 2019 Labor changed the rules to let them spend taxpayers' money on political propaganda up to six months before an election, amounting to \$5.2 million—just weeks before the election. Then we had this half a million dollar spend on polling, including a targeted poll in the area of a marginal seat held by Labor in Livingstone.

It is time for accountability. It is time for transparency. It is time Queenslanders are treated with respect. To vote against this motion is to vote against trusting Queenslanders. It would be to vote against respecting their right to know how their government makes decisions and how their government spends money on their behalf. It is time that Queenslanders were not blocked from the truth. They have been blocked from the borders. The government has allowed special exemptions for special groups, but all Queenslanders deserve to be shown respect and this information should be released.



**Mr MELLISH** (Aspley—ALP) (5.05 pm): I rise to oppose this motion. When I first saw this motion, two things came to mind and they have only been confirmed so far. First is the LNP's endless ability to blame someone else for their own failings and the second is the fact that the LNP's attitude is always 'do as I say, not as I do.'

These unprecedented times have meant that governments at all levels have had to ask their communities to do things they have never had to previously. Strong actions such as border closures and lockdowns have become essential to protecting the lives and jobs of Queenslanders from the worst effects of COVID-19. Properly communicating these important measures throughout the pandemic has been a key part of our success in tackling the virus so far. In fact, the Commonwealth government itself engages Ipsos to conduct research each and every year.

But no, the LNP think they have a smoking gun here. They think they have found out why they lost the election last year. One would think they would have done a proper review and taken time out to reflect on what happened last year, but we have not seen that yet. Was it the half-baked Bruce Highway announcements? Was it their opposition to Cross River Rail? Was it the candidates they chose? Was it their inability to put forward a case against the strong leadership of our Premier? Was it their leader calling for the borders to be opened 64 times? According to the LNP, it was none of those things; it was actually consumer sentiment research about the global pandemic. There is always someone else to blame. It is the preferences, it is the pandemic, it is the redistribution; it is always someone else or something else.

The other point that came to mind when I saw this motion was the 'do as I say, not as I do' nature of the LNP. They are pretty good at getting research of their own, obviously. I saw an article from late 2020 entitled '\$1.1m of public money used to fund Liberal-linked market research sent to pm's office'. It states—

A second major taxpayer-funded market research project about community attitudes to Covid-19 undertaken by Jim Reed, a long-term researcher for the Liberal party pollster Crosby Textor, has been handed to both the prime minister and the treasurer's political offices.

Who are Crosby Textor? Of course, those opposite know Crosby Textor very well. They were the architects of 'Operation Boring' in 2014.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Order, members. Pause the clock. The mover of the motion was heard in silence and shown that respect. I would ask opposition members to afford the same respect to the speaker on their feet, otherwise I will start naming people.

**Mr MELLISH:** What was 'Operation Boring'? 'Operation Boring' was the operation the Queensland LNP undertook to save themselves from their own premier. An article from 2015 states—

The first step was to remove from public gaze those ministers who were seen as having offended public sensibilities: Notably, Newman's "strutting Attorney-General Jarrod Bleijie", as he was described so colourfully in The Australian newspaper. Bleijie's disappearance from the media brought jokes in the Twittersphere about Harold Holt and North Korea.

The article goes on to say—

One of the ground rules of Operation Boring was that Newman had to curb his naturally combative personal style ...


We can mark that up as a failure. They clearly did not take that advice. Of course, there was also \$70 million of taxpayer funds spent lining up Strong Choices, and some of that went to Crosby Textor as well.

In Queensland and federally, the LNP are more than happy to do research of their own, although they do it for more blatantly political reasons than they would have people think. I would strongly question the advice the Prime Minister has been getting if I were the federal government. Who gave the Prime Minister the advice to sit on his hands while every other world leader was out there securing vaccine supplies? Who advised him to not pick up the phone to the Pfizer CEO, as many other world leaders did? Who is now advising him to pick fights with state governments instead of doing his job on the vaccine and on regional quarantine? I do not know who advised him to back in Clive Palmer's High Court challenge trying to force us to open borders and let COVID into Queensland. I see the Prime Minister is threatening to do that again now.

Everyone knows that New South Wales, Victoria and the ACT would not be facing the tragedy they are currently to the extent they are if the Prime Minister had just done his job. Maybe that is the community sentiment the Prime Minister should have sought. The New South Wales government seems too obsessed with keeping their rabid base happy rather than locking down quickly. They are

now in a world of hurt with over a thousand cases and multiple deaths each and every day. The community sentiment in Queensland is overwhelming: give us the vaccines and we will get people vaccinated.

With the LNP, both nationally and in Queensland, it is always two things: it is someone else's fault and 'do as I say, not as I do'. I note that the federal government has spent upwards of \$36 million on outsourcing as part of its COVID-19 response, including many payments to external consultants. I do not know what sort of advice on a vaccine rollout is being presented. The Prime Minister really just needed to pick up the phone to Pfizer overseas. Many other world leaders did it. If he had, we would not be in the situation we are in now. Those opposite are more than happy to outsource their own jobs when they want to. For that reason, I am happy to oppose the motion.

 **Mr PURDIE** (Ninderry—LNP) (5.10 pm): I rise to speak in support of the motion moved by the member for Maroochydore. For a government that won in 2015 on a promise of transparency and accountability, what we have now is a government that is arrogant, deceptive and drunk on power. Eighteen months ago, Queenslanders put their faith in this government. They dutifully gave up their freedoms and liberties, ostensibly to protect the elderly and the most vulnerable from the COVID-19 virus. We did so because we were told the decisions were being based solely on medical advice. We now know that was not necessarily true.

Last Wednesday, at lunchtime, when the Premier was making an announcement to shut the borders with little notice, banning Queenslanders from returning home, a group of Queenslanders were in transit, on their way to or already arrived at Orange Airport. Some of them, via text message or through scuttlebutt, had heard that their border exemptions had been revoked. I spoke to one of them, Steve, earlier today. He sent me a chronology of what he endured. I will read some of it out shortly, because you would not see this in a Spielberg movie. Steve has lived in Queensland for 16 years.

**Mrs Frecklington:** He is a Queenslanders.

**Mr PURDIE:** He is a Queenslanders. He has a wife and children on the Gold Coast. He is currently the full-time carer for his mother-in-law here in Queensland. He had flown to a town between Dubbo and Orange for his mother's funeral. I will quote from what he emailed me today. He said—

Upon arrival at Brisbane airport, everyone on the plane was met by QLD Police, and told we could not enter Queensland and would have to return to NSW, after being taken by bus into Brisbane CBD and spending the night in a Quarantine Hotel. Later that evening at approximately 5:32PM, I received via email 'Quarantine Direction for my border pass ...

Among other things, the order stated—

"You are not permitted to enter Queensland. You are to remain at the stated place—

being the Marriott Hotel—

until your departing flight out of Queensland Destination:Orange Flight Number: Date:unknown Time:unknown"

That was the direction he was given. He spent the next 24 hours frantically ringing and emailing everyone. I have the list: obviously, the health minister, the government, the health department and local members of parliament. I have heard through other sources that our police who were manning this hotel were equally as outraged and confused by this—being directed to tell Queenslanders who had nowhere to go back to that they had to leave. There were no available flights for them to catch. They were given a direction to leave on an unknown flight at an unknown time, and if they did not they would cop a hefty fine—over \$5,000. On Thursday, the following day, about 25 hours later, he received an update, a quarantine direction for his border pass. The direction contained additional information—


"You are not permitted to enter Queensland. You are to remain at the stated place until your departing flight out of Queensland ... NSW Flight Number: TBE Date: 28/08/2021 Time: 0800

The problem is that there were no flights to Orange at that time, so how could he comply with this direction? As I said, I understand police were then trying to advocate for him desperately to get an exemption—and for the other Queenslanders in the hotel—but it all fell on deaf ears.

On Friday he got a call from the police asking if he had secured a flight to leave the state as per his direction. Obviously he could not, because there was nowhere for him to go. He was a Queensland resident returning to his family and there was no flight available for him to board. He was told that if he disobeyed the direction he would get fined. Subsequently, the next morning he received that fine. He received two fines: one of \$4,135 under a public health direction and another of \$1,378 for disobeying a police direction. He received \$5½ thousand in fines for failing to comply with a direction to leave the state of his home and his family to return to New South Wales, where he had nowhere to go.

To rub salt into the wound, I am reliably informed that at 10 o'clock the next morning Kyle Paterson, the 22-year-old from the Cronulla Sharks, waltzed into the Marriott like he was in *Wayne's World* with his VIP pass to red carpet treatment with an exemption from this government to stay. This while Queenslanders and Stephen were being fined after being detained, evacuated and exiled from their own state! It is a shame.

(Time expired)

 **Mr BROWN** (Capalaba—ALP) (5.15 pm): The member for Maroochydore is being completely transparent in this motion tonight. The opposition—

**An opposition member:** Yes, transparency all the way. That's her job. It should be yours.

**Mr BROWN:** I thought that was a compliment. You are waiting for the next one, aren't you? The opposition need all the help they can get. They need to get their hands on this polling, because we saw time and time again over the past 18 months that—

**Opposition members** interjected.


**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Order!

**Mr BROWN:** Time and time again over the past 18 months, the opposition has not listened to the people of Queensland. This was no more telling than during the election. Where did we see the biggest swings? On the Sunshine Coast. We picked up Caloundra, Nicklin and Hervey Bay with massive swings in the elderly population because the LNP did not listen. I urge the member for Maroochydore to get out of her beachside mansion and go down to the bowls club, the pub, the P&Cs and the aged-care facilities and chat to people. If she does, she will find out that they want to be protected from COVID. They do not want people to be let in. Time and time again in the lead-up to the election those opposite called on us to open the borders. They were not listening to their constituents; they were listening to their small group of Tory mates who said, 'Let it rip. Come on through.' We have seen the devastating effects of that approach in New South Wales and we are glad that the people of Queensland supported us and re-elected us at the last election.

One only need look at New South Wales to understand why it is important that this research is done—for the Chief Health Officer to set clear objectives and clear restrictions. The Chief Health Officer and the people of Queensland squashed delta in nine days. In New South Wales, restrictions change on a daily basis: 'You do not need to wear masks outside'; 'This LGA is in but this LGA is out'; 'It is statewide'; 'We might do a border bubble'. They have no idea. I suggest that they do some research for their Chief Health Officer, actually listen to their Chief Health Officer and have clear and concise restrictions—like we did. Our Chief Health Officer has been very clear. We put in place restrictions during the height of delta in the Indooroopilly cluster that allowed us to squash it in nine days. That was thanks to the people of Queensland understanding the Chief Health Officer's directions and the Premier listening to those.

As the member for Aspley alluded to, the federal government also does this research. I cannot begrudge them doing \$500,000 of research. It did go to their mates Crosby Textor. They could have been a bit more transparent about that. It was important that they had the research for an important advertising and education campaign around COVID-19. I will not begrudge members opposite doing exactly the same.

We have listened to the people of Queensland and they have listened to the Chief Health Officer's advice. We can understand why the opposition wants to get its hands on the polling—because it is lazy. It does not want to do the legwork to listen to its constituents and to understand what Queenslanders are thinking when it comes to COVID. The people of Queensland have listened to us. We have listened to them. We have ensured that we have clear restrictions that have been well followed which have allowed us to have great success—only 18 days of lockdown compared to the 18 weeks in New South Wales under that Liberal government. If those opposite were in charge here I would hate to think what might happen. No doubt they would get polling advice like this, but they would completely reject it. They would open up the borders and let it rip. I oppose this motion wholeheartedly.

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (5.20 pm): I rise to speak on the private member's motion moved by the LNP and to support it. Make no bones about it: the Premier should release that information. Why does the government have an issue with releasing to the public what the public thinks about COVID? When you say it like that, it does not sound like such a big deal, does it? And that is because it is not. If key COVID decisions are not being made based on the polling undertaken by the government, then it should be released. For fair, decent and transparent public administration, the


Premier should table these documents. More than that, the documents should be tabled for the Queenslanders who have been put out of work, for the small and family businesses that have been forced to close, for the Queenslanders separated by borders—interstate and international. They have a right to know. The parliament has a right to know. Queenslanders have a right to know.

People can accept decisions which are made on expert medical advice. Queenslanders have shown that they are prepared to do that time and time again, but people will not cop decisions that are made for the sake of politics. If there is nothing to hide in the polling, then there is nothing to hide from Queenslanders. I wonder if that sentiment polling captures Queensland's vaccine hesitancy rate across the period that the Premier flip-flopped when it came to getting her COVID-19 vaccine.

A true leader instils confidence and leads by example. Queenslanders deserve that, but, sadly, they did not get it from the Premier. Every excuse in the book was used by the Premier earlier this year, wasn't it? First we had the flu vaccination. Important yes, but it could have waited surely until the Premier had had her COVID-19 vaccine. Then who could forget the famous dog bite and the subsequent tetanus shot? I wonder what the polling said about that. And then to round out the trifecta of excuses, we had the Premier say that she needed a particular brand of the vaccine before jetting off to Tokyo. Of course, that comment was made not long after the Premier culled the number of international arrivals. Those comments must have had some blowback in the polling. The hypocrisy, the mixed messages, the complete and utter confusion! With nearly \$500,000 worth of polling, one would think that these things would have been ironed out. Evidently not. The government's decisions impact every Queensland, whether it is the cafe owner at the end of the street, the truckie driving their haul up the coast or the sound technician who cannot get a job because there are no more live gigs.

Also, there are plenty of compassionate cases to consider. A mother talked to me about her son who had been stuck at boarding school over the border—a teenage boy pursuing his dream career who has slowly lost all hope. Now she fears for his mental health and his life. She has watched her bright young man become a boy without hope, without the chance to be held and supported by his family in Queensland. Another mother told me how her son had gone to see his father and had to flee in fear of his life because of domestic violence. He drove 20 hours through the night from Victoria and was stopped at Goondiwindi. Despite Victorian police advising him that fleeing domestic violence was grounds for a border pass exemption, the officer on the border at Goondiwindi told him to turn around—turn around and sleep in his freezing car at a truck stop. I have just heard that his request for an exemption has been knocked back. Now she, too, has serious concerns for this young man and both his mental and physical safety.

Then there is the tragic case of a mother who travelled to Narrabri after her son was murdered. She was travelling with his ashes back to her family farm in southern Queensland when she, too, was stopped. 'Fly into Queensland,' she was told. 'Travel from the border back to Sydney to get a flight to Brisbane, and then spend two weeks with your young son's ashes in a hotel room.' Her husband is devastated talking about the terrible toll the situation is taking on his wife at an already unfathomably sad time, yet a plane landing with an NRL entourage touched down here earlier this week. Seriously, does the government care about vulnerable Queenslanders who are trapped across the border? They are willing to play by the rules, but the Premier keeps changing them. Let the openness and transparency begin on 14 September when the Premier should table the Ipsos community sentiment polling about the pandemic for the government. It is time for the government to be honest with Queenslanders.

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (5.25 pm): I rise to oppose the motion. It just beggars belief that those opposite in these unprecedented times continue to take issue with taking the advice from health experts and asking Queenslanders to act upon it. Let us be clear: it is Queenslanders who have done the hard work to ensure that our state, for the most part, has handled the threat of COVID-19 and the devastation that it causes. The fact that Queensland is at the stage that we are now and enjoying the ability to go out safely, to see our neighbours and our friends, to visit our family and to enjoy the best that our state has to offer is all down to Queenslanders. That is right: it is Queenslanders all following the health advice. Some try to pretend that it is all down to good luck, but it is not. It is down to our great people.


In March 2020 it was unimaginable that we would be doing the things that we do now that we consider part of everyday life—the routines that we have, wearing masks, social distancing and using our check-in apps. We never thought that this type of behaviour would become the norm, yet as we manage this pandemic we have been reminded that Queensland is a tight-knit community. From the cape down to Coolangatta, all levels of government have asked Queenslanders to do things that they have never done before. We know that by following the health advice we have been able to save lives.

Governments have a responsibility to effectively communicate with Queenslanders—all Queenslanders—because we are in this together. Each and every Queenslander has a role to play when it comes to following health advice and the only way that we are able to do this is if they have access to clear and concise messaging. All governments around the country have engaged in conducting research to ensure that they are communicating effectively. We have seen that in both Victoria and New South Wales. When they have had prolonged lockdowns and outbreaks of COVID it has been absolutely crucial that their messaging is right and that they are communicating with everyone—all groups, minority groups, new Australians—and we have seen the disasters that have happened when some people do not understand what is going on. We need to have this clear messaging and it needs to be for everyone. It is our responsibility that we are talking to Queenslanders in a meaningful way.

I will tell members why it is of utmost importance: in regional Queensland we have to contend with a hopelessly inept and downright dangerous misinformation source in our nation's capital, and that is the federal member for Dawson. He says that masks do not work and lockdowns do not work. He says that we have to accept that people will die from COVID. I am not prepared to give up anyone from my community to COVID. All of their lives matter. Today New South Wales hit the 100 mark in terms of deaths, and that is very sad. Surely then the member for Dawson has a list of 100 people whom he is prepared to give up, but I am not prepared to give up anyone. The federal member for Dawson is downright dangerous and I am distraught that I have to spend time refuting the myths and the conspiracies in my community of Mackay.

Those opposite want to throw stones; to come in here and talk about how governments should not effectively communicate the health advice that saves lives. How about they start within their own tent first. The member for Whitsunday was happy to stand beside her good friend, the member for Dawson, for a photo-op just three days after his anti health advice speech in the national parliament. Earlier this afternoon she heckled the health minister when the minister was talking about the health risks associated with COVID and then accused the Premier of scaremongering when she was talking about the young families and the children who have been in hospital. She needs to tell that to those families with children in hospital and to the family of the 12-month-old baby.

*(Time expired)*

 **Mr LISTER** (Southern Downs—LNP) (5.30 pm): When I saw that I was one of the fortunate few who had a chance to speak on this motion I was very pleased indeed because this is an open-and-shut case. Those members opposite who trot out those brazen falsehoods that the research was done for any purpose other than to give a taxpayer funded benefit to the Labor Party in the last campaign should hang their heads in shame. They drench this House in dishonour by coming in here with those falsehoods. We heard the Freudian slip from the Chief Government Whip that it was actually polling. He then very unwisely spoke about how the Labor Party had won so many seats. Juxtaposing those two things together spells out exactly what this government was about. It was a disgraceful, obscene use of \$500,000 of taxpayers money.

**Mrs Gerber:** Taxpayer money that could have been spent on your border community

**Mr LISTER:** Taxpayer money that could have been spent on my border community. I take that interjection. It is flagrantly false to say that this research was done for any other purpose. The fact that the government is resisting tabling it, resisting disclosing it to the people who paid for it—the taxpayers of Queensland—shows what a rump they really are.

Because I know that the people of Southern Downs do occasionally watch parliament, I want to tell them what \$500,000 would have bought them. It would have funded a public dentist in Inglewood for two years. This government has been pretty slow in providing us with a publicly funded dentist there. It would fund 300 kilometres of dog fencing to protect the hardworking graziers in my electorate of Southern Downs from wild dog attacks due to the poorly managed state forest and national parks that the Labor Party has. It would have purchased an extra round of the Pick Queensland bonus to make sure that the communities I represent have the workers they need to bring in the crops that feed us in this state and provide employment and prosperity for the people in the communities that I represent.

I know that the Labor government is very proud of its record in stamping out corruption. Over the years I have heard many luminaries in the Labor Party talk about the Fitzgerald report. Let us talk a little bit about misconduct and a lack of disclosure by government. Commissioner Fitzgerald says—

It is much less likely that a pattern of misconduct will occur in the Government's public administration if the political processes of public debate and opposition are allowed to operate, and the objectives of the parliamentary system are honestly pursued.

...

One of the functions of any opposition party in Parliament is to expose errors and misconduct by public officials. Unless the Opposition can discover what has happened or is happening and give consideration to events with expert assistance, it cannot expose and criticize activities and the people involved. It is effectively prevented from doing its job.


...

It is essential that the Government is not able to claim that secrecy is necessary when the only thing at risk is the exposure of a blunder or a crime.

This government is addicted to publicity. Everything it does, every bungle and every cover-up, is supported by a phalanx of busy propagandists and social media people all funded by the taxpayer. When the people in my electorate of Southern Downs are delivered propaganda and messages that have been crafted through the dishonest use of public funds to support this government's campaign at the last election they ask, 'Why are we not getting the things that we need?' The reason is because this government is not accountable to the proper electoral forces. It uses its position in government to waste taxpayers' money to improve its own electoral prospects and that is disgraceful.

When my people cannot get across the border, as the member for Mudgeeraba said before, the truck driver who cannot get across the border, the small business operators who cannot get across the border because the Labor government has bungled the exemption process, they say, 'Why are we being treated this way?' It is because this government is so smug. This government is certain it is electorally invulnerable because of the fact that it has access to Treasury and taxpayers' money and can fritter it away on its own little designs and thought bubbles and make sure it has a publicly funded propaganda unit and all the necessary research to make the most of it when the election campaigns come along.

I say to the members opposite that by coming into this House and saying they are not going to support the disclosure of this research, which the member for Capalaba has rightly said were polls and were used to win those seats, they bring dishonour into this place. The people of Queensland have a right to know what went on. If it does not suit the Premier to have her wrongdoing disclosed I am not concerned about that. We should disclose that. I urge everyone on that side of the House to at least be honest and let us have the research.

 **Mr McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (5.35 pm): I rise to speak against the motion. The motion is a farce. It is a sham. It is nothing more than pointless political grandstanding that attempts to undermine Queensland's world-leading response to the COVID pandemic. These unprecedented times have meant that governments of all levels have had to work with Queensland and Australian communities in ways that have never been contemplated or done before. Strong action based on expert medical advice, although unimaginable only a few short years ago, has become essential to protect the lives and jobs of Queenslanders from the worst effects of the global pandemic.

**Mr Millar** interjected.

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

**Mr McCALLUM:** Properly communicating these important public health messages in the constantly shifting climate of this pandemic has been a key part of our success in tackling this virus so far. All governments around Australia, including the Commonwealth, have conducted research to ensure effective communication, particularly during the COVID-19 global pandemic. The market research is used to shape the language to target key audiences, identify where audiences access information and determine the public's responsiveness to COVID health messages.

**Mr Millar** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member for Gregory, you can leave the chamber for an hour. You continued to be disorderly after I issued you with a warning.

*Whereupon the honourable member for Gregory withdrew from the chamber at 5.37 pm.*

**Mr McCALLUM:** The Commonwealth government itself engages Ipsos to conduct millions of dollars worth of research each and every year. On 26 October last year an article published in the *Guardian* made it clear the federal government is spending \$135 million on COVID messaging. Also last year it was revealed that \$5 million in taxpayer funds were provided to Liberal Party pollster Crosby Textor to conduct research. That was referred to specifically and explicitly by the member for Aspley and also by the member for Capalaba.



Separate to that, however, and this is from the same article that the member for Aspley was referring to, officials confirmed a separate trove of market research about the coronavirus undertaken by Resolve Strategic, Jim Reed's current firm—same pollster, different firm—under a contract worth \$541,750. This is on top of the other \$500,000 research which had also gone to the Prime Minister's office. The article states—

Treasury officials told Monday's estimates hearing the market research was 'not political' and that all major government advertising campaigns were required to be accompanied by market research.


It is a requirement of their federal counterpart's government. That same second firm was first engaged by the Prime Minister's department and then by Treasury on recommendation from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet to conduct research about community and business attitudes to the pandemic and the government's response. I table the article.

*Tabled paper:* Article from the *Guardian*, dated 26 October 2020, titled '\$1.1m of public money used to fund Liberal-linked market research sent to PM's office' [1318].

Rather than misrepresent legitimate market research in the middle of a health pandemic for a government that has helped to keep Queenslanders safe, why don't we actually talk about some official polling? The latest Newspoll figures make very interesting reading. The federal LNP's approval has plunged below that of Labor. According to the latest poll, the LNP primary vote has fallen to 36 per cent. That is the LNP's lowest result since March 2019 and is more than two points below its 2019 election result. Meanwhile, support for Labor jumped to 40 per cent.

It is clear that this is a result of anger towards the federal government's failure on international arrivals, quarantine and the lack of vaccine supply in the lead-up to the spread of the delta variant, which has our two most populous states currently in lockdown. In contrast, here in Queensland our economy remains open, our communities are enjoying the welcome return of things such as sport events, school awards and celebrations, and we have dancing back. It is no wonder then that the most recent official public poll in Queensland, the Stretton by-election, reconfirmed the community's overwhelming support—

(Time expired)

 **Mrs GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (5.40 pm): The fact that those opposite have commissioned COVID community sentiment polling paid for by hard-earned taxpayer money while people were losing their jobs, while businesses were going to the wall and while families in my community were being ripped apart is a complete slap in the face to my Currumbin community. While we struggle on the border, the Palaszczuk Labor government decided to spend half a million dollars of hard-earned taxpayer money on public polling—and that is just the polling we know of. The actual figure may well be higher, with an additional \$74,000 of taxpayer money spent on strategic stakeholder engagement and communications advice. Conveniently, that 'stakeholder engagement' came just before the last state election. Nothing to see here.

Those opposite will no doubt claim that key COVID decisions are not being made because of this polling. If that is the case then there is no reason for the polling to remain a secret. This is a government that would not know the meaning of honesty and accountability. Here is an idea for you, Premier: instead of spending taxpayer money to try to get yourself re-elected, how about the Labor government spend some money supporting the community that has been asked to bear the burden of their COVID-19 restrictions, that is, the community that has been left decimated by border closures and border restrictions? How about spending some of that \$500 million on targeted relief for the border community?

The Premier claims that her government makes decisions guided by the health advice. Mind you, that health advice is not being released to the public either. If this government truly respected Queenslanders, they would release all the qualitative and quantitative results regarding their community sentiment polling. I am sure locals such as Jackson, a Tugun plumber, would like to know if COVID restrictions are being influenced by public polling. He wrote to me this week, explaining the impact of restrictions. He wrote—

Half of my work is in the Northern Rivers and now I'm unable to go to my jobs. Yet there are no relief packages for people in my position. I'm worried about how I'm supposed to pay my mortgage and bills once my savings dry up.

The truth of the matter is that this secretive and deceitful government will not release the results to Queenslanders because Labor are not honest. Labor are not accountable.

Here is what we know from documents acquired from a right-to-information request. We know that this state government has been tracking Queenslanders' sentiments on what restrictions people believe to be the most important, what activities or sectors should be prioritised in the lifting of restrictions and whether the restrictions should be lifted in regional Queensland before they are lifted in

border communities such as those in South-East Queensland. This Premier and the state Labor government spent public money to track how popular their border restrictions and lockdowns are. It begs the question: why does the Premier have an issue releasing what the public thinks about COVID? It will reveal that the Premier is not making decisions based on the health advice or in the interests of economic prosperity!


My community do not trust this state Labor government and with good reason. This time last year, September 2020, the Premier flatly denied that the government was doing any secret polling on their border policy and COVID restrictions. Then just a month ago, on 10 August, it was revealed that that is exactly what the state Labor government is doing. Instead of spending half a million dollars on secret polling to get them re-elected, the Palaszczuk Labor government should have been spending that money supporting communities that are being asked to bear the burden of their border closures, communities where there are no jobs because people are complying with the COVID restrictions, communities where businesses have gone to the wall, communities where families are being torn apart by these COVID-19 restrictions. This government should be focused on ensuring border residents do not lose their livelihoods. Instead, they are focused on spending money on secret polling—polling, mind you, that they will not release to Queenslanders.

**An opposition member:** Open and accountable.

**Mrs GERBER:** Open and accountable! This is public money. At the very least, Queenslanders deserve to see what they got for their half a million dollars. Taxpayers deserve to see the results of the secret polling that they paid for. More importantly, my community deserves some targeted relief and that is what this money should have gone towards, not secret polling. Imagine what \$500,000 could have been spent on in my community to support locals and businesses.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I draw your attention to a ruling that Mr Speaker made when this parliament was first sworn in about interrupting other members, as well as standing order 251. In a Speaker's ruling he talks about interrupting members while they are on their feet. He also talks about behaviour. I put it to you, Mr Deputy Speaker, that given some of the childish behaviour that we have just seen while the member was on her feet, those members should be called to order pursuant to standing order 251 and the Speaker's ruling issued at the start of this parliament.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Tonight I have seen and witnessed many examples of behaviour that I consider to be unparliamentary. I have been attempting to allow the people on their feet to continue the debate in a free-flowing and robust manner. I will continue to do that. However, I issue a general warning that the behaviour I am seeing from both sides of the chamber tonight has been unparliamentary and from here on in I will be issuing warnings or taking further actions.

 **Mr HEALY** (Cairns—ALP) (5.46 pm): I rise to oppose this obviously very important motion! It is unbelievable that this group of people come in here and complain that they do not have enough time. They whinge and complain, yet these are the sorts of things that they come up with. I look at the brains trust and wonder where it emanates from. Anyway, I will move on.

Those opposite would find this market research difficult because this is what governments do and they are not one so I will explain a few things. These are unprecedented times and they have meant that—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**An opposition member:** Let's see what the people of Cairns think.

**Mr HEALY:** We did, last October. They thought very well, actually. These unprecedented times have meant that governments at all levels have had to ask their communities to do things they have never had to do before. Strong actions such as border closures and lockdowns once seemed unimaginable, but as we heard a while ago these are unprecedented times. We are seeing governments across the Commonwealth give necessary and absolutely unheard of instructions to their communities. It is absolutely unbelievable that we are doing that, but it is essential to protect lives. We have only to look at what is happening south of the border to see that. If you cannot understand that, you are a long way from getting it.

I refer to some of the comments we have heard in this place in relation to the Premier, her leadership and her not wanting to get a jab. What an absolute joke! She could walk on water and they would complain that she could not swim. People opposite have absolutely no understanding. Properly communicating these important public health messages in the constantly shifting climate of this pandemic has been a key part of our success in tackling the virus so far. Something those opposite would not recognise—and we have heard it from previous speakers on this side—is that all governments around Australia, including the Morrison government, conduct research to ensure efficient

communication, particularly during a COVID-19 pandemic. If my memory serves me correctly, Scott Morrison learnt that the hard way. Around about 20 years ago, he orchestrated the 'Where the bloody hell are you?' campaign. He did not do any market research, it was a disaster and he lost his job. It is good that he has learnt something.

The reality is that engaging with communities and finding out the appropriate ways to get the message across is absolutely fundamental. As we have heard, the Commonwealth government conducts millions of dollars worth of research each year. For those who came up with this fantastic concept, I would say: please look a little broader. It happens in a wide range of areas in government. The market research is used to shape use of language, to target audiences, to identify where audiences are and to get the appropriate information, and it determines the public's responsiveness to COVID-19.

It was revealed that last year the Commonwealth paid \$5 million to Crosby Textor to conduct government research. What do those opposite think about that? Do they think that money could have been used somewhere else? An article published in the *Australian* last October made it clear that the federal government is spending \$135 million on COVID messaging. With over \$100 million being spent by the federal government on sentiment testing, you would think the federal government would be a little more aware of what people are thinking. That amount of money is scary, but those opposite drag up this little issue here.

Surely those opposite would be aware that, for example, the tourism industry in Queensland is on its knees and needs the federal government to reinstate JobKeeper. I know that our tourism minister has written to the federal minister, backing the calls of our industry in Queensland for the federal government to provide a JobKeeper style wage subsidy, accessible by Queensland's tourism and hospitality industries. You do not need market research for that; it is pretty obvious.

**Mr Mickelberg** interjected.

**Mr HEALY:** Why would they take on the responsibility of wage subsidy 12 months ago but now walk away from it, knowing there is an industry going through what it is?


**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Order! Pause the clock. Resume your seat, please, member.

**Mr HEALY:** Bugger. I was on a roll. Sorry.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order, members! I warn the member for Buderim. I ask the member for Cairns to withdraw that unparliamentary language.

**Mr HEALY:** I withdraw. With all the sentiment testing that is going on in the federal government, one would be aware that New South Wales and Victoria being locked out is having a significant and detrimental impact on what is happening up here. It is the responsibility of the federal government. They do not need market research. We need them to step up and fulfil the responsibility they took on 12 months ago. They have not done it. It is impacting. We are doing everything as a state government. We have spent a billion dollars on the tourism sector and we will continue to invest more as we come out of this. We will need to have flights subsidised and we will need to have marketing campaigns. I tell you what: in some areas the federal government does not need to do market research.

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (5.52 pm): I rise to speak in support of the motion. Over the last 40 or 50 years, there has been a quiz program on Australian and American television called *Family Feud*. Members might know it. It has been hosted by some well-known people like Tony Barber, Rob Brough and Daryl Somers. This show centred on what people thought about certain issues depending on the polling. It led to a very famous catchphrase. After the contestant gave what they thought was the most popular response, the host would go, 'Survey says' and we would have to wait and see what it said. We can be left in no doubt that when it comes to the most important decisions made in this state in the last 18 months—that is, the health advice—the Queensland cabinet has played a game of *Family Feud*, with the new host being the Premier.

Ministers sit around the cabinet table and have some big decisions to make. The host takes over. The Premier says to the education minister, 'We have the health advice, but I am asking you: should we close down the schools to protect our children?' The education minister: 'Survey says'. Then the Premier asks the health minister, 'We have the health advice, but should we start a scare campaign that says we will not open up borders or stop lockdowns until we have 100 per cent of people vaccinated, including children?' The health minister: 'Survey says'. Then the Premier has one other question. She asks the arts minister, 'Should we allow 100 people into a live music venue when we are allowing tens of thousands of people into Suncorp Stadium?' The arts minister: 'Survey says'. We can be left with no other conclusion than that this is how this government makes decisions.

Another proof of that is found when we look at the brief that was given to the polling company before they started the polling. It said, 'This research will help guide the decision-making around the lifting of restrictions.' Then when the polling company went to the people and asked them questions, one question was, 'What advice would you give to leaders about lifting restrictions?'

Let's get fair dinkum about this. This is an absolute con job and a waste of Queensland taxpayers' money. Over \$500,000, we know, has already been spent. My understanding is that they have extended that contract, so that same money will be spent again over this next period of time so that this government can work out what are the most popular decisions. Time and time again when we have asked for the health advice—to treat Queenslanders like adults so that they can understand what the implications are—this government has refused to provide it.


The government can immediately put to bed any doubt about the purpose of the polling that has happened over the past 12 months by doing two things—

**Mr Crisafulli:** Show us!

**Mr MANDER:** That is exactly right: show us. Show us the health advice. Secondly, show us the polling. The government whip has already admitted that it is not sentiment surveying; it is polling. He said 'polling' time and time again.

**Mr Minnikin:** A great contestant!

**Mr MANDER:** A great contestant; I take that interjection. The Queensland public deserves more than a game of *Family Feud* when it comes to the biggest decisions that have been made in this state probably in our history. There is one major difference between this government's polling and the *Family Feud* polling—that is, the *Family Feud* polling is public and everybody knows about it, whereas we know nothing about the polling from this government.

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (5.57 pm): We are still in the middle of a global pandemic and people's lives are still on the line. Let me just share with the chamber some figures in relation to what we are dealing with here. We have had seven deaths in Queensland—seven very regrettable deaths for everybody who knows and is related to those people who died. Do members know how many deaths there were this week in the United States? There were 10,528 deaths. There are three states of note that are experiencing a third wave: Texas, 1,420 deaths; New York, 1,642 deaths; and Florida, 1,727 deaths. We are talking thousands of deaths, recently. Do members know what their two-dose vaccination rates were? Texas' vaccination rate is 47 per cent; New York's is 60 per cent and they had 1,642 deaths; and Florida's is 53 per cent. Do members know what our vaccination rate is? Our vaccination rate is just over 30 per cent. I say to people in this debate: let's get the silly politics out of it and get onto the policy.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr BAILEY:** If the opposition were serious about saving lives they would be moving a motion about the federal government's incompetence when it comes to the vaccine rollout. They would be moving a motion about their incompetence in not doing their constitutional duty in providing quarantine. They would be moving motions about substantial things that mean something and might actually mean a better health outcome.

All we have is a childish motion on something that every government around the world is doing. We know the only way out of this is to get people vaccinated. We know some people out there have very different views about a whole lot of things. The way we communicate with them to convince them to get vaccinated is really important. The irresponsible nature of this motion is another act in a long line of attempts to undermine our health response.

The proof of the pudding is in the eating. We have had seven deaths in Queensland. In the United States there have only been four states that have had fewer deaths than Queensland—South Dakota, Vermont, DC and Maine. Do members know why they have fewer deaths?

**Mr Minnikin** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Pause the clock. Resume your seat please, Minister. Member for Chatsworth, you are continually interjecting and it has nothing to do with what the motion is about or what the minister is speaking about. I place you on a warning.

**Mr BAILEY:** They have fewer deaths compared to Queensland's performance in the last 20 months if I only count their last week. What I say is look at the outcome. The outcome in this state is world leading. Look at New South Wales—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr BAILEY:** That is what we are trying to stop here in Queensland. For those opposite to be making silly interjections and talking about game shows when people's lives are on the line is a bloody disgrace.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr BAILEY:** I apologise and I withdraw.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** We are almost there, folks. Let us try to get there in an orderly manner.

**Mr BAILEY:** People's lives are on the line and we are not out of the woods yet.

**Mrs Frecklington** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member for Nanango, I am going to place you on a warning. You interjected as soon as the House resumed.

**Mr Lister** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member for Southern Downs, you can go on a warning too.

**Mr BAILEY:** We are not out of the woods yet. People's lives are on the line. Let us focus on ensuring that people do not die from this virus and do not die a lonely and painful death. If we look at Queensland compared to anywhere else in the world, I know where I would rather be, that is under the strong leadership of the Premier, the Chief Health Officer, the Deputy Premier and the Minister for Health. We only have to look around the world to understand how effective we have been in Queensland. For those opposite to be carrying on like this is some kind of game when people's lives are on the line—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr BAILEY:** I am looking at every single one of you. They can be outraged, but there is a reason they are in opposition. They let people down last year. Last year the opposition continued to undermine our health response. They are still doing it here today. This motion is a joke.

Interruption.

## PRIVILEGE

### Correction to *Record of Proceedings*, Apology



**Mrs GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (6.03 pm): I rise on a matter of privilege suddenly arising. At the end of my contribution to the debate I said 500 million. Obviously I meant 500,000. There was no intention to mislead the House.

## MOTION

### Palaszczuk Labor Government, Ipsos Polling Data; Order to Table Documents

Resumed.

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

**AYES, 32:**

**LNP, 29—**Bates, Bleijie, Boothman, Camm, Crandon, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Gerber, Hart, Janetzki, Krause, Last, Leahy, Lister, Mander, McDonald, Mickelberg, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, O'Connor, Perrett, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Stevens, Watts, Weir.

**Grn, 2—**Berkman, MacMahon.

**PHON, 1—**Andrew.

**NOES, 48:**

**ALP, 48—**Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Kelly, A. King, S. King, Linard, Lui, Madden, Martin, McCallum, McMahon, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.

Pairs: Hunt, Powell; Lauga, Boyce; McMillan, Bennett.


Resolved in the negative.

## PUBLIC HEALTH AND OTHER LEGISLATION (FURTHER EXTENSION OF EXPIRING PROVISIONS) AMENDMENT BILL

### Second Reading

Resumed from p. 2396, on motion of Mrs D'Ath—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Ms CAMM** (Whitsunday—LNP) (6.09 pm): I rise to contribute to this debate. As outlined by my colleague the member for Mudgeeraba, this is very important legislation. I am very disappointed with the government's approach of not allowing every member of the House the opportunity to speak in the debate on the extension of powers legislation as it is critical legislation. As outlined by the members before me, it impacts every single Queenslander, both in our state and those who cannot get back into our state at the moment—whether they are in business, whether they have a family member who has passed away or whether they are looking to return at some stage in the future.

This does not take away from the importance of the health directives. This is not about questioning the actual health advice. It is about the transparency of that health advice. It is also about ensuring consistency when health advice is released and who is charged with communicating that health advice and the directives that are given. Members should have an opportunity to represent their community so that the government can hear what the impacts are when that health advice is given or flippantly expressed in a media conference or statement such as when the Premier stood up and told people in South-East Queensland not to travel to regional and rural Queensland and North Queensland. That has an impact. Where was the health advice?

I represent the Whitsundays and, when the member for Mackay is touting how great the tourism industry is doing in the Whitsundays, I will remind this House that Hayman Island is at six per cent occupancy, Hamilton Island is at 17 per cent and Airlie Beach is at 40 per cent occupancy. Charter boat companies have a list of staff where they have to decide who gets a shift this week based on whether their partner works.

**Mr Healy** interjected.

**Ms CAMM:** I take the interjection from the member for Cairns. Are your charter boat companies at the moment divvying up their two or three trips out to the reef based upon whether someone has to pay their rent?

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Bush): Pause the clock. Member for Whitsundays, I ask you to direct your comments through the chair.

**Ms CAMM:** I will take your advice, Madam Deputy Speaker.

**Ms Grace:** International borders are closed.

**Ms CAMM:** I take the interjection from the minister. International borders are closed, and we are grateful for that decision made by the federal government. We are grateful because we need to reach that 80 per cent vaccination rate. That is a very good point. What is not closed is the border between Caboolture and Cairns. When the Premier came out of hotel quarantine and made that flippant comment, people across our state were too scared to drive an hour north. They were too scared because of a snap lockdown announced with two hours notice—which is what this government does. That isolated Queenslanders from other parts of the state.

Then there are the double standards that exist. This current government is drunk on power. That is a very dangerous place to be. It is an abuse of power. It is why these powers are so important. It is why we have foreshadowed moving amendments to ensure that this House can come together again in December to debate whether there is a need for another extension of power. After the comments made by the Premier today in the House about children and vaccinations—I look forward to seeing the health advice—I have already been contacted by parents across this state who are asking the question: are we now co-parenting with the Premier of Queensland? When was the Premier qualified to give vaccination advice to parents across the state? This is simple scaremongering. It is an abuse of power and it needs to be called out for what it is.


The Labor government is so insecure that it needs to keep fear in the minds of people instead of promoting vaccination, instead of going out to Indigenous communities and knocking on door after door to ensure our most vulnerable population is vaccinated. When is that investment going to happen? When is that vaccination rollout going to occur? You can blame the federal government all you want—

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Members on both sides, I ask that you stop quarrelling across the chamber.

**Ms CAMM:**—but it was the fearmongering by this Premier around AstraZeneca that delayed the vaccine rollout and people's take-up of the vaccine. Responsibility needs to be taken.

We will all accept the health advice when it is delivered transparently. Businesses will understand when you deliver the health advice with facts. The continuation of scaremongering and fear makes me question, and makes my community question, whether this health system with an 80 per cent vaccination rate could actually handle any outbreak.

 **Mr McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (6.15 pm): I rise in support of the Public Health and Other Legislation (Further Extension of Expiring Provisions) Amendment Bill 2021, which will continue to protect the health, safety and welfare of all Queenslanders. This bill will help mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in the community, supporting Queensland businesses and continuing our safe and strong economic recovery. Queenslanders are doing an outstanding job in responding to the pandemic.

Today we had no new local cases and just 23 active COVID cases across the entire state. Over the border in New South Wales today they had 1,116 new local cases and four deaths, despite being in lockdown for over 12 weeks now. We send the people of New South Wales our very best wishes as they battle with this deadly delta outbreak.

In contrast, here in Queensland our economy remains open and our communities are enjoying the welcome return of sport, events, school awards and celebrations. Why? It is because of the leadership of the Premier and a government who listens to the expert health advice and acts accordingly.

In our local community of Bundamba this means the Western Spirit, Ripley Valley, Ipswich Knights and Western Pride football clubs can return to their playing fields for training and fixtures. It means our Church Street Kindergarten and Preschool can resume fundraising efforts, the Ipswich Historical Society can host a family fun day and the African Youth Support Council can plan the opening of its new youth support centre at Redbank Plains after having to cancel the last planned opening due to the impact of COVID. It also means Bellbird Park State Secondary College can celebrate the success of its students from years 7 to 11.


None of this would have been possible without our ongoing safe and strong recovery, guided by the very best expert advice provided by our Chief Health Officer, Dr Jeannette Young. Of course, it would also not have been possible without an increasing number of Queenslanders coming forward to get vaccinated. In Bundamba that means visiting your GP or registering to get vaccinated at Foote's Pharmacy at Redbank Plains or one of the three participating pharmacies nearby in Springfield.

Our local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 12 years and over can also get vaccinated at the Institute for Urban Indigenous Health clinic at Goodna and the Kambu Health clinic at Booval. Nationally, the vaccination rate for First Nations people is well below that of non-Indigenous people, and I am encouraging everyone to make the choice to protect themselves and their mob.

I am very proud to say that the Palaszczuk government continues to grow our network of COVID-19 vaccination hubs, and that includes opening a new facility at the former Harvey Norman showroom in the Ipswich CBD, accessible from the Nicholas Street mall. Our mass vaccination centre at the Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre is now administering 3,000 doses a day, and soon new facilities will open at the Brisbane Entertainment Centre at Boondall and at the Logan Entertainment Centre.

Vaccination remains our first line of defence, and Queensland is fast approaching 1.5 million total doses across the state. The sustained growth of new cases and the spread of highly transmissible COVID variants like the dangerous delta strain continue to present significant risks to Queensland and the rest of Australia.

The public health emergency requires a significant response from our health system and support from departments right across our government. Unless they are extended these emergency amendments will expire 30 September 2021—this month. No-one can seriously say that this pandemic will be over by the end of this month. The delta variant is taking a tragic and deadly toll over our border in New South Wales with more than 1,000 local cases per day. By working together we are continuing to keep Queensland safe, and we need to keep doing so now more than ever. We have done too well, worked too hard and come too far in this pandemic to falter so close to the end. That is why this bill is so important to our continuing success in Queensland. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (6.20 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Public Health and Other Legislation (Further Extension of Expiring Provisions) Amendment Bill. The bill provides an extension of the provisions debated in April this year in relation to local government, providing flexibility to facilitate the holding of COVID-safe local government by-elections and fresh elections, an extension of the operation of the COVID related local government meeting provisions.

The LNP will not oppose this bill; however, the opposition will move amendments that have been outlined earlier by my parliamentary colleagues. I have no doubt the government will cry foul and make it sound like the LNP is trying to defy health advice and that we will not listen to medical advice and experts. That could not be further from the truth. The amendments put forward are an aspirational target for the transition away from restrictions. The position Queensland now finds itself in is very different to when this House debated similar provisions earlier in the year. At that point in time the vaccine rollout here in Queensland had not commenced. I am pleased to say that some of my communities are up around 60 per cent. In the future Queenslanders need the opportunity to transition away from how we have been living for the past 18 months. It is the responsibility of government to provide a step-by-step road map grounded by expert advice that shows Queenslanders the path out of this pandemic. Queenslanders need to have this advice available to them.


There is also a need for the government to provide a road map for border communities that are seriously disrupted. It is not just with New South Wales: there is a need to consider South Australia, which my electorate borders, and the Northern Territory. There is no doubt that border communities need a cross-border commissioner in Queensland who understands the complexities of border communities like Mungindi. A Queensland commissioner could also ensure there is a safe and ongoing framework for boarding school students to provide parents with the certainty of being reunited with their children during school holidays.

The government clearly has a problem with consistency. It has been absolutely galling this week for Mungindi residents to read of the NRL entourage jetting in from Sydney whilst Queensland Health nurses who work at the Mungindi Hospital in Queensland cannot cross the border to come to work. Where is the health advice to downgrade services at the Mungindi Hospital during a pandemic? Where is the health advice to lock the staff out of the hospital during a pandemic and when we are expecting and starting on a large grain harvest? This is a ludicrous decision. Common sense has to prevail. The Mungindi community has not had one COVID case since the start of this pandemic. Mungindi is an example of where a genuine border zone is needed rather than the road map of problems I will table in this House.

*Tabled paper:* Document, undated, titled 'Mungindi, QLD 2406' [[1319](#)].

They need to have a genuine border bubble and a genuine zone, not the list of problems they have. I also have constituents who have raised the need for an agricultural border zone with the South Australian border in case of future Queensland border closures with that state. The current class exemption for agriculture is not practical for South Australia because there is a lack of COVID testing out in that area. In fact, there is no health facility to even provide that testing. These properties are very isolated from other major communities, and I am pleased to say that vaccination rates in some of those properties is 100 per cent. I will take the opportunity in this debate to ask the government for a South Australian agricultural border zone for future border closures.

The LNP want Queenslanders to have better access to the vaccine should they choose to be vaccinated. That is not happening in all regional areas, despite locals actively seeking vaccination. In particular, the Western Downs is reported to have a vaccination rate of only 21 per cent—well below the state average. There is a need for mass vaccination hubs across the Western Downs. These communities are on the north-south freight routes and they are on the frontline. Mass vaccination clinics have shown to be successful in other communities like Goondiwindi, and I take this opportunity to call for mass vaccination clinics in Dalby, Tara, Moonie, Miles and Chinchilla as a matter of urgency. The Western Downs vaccination rate must be increased above 21 per cent. It is way too low for a region that is so near to the border. We only have to look at the exposure sites today to see how important it is to fast-track southern communities' vaccination opportunities.

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (6.25 pm): I would like to start by saying to the member for Whitsunday that I am qualified to talk to parents about vaccination. If I was going to be talking to parents about the vaccination of their children—I have certainly thought about this deeply in relation to my own children—the first thing I would be pointing out to people is that just over 12 months ago we were telling people that children had a very low chance—and no chance—of catching and spreading this disease



and that teachers were safe. Well, it mutated. Now we know that the delta variant is acting in a different way. Like a lot of clinicians, I am very worried about what future variants of this disease might do, so I think it would be very prudent to be able to get my children vaccinated. I am glad that my 16-year-old has been able to get her first. Sadly, my 13-year-old cannot get a vaccination yet. I have talked to many, many parents who would like—

**Mrs Frecklington** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Bush): Pause the clock. Member for Nanango, I understand you are already on a warning. You can leave the chamber until seven o'clock.

**Mr KELLY:** Perhaps take the time on your journey out of the chamber, member for Nanango, to ask the constituents in your area how they feel about vaccinating their children, because I am sure they will feel the same way that those in my area feel. They will feel that they should be able to vaccinate their children and keep their children safe because we do not know where this thing is going.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. We clearly have an anti-vaxxer over there trying to—

**Mr KELLY:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member has been excluded from the chamber.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I take offence, Madam Deputy Speaker.

**Mr KELLY:** The member has been excluded from the chamber.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** Exactly. So therefore you cannot—

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Nanango, is there a point of order?

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** Yes, Madam Deputy Speaker, I do have a point of order. I take offence and I ask the member to withdraw.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Greenslopes, the member for Nanango has taken offence and I ask that you withdraw.

**Mr KELLY:** I withdraw, but I seek your guidance, Madam Deputy Speaker, as to how a member who has been asked to withdraw from this chamber can continue to engage in the debate.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I will take some advice, thank you, member for Nanango. Member for Greenslopes, there is no point of order. The member for Nanango was in the process of leaving the chamber. The member for Greenslopes made a comment that she has taken offence to and she has requested that that be withdrawn.

**Mr KELLY:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I have taken personal offence at being called an anti-vaxxer and I would ask that that be withdrawn.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Nanango, the member for Greenslopes has taken offence. I ask that you withdraw the comment.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I withdraw. Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Nanango, is there a point of order? I hope that you are not about to reflect on the chair.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** No. I withdraw, and now I rise to a point of order. I still take personal offence and I ask the member to withdraw. He has not withdrawn.

**Mr KELLY:** I withdraw.

*Whereupon the honourable member for Nanango withdrew from the chamber at 6.29 pm.*

**Mr WEIR:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. My point of order is about respect for the Speaker. You were on your feet before. The member kept on speaking and then questioned your ruling.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** There is no point of order. Take a seat.

**Mr KELLY:** We thought we would be out of this by now. This bill is all about keeping Queenslanders safe. We are not out of this and it is really important we reflect on why we are not. Why do New South Wales, the ACT and Victoria remain in lockdown with no definite chance of lifting? We have to reflect on why that is the case.

First, as I have already pointed out tonight, the virus has mutated and become much more virulent. Second, the virus leaked out of hotel quarantine—hotel quarantine that should have been fixed a long time ago by the Morrison government. Third, it leaked into a population with low vaccination rates. Vaccination rates were low because the federal government delayed starting vaccinations for four months and then they failed to secure enough vaccines for the population.

Fourth, it leaked into a state whose leaders spent 18 months telling people that lockdowns do not work. The New South Wales Premier repeatedly told the people of New South Wales that contact tracing was enough, and the Morrison government backed this in as the gold standard. On 24 June, when other states would have gone into a hard, fast lockdown, the New South Wales Premier said she was comfortable with the current settings. Again, Scott Morrison backed her in.

Fifth, when the New South Wales government finally introduced lockdowns, they limped and lagged their way to putting in proper lockdowns. In a move fitting of an Olympic diver or gymnast, the Prime Minister backflipped and short, sharp lockdowns are now the way forward apparently. Gold standard, no doubt! There can be no doubt that the current outbreak lies squarely on the shoulders of the incompetence, inaction and arrogance of Scott Morrison and Gladys Berejiklian.

I support this bill because it gives us the capacity to take a different approach that amazingly has allowed our state to beat the delta variant. One would think everyone in this chamber would be in furious agreement, proud of being in a state that has achieved something that very few countries have achieved around the world. However, when you read the statement of reservation, you realise that Crackers Kelly, the leader of the united nutjob party, might have left the LNP but his spirit is alive and well on that side of this House.

Those opposite wrote that they do not like ad hoc lockdowns. Perhaps they would prefer a good non ad hoc lockdown, like the poor people of New South Wales are having to endure right now. They went on to say that we need to develop a strategy that 'identifies risk exposure and quantifies the measures necessary to address different levels of risk'. Forgive me if I am mistaken, but I thought this bill actually laid out the measures that did just that. What part of the risk exposure don't they understand? Which bit of health advice do they need? Have they missed the number of people dying? Do they lack the capacity to sit down with a calculator and use the numbers provided freely by John Hopkins University to work out the rate of death? Do they have so little understanding of health care that they do not understand the number of people who have died of other preventable causes simply because their health system was overwhelmed? Do they have zero understanding of the tens of thousands of healthcare workers who have died around the world as a result of caring for people with COVID-19? Which bit of the risk don't they get?

Perhaps they want an alternative approach. Perhaps they support the approach taken by the New South Wales Premier. That has worked well! Perhaps they just want to let Scott Morrison have a go because he has done so well when it comes to vaccination and quarantine! Perhaps they think we should listen to whatever nonsense Crackers Kelly, the member for Manila, the pretend Cowboy Canavan and all these other crazies are expounding. How about this for a strategy? We listen and apply the advice of health professionals.


Let me turn to another section of the statement of reservation. They have attempted to reinterpret the advice of the Chief Health Officer and they have completely missed the mark.

**Ms Bates** interjected.

**Mr KELLY:** Listen to this, member for Mudgeeraba. Read the advice from ATAGI. The CHO has provided advice directly from ATAGI. I call on those opposite to withdraw their slanderous statements about the CHO in their statement of reservation.

Finally, it says in the statement of reservation that apparently politics has no place in a pandemic. I agree. Then why did the former leader of the LNP ignore the advice of health professionals and call for the border to be opened 64 times? Why have the current LNP members of this committee half-

quoted the CHO and attempted to besmirch her good reputation? Why do those opposite and their associates—Craig ‘Crackers’ Kelly, Manila’s favourite adoptive son and Cowboy Canavan—continue to cast doubt on the seriousness of this illness? The Premier and the CHO have done a magnificent job. Queenslanders have done a magnificent job. This bill gives us the capacity to continue to do a magnificent job. It gives up the capacity to keep Queenslanders safe. I commend it to the House.

 **Mr PURDIE** (Ninderry—LNP) (6.34 pm): As a member of the Economics and Governance Committee, I rise to speak to the Public Health and Other Legislation (Further Extension of Expiring Provisions) Amendment Bill 2021. This bill continues the amendments to the Public Health Act that gives emergency and extraordinary powers to the Chief Health Officer in Queensland and proposes these powers be extended beyond the current expiry date of September 2021 to April 2022. This bill is the fourth subsequent bill presented to parliament that seeks to extend the date on which these emergency powers will expire. By the time April 2022 comes around, Queenslanders will have been subjected to the snap enactment of emergency provisions for two years and two months.

During our examination of the bill, the committee considered 588 submissions. The majority of the submitters to the committee were individuals who raised concerns with lockdown restrictions, mask mandates and social and economic impacts, particularly when just a few cases of COVID-19 were being reported in the community. Yesterday, we woke to the news that just one week into a pause on hotel quarantine admissions, NRL players and cricketers have yet again been allowed into Queensland while Queenslanders are being evicted. A growing public sentiment which is alert to the unfairness of elite sporting teams and others being able to travel, restrictions on community sport and the inconsistent approach to the granting of exemptions all leave the community sceptical about the motivations for certain decisions.

Together with my LNP colleagues, I am concerned the government has been unable to clearly communicate public health measures and has not been transparent with the rationale of enforcement or easing of restrictions. Transparency is vital to achieve confidence in leadership. The state government must release the medical advice which it receives as the basis for enforcing restrictions. Queenslanders are entitled to this information. Without it, we are forced to sit back and take any decision on the chin with little warning and little context. This uncertainty breeds anxiety.

To that end, it is imperative the government publicly release what contingency plans have been made in preparation for a COVID-19 outbreak in Queensland based on our current vaccination rates. My office has been inundated with inquiries from constituents who claim the government is operating in a social and economic vacuum. I will continue to put pressure on the Labor government to engage consistently with stakeholders across different industries and geographies to refine and update the health directives in order to develop appropriate rules.

This bill was a perfect opportunity to introduce some much needed fiscal support packages for small and family businesses that would have added to the range of measures to support the Queensland economy. It failed to do so. While the Premier has agreed to the national plan to transition Australia’s national COVID-19 response and limit lockdowns, she has failed to convince the public that her government is genuinely committed to this approach. When introducing the bill, the Minister for Health justified the extension of the bill’s expiration date by saying—

This will allow time for Queensland Health to assess the effectiveness of the vaccine rollout and what this may mean for the COVID-19 response.


I find it interesting that the litmus test is vaccination rates when Queensland’s vaccination rates are the second lowest in the country. Extraordinary measures are called for in extraordinary times. However, it is important that Queenslanders can trust—

**Government members** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Lui): Order!

**Mr PURDIE:** Thanks for your protection, Madam Deputy Speaker. However, it is important that Queenslanders can trust in and understand a roadmap to normality. The opposition proposes the following: that the expiry date of the Public Health and Other Legislation (Further Extension of Expiring Provisions) Amendment Bill 2021 be set at Friday, 10 December 2021 instead of April 2022; that expert health advice received by the state government is shared publicly; and that the state government must identify a clear road map away from COVID-19 restrictions and set a target date to reach 80 per cent of the population being fully vaccinated.

However, this is with strong concerns about the crippling effect ad hoc lockdowns have on small and family business communities, in particular the tourism sector. A sensible risk strategy must be communicated to Queenslanders that quantifies appropriate measures in accordance with the level of risk. One rule for sporting teams and entertainers and another for everyone else does not pass the pub test. I commend the passing of these key amendments to the bill and I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (6.39 pm): I rise to support the Public Health and Other Legislation (Further Extension of Expiring Provisions) Amendment Bill 2021. Firstly, I want to thank the chair and the members of the Economics and Governance Committee for the work they have done in undertaking that report. This sort of bill would normally be for the health committee to consider, but we were very busy dealing with other bills. I say thanks very much for a good report and its commonsense points as to why we need the extension.

I will pick up on one point of the member for Ninderry. He said the Premier failed to convince the public. I do not know where he was in 2020 regarding the state election, but I am pretty sure the public resoundingly put faith in the Premier and were convinced that we are keeping Queenslanders safe by listening to the health advice. I am not sure where he was.

As we know, in January 2020 a public health emergency was declared under section 319 of the Public Health Act due to the outbreak of COVID-19 in China. Fast-forward 18 months and the numbers are stark, especially in New South Wales, who are struggling to contain the delta virus as they enter their third month of lockdown. That is in stark contrast to the way we have handled this global pandemic here in Queensland. The Chief Health Officer must be applauded for the way the government has handled this. Using the Indooroopilly cluster as an example, we managed to get on top of that in eight days compared to what is going on in other states. That, again, comes down to the confidence of the people of Queensland to follow the advice of the government and the Chief Health Officer. We thank Dr Jeannette Young. We cannot thank her enough for what she has done in the last 18 months. We can all hold our heads high after following her.

As at 1 February 2021 the World Health Organization reported 102 million people with coronavirus—that has almost doubled—and now we have four million deaths globally. The World Health Organization talks about it being closer to 10 million; that is the reality of it. Australia had experienced a far lesser burden, although other states are in the midst of it now, than other countries until delta came along. In Queensland as at the end of the month, there were 1,980 confirmed cases of COVID-19 with seven deaths related to Queensland residents. In New South Wales as at today there have been over 28,000 cases and over 150 deaths. In Australia, there has been a total of 56,000 cases with over a thousand deaths, and the WHO reports 216 million cases around the world.

We have to take this seriously. We have to have the right provisions in place. We have to use common sense and apply the science. Of course, the only way we are going to navigate our way out of this is with vaccines. I was really pleased to see the Townsville numbers today: 79,000 people in Townsville have had their vaccination, and I see the member for Townsville in the chamber. That is fantastic. The big vaccine hub we have in place there is working. The message is getting out in North Queensland, and they had to go into lockdown as well.

I applaud the government. I note in the report, for the benefit of the member for Logan, the QNMU endorsed the regional quarantine facility that is to be built similar to Howard Springs. The Labor government of this state is doing it. It is going alone and doing that to ensure we can quarantine people safely. The feds had the opportunity to join us over a year ago on that, but they did not listen. They did not listen, they have failed in the supply and they have failed, as have other governments, by not acting early when there is an outbreak. That is a tragedy for the economic impact applied and the mental health of people. I have family in Sydney. It is just incredibly testing for them to be locked in their house with five kids. I do not know how they are doing it, but hats off to them.

I have to take up some of the points of the member for Whitsunday. She says that we were scaremongering and that we were drunk on power. What was the member for Whitsunday thinking? We have applied good common sense, we have applied science and we are listening to the Chief Health Officer. That contribution was disgraceful. The LNP need to get behind what we are doing on this side of the House by listening to the health advice.

**Ms Bates:** We are supporting the bill.

**Mr HARPER:** I can hear the member for Mudgeeraba interjecting as she normally does.


**Ms Bates:** We are supporting the bill.

**Mr HARPER:** If we had listened to the LNP—

**Ms Bates:** Are you aware we are supporting the bill?

**Mr HARPER:** I take the interjection, because if we had listened to that lot opposite, we would still be in lockdown. They wanted to open the border 64 times. Good grief!

In conclusion, we will continue to rely on the science. I am glad that the Premier is asking about the Doherty institute in relation to vaccine extensions; that was relied upon—the TGA approving from 12- to 18-year-olds. Of course, more clinical trials will happen and we will listen to the science. That is what we do. Queensland is doing a great job. We continue to do a great job by applying these extensions. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (6.45 pm): I rise to make a brief contribution to the Public Health and Other Legislation (Further Extension of Expiring Provisions) Amendment Bill 2021. The important part of that title is 'further extension'. I am concerned that the bill that is before us extends this too far. We have proposed an amendment, which I think is sensible. It does not stop us coming back into this House and carrying on these provisions. However, it does keep the government accountable and ensures we have a good hold on what is going on in our community. Let's have a look at a couple of things that have been going on.

We have consistently been asking for the public health advice to be published. This is public health advice put together by people who are paid by the taxpayer. There is no reason for this to be secret. If the health advice is based on science and it is solid and it is what we should be doing, then publish it. There is absolutely no problem in publishing that sort of thing. There is no need for a veil of secrecy around this. If that were published, it would relieve some of the fear and anxiety out in the community. I think people out in the community at the moment are finding a great deal of mental health issues are starting to become apparent because of this COVID virus. I think it would be a good thing if people could understand why the health advice is in place because they are told where it has come from and what has happened.

I am concerned about the lack of a plan for the way out of here and I think our communities should be rightly concerned. I am also very concerned about the fact that we are creating more than one class of citizen here in Queensland. There are those people who have to abide by the rules and then there are those people who play sport, who are given exemptions, who are allowed to do other things.

**Mr Harper:** Tell us about following all the rules.

**Mr WATTS:** I will tell the member about following rules. I broke the rule. I took responsibility. I apologised to my community and I was appropriately fined, and that is exactly what should happen. What should not happen is we should not be chartering planes when there are family members stuck elsewhere who live in Queensland, who pay rates in Queensland, who have registration in Queensland but who cannot come home. It is not that there is a process that they must follow; they cannot come home. They are forbidden from entering the state. That I think is a serious problem and an overreach from this government and it should not be allowed. It just feeds the anxiety and the fear that people in my community have.


I think there are a couple of things that we need to look at. People's lives are on hold. There are people who have missed their 21st or have missed engagements, weddings and funerals. All of these things are very important. That is one of the reasons I have been double-vaxxed with the AstraZeneca. I would encourage other people to look at the science, talk to their doctor and follow their doctor's advice in terms of vaccination because we need to find a way out of here. We cannot stay in this situation forever where our own citizens are banned from coming back to Queensland.

I just want to say a couple of other things. I want to know what the plan looks like. One of the key things is that it should be transparent. If it is going to be transparent, we should be publishing the health advice. It needs to be accountable, which means it needs to be brought back into this House so that it can be reviewed and talked about. That is the reason for not wanting to extend these powers too far into the future.

People should have confidence in it. That would require good communication and consultation. Coming up to Toowoomba and announcing what you are going to do without talking to anybody in Toowoomba, apart from the proponent who will make a profit from it, is not good enough consultation. I am really interested to find out from the government and would really love to see published the

preparations we are making in terms of our medical supplies, our training of people and our building of facilities. In Toowoomba we do not have enough negative pressure rooms to deal with an outbreak. We do not have enough ICU facilities to deal with an outbreak. I should imagine that this is not dissimilar around the state.

A plan would make sure that we have some transparency and accountability and that we are prepared for a medical emergency. That would then give some confidence to the people of Queensland, removing some of their anxieties and fears—rather than simple two- and three-word slogans that are feeding those fears and causing anxiety, mental stress and suicides in our community.

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (6.50 pm): I rise to speak in support of the bill before the House. Last time we were speaking about the need to extend provisions, I remember I was hoping to see my grandparents. We were talking about a travel bubble and things were looking up. We were really excited about the idea of being able to go to New Zealand to see Nan and Pop, who missed my wedding last year. Six months later, things have deteriorated. Large parts of Australia are gripped by an outbreak. Most of the eastern seaboard is now in lockdown. It has been for some time and will be for some time to come. My sister lives in northern New South Wales and I have not seen her or my nieces for months. They have barely had a chance to meet my baby daughter. Sadly, the idea of seeing my grandparents in New Zealand seems a really long way off. I know that I am not alone. There are many people in Queensland and indeed right around Australia missing family interstate and overseas. We are a nation of migrants. My beautiful little nieces are missing their grandparents up here in Queensland, and we are missing them too.


Parts of New South Wales have been locked down for months. There is no end in sight to that but, thanks to the strong management of our Chief Health Officer and our government, we are blessedly living delta free in Queensland and are in the race of our lives to get vaccinated. The feedback I am getting from my community now is that they are being offered appointments to get those jabs and that they are excited to have the opportunity to do their part in getting that jab. I say again to my community tonight, as I have always said: if you have not yet registered online with Queensland Health, do not delay. Do it today. Get registered and get vaccinated. My personal experience a couple of weeks ago was fantastic in getting vaccinated at a Queensland Health hub. They did a wonderful job. I felt really well looked after. I thank the Queensland Health team that did such a great job taking care of me and thousands of others who were vaccinated at the hub that day.

It is my hope that every eligible Queenslander will have the chance to get vaccinated, especially our young people. My daughter Allegra is an amazing young woman. She is in year 7 and celebrated her 12th birthday just a couple of weeks ago. She wears her mask to school and is now eligible to register for the Pfizer vaccine. She deserves the chance to be protected before we open the border. Every kid does. My son, Heath, is nine. He is not eligible to register for a vaccine, but he is a smart kid and he sees his sister wearing her mask to school, so he decided that he was going to do that, too. It is not because he has to but because he knows it is a smart thing to do. It increases his protection. He wants to do it. He knows it is the best way to keep himself safe and keep his teachers safe. I am really proud of him for making that decision. Heath spent time in the neonatal intensive care unit as a newborn baby. I can say from experience that seeing your kid in hospital is not an experience any parent wants to have or repeat.

Our lives have changed in many ways since the start of COVID, particularly with the advent of the delta variant. One of the biggest changes has been the introduction of the check-in app, which has provided an easy way for contact tracers to track us down quickly so they can get on top of these outbreaks. It is due to innovations like this check-in app that we were able to, in just eight days, amazingly and miraculously, get on top of the recent Indooroopilly cluster, which affected a lot of people in my community. When I think about what is going on in other parts of Australia right now, it absolutely blows my mind that the Queensland community came together like it did. We had tens of thousands of people in home quarantine and in lockdown. I thank the people in my community and beyond who did the hard work. Some of them were locked down for well over two weeks, but they did it because they knew it was the right thing to do. Because of those people who stayed home, here we all are today in parliament. Sure, we are wearing masks, but we are here.

I mentioned in April that I had a friend who came back from the UK and stayed in the Howard Springs quarantine facility. She said that it was absolutely fantastic. She said to me at the time, 'Gee, it would be great if Queensland could get one of those.' Well, I have good news: we have one coming. We have our very own Howard Springs variant—the Wellcamp facility, which is absolutely fantastic.

Hotels were never meant to be a long-term solution. They were a short-term solution to what has turned out to be a long-term problem. When you know what you know, you do what you can do. We know better; we can do better. Let's get this quarantine going. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr LISTER** (Southern Downs—LNP) (6.55 pm): I listened carefully to the second reading speech of the Minister for Health. She mentioned a number of issues I would like to speak about. I am a member who represents a border constituency, with about 500 kilometres of frontage with New South Wales. Many of my communities have a common community with the towns on the other side. Those people who have an entitlement to cross the border—they are expected to be essential workers—should be able to do so but, because of the bungling and the lack of preparation of this government—

**Mr Power:** Stop attacking Gladys. She's already got so much on her plate.

**Mr LISTER:** I am not taking interjections, Madam Deputy Speaker.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Lui): Order, member for Logan.

**Mr LISTER:** I need to speak for those little people whose voice is not being heard. I heard the minister thank the retail workers who continue to stock our shelves. I ask her to bear in mind the retail worker at the Wallangarra General Store who on a number of occasions has been prevented from traversing the border, because the system is capricious. The police on the border are given the invidious task of having to decide who is essential and who is not. I have written at length to the government over these matters. Nothing has happened. I heard the minister say that we all acknowledge the pain and the distress caused. I ask the minister: why am I never consulted when it comes to border matters?

**Government members:** Ha, ha!

**Mr LISTER:** I represent communities that the minister and this government do not understand. This is a serious matter. I can see that this might enliven the humour of some of the—

**Mr Power:** Why don't you actually do something with the New South Wales government?

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order, member for Logan!

**Mr LISTER:** The Labor government has consistently and systemically excluded not only me but also every other member who represents a constituency along the border, like my honourable friend the member for Mudgeeraba. She has border frontage with New South Wales. There is bungling and absurdity that comes up in the exemptions for essential workers that prevents them from being able to fulfil their intended role according to the Chief Health Officer. That is, for instance with agricultural workers, anyone who in any shape or form supports agriculture. That is what the Chief Health Officer said. Those people are being turned away because of the bungling and the lack of awareness about and understanding of country communities and border communities.

I heard the minister say that she really looked forward to hearing the debate to see what the opposition would do. I can tell her what the opposition would do: the opposition would have saved \$500,000 and not spent money on polling to assist its electoral chances. The government should listen to the medical advice rather than to the pollsters, which is the obvious inference when the polling was put together and concealed by the government, because it would be damning if it were released.

We heard the minister say that she is ensuring the economic future for all Queenslanders. Those are empty words because, as I say again, on many occasions I have said in this House and I have written to the Premier saying that I should be consulted when the planning for border closures is being carried out so that my communities are represented, so that they know that when the decision is made it has taken into account their needs and interests. Every single time the border has been closed there has been a bungle which has resulted from the lack of consultation. It is entirely political that the Labor government never consults with LNP members who have been elected to represent border communities.

Finally, I say this to the minister: what about those many people who depend on ambulances and fire brigades that have to cross the border to reach them? When we put a six-tonne concrete barrier across a border—it does not matter what the law says—they will take 20 minutes longer to get to a heart attack or a fire. The people in my electorate and the people just on the other side of the border—our friends and cousins in New South Wales—are entitled to a government that understands their needs and does not sell them out just so the Premier can look good each morning at her morning press conference.

Debate, on motion of Mr Lister, adjourned.

## ADJOURNMENT

### Slater Clifton-Walker



**Mr O'CONNOR** (Bonney—LNP) (7.00 pm): I take the time tonight to remember a local Labrador boy, Slater Clifton-Walker. Slater was diagnosed with brain cancer at just 17 months of age. His type of tumour accounted for just six per cent of childhood brain tumours affecting one in 1.4 million children—and everyone who met him could see that he was one in a million in so many ways, more than just this. Slater faced invasive, intensive and even experimental treatments and medication to reduce the tumour, leaving him with significant side effects, but he was given a 10 per cent to 20 per cent chance of living to his seventh birthday. Tragically, he passed away on 11 August aged just 6½. He lived every single day of that to the fullest though. Even in his final months when he had lost his hearing, he would wake up each day singing.

I had the honour of knowing Slater for the last few years. He was a cheeky little kid with a great sense of humour. In 2019 he was the Face of Relay for the Cancer Council's Relay for Life, bringing joy to everyone with the Ninja Turtle moves he pulled on his lap around the oval. He started school at Musgrave Hill State School this year and made an immediate impact on the staff, students and school community there. Earlier this year they ran a Hero Day for Slater with all of the proceeds going to paediatric brain cancer research at the Children's Brain Cancer Centre. His class, Prep Silver, alone raised \$3,605 for this important cause and the school overall raised over \$20,000. It was truly a special day for Slater and I am so glad he got to see it.

Slater had an amazing support team around him and I want to put some of their names on the record of this parliament: his oncologist and co-founder of the Children's Brain Cancer Centre, Dr Timothy Hassall; his clinical nurse consultants Brooke Spencer and Michelle Noyes; his allied health team Hayley Coulson, Ashlyn Harrop and Anshu Shama; social worker Ruth Granata; GPs Dr James Hudson and Dr Brian Cheong, who first found his tumour; the staff of the Queensland Children's Hospital, the Children's Hospital Foundation and our own Gold Coast University Hospital who were absolutely exceptional; and the amazing educators at Musgrave Hill State School, in particular Luke, Brooke, his teacher Amy and teacher aide Jen. Thank you to you all and to everyone else who has been there for Slater.

Bianca, Slater's mum, is also a hero. She has gone through every treatment with him and is now dealing with the unimaginable grief of losing a child. Our community stands with her and all of Slater's family. One Australian child will die from brain cancer every nine days and my hope is that through Slater's story, his courage and his fundraising efforts we will see that number come down. Goodbye, brave little boy. You will be missed but not forgotten.

### Slater Clifton-Walker; Wynnum, Local Newspaper



**Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (7.03 pm): May I, too, pass on my condolences to Slater's family.

In April last year my bayside community lost the *Wynnum Herald*, our community newspaper since 1946—a financial decision by the Murdoch owned Quest newspapers. It suspended the print edition of the newspaper and transitioned to an online version accessible only behind a paywall. Suddenly, my local community was left without our local paper and its absence was strongly felt. Many of my constituents contacted my office to express their dismay and concern over the downfall of our community news outlet. Local news businesses over the world have been devastated by COVID-19, ironically during a time when people want and need a local news product more than ever.

Community newspapers are a significant asset to society. They provide a voice to and for local communities and keep them connected and informed. They are the resource we trust to keep us up to date with the latest news on local issues and events that are important to us. They are particularly necessary during a public health crisis when local information becomes imperative as part of our health response. Local news is an important form of civic engagement. It breeds the kind of citizen action that makes local journalism a useful way of keeping governments accountable. A local newspaper reflects the intricate character of its local community. It shares in the wins and the woes of the people; it creates collective feelings of hope and anger when anger is due. A local newspaper tells the ongoing story of where we are and who we are.

Luckily for my bayside community, we had a replacement local newspaper not two months after the *Wynnum Herald* hit the pavements for the last time. A passionate local, Damien Lugg decided that no local news is bad news and together with his partner, Kirsten Molnar, he set about creating the *Community Leader*, and I welcome them to the chamber today. The *Community Leader* was first




distributed in June 2020. In its print version alone, it reaches 25,000 homes and businesses across my electorate free of charge. In a little over a year it has become a replacement voice in our local area and I want to share with members an extract from the first page of the very first edition of the *Community Leader* describing what it is like to live in the bayside. I think it sums up perfectly the role a local newspaper plays in uniting and shaping the voice of local communities and I thank Damien and Kirsten for their vision and commitment to the bayside—

Go for a stroll and you'll hear about this morning's sighting of dugongs, or perhaps a dolphin pod. It's the kind of place people still say 'good morning' with a smile, and the fiercest of conversations bubble about who makes the best coffee.

Thank you, Damien and Kirsten.

### Coronavirus, Queensland Border Restrictions

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (7.06 pm): Those opposite might be surprised to know that one and one always equals two—not sometimes, always. Those on the Gold Coast are being severely affected by border restrictions around the Tweed area. Unless you are a member of parliament like the member for Currumbin, myself and the member for Mudgeeraba, you will not appreciate how affected these areas are by these restrictions. I wrote to the Premier urgently two weeks ago and suggested that we put together a cross-border group of MPs and councillors to discuss these issues and to come up with sensible suggestions to make to the government. Two weeks ago I wrote to her, but I have had no reply. One and one is two.

I am aware that the Premier keeps saying that she has talked to the New South Wales Premier. The New South Wales Premier says that the Queensland Premier has not actually spoken to her at all about moving the borders. The Queensland government says it wants to move the borders, but it is the one that is stopping this from actually happening. New South Wales put forward some very sensible suggestions yesterday around moving the borders, but that was rejected by Queensland. It put forward some very sensible suggestions about reworking the essential workers to include healthcare workers, to include education workers, to include childcare workers. That, too, was rejected by the Queensland government. It put forward very sensible suggestions to involve rapid testing at the border. That, too, was rejected by the Queensland government.

Tonight we heard that the Queensland government has been doing polling about its responses to COVID. One and one equals two, members. The decisions that are being made by this government are clearly political in motive, coming from that polling.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr HART:** It is slamming the borders closed. It is putting these restrictions in place that are having a terrible effect on my electorate.

**Government members** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Lui): Pause the clock. Members to my right, please cease all interjections.

**Mr HART:** It is putting these restrictions in place based on polling and political decisions. It goes out and makes these announcements and then it has the Chief Health Officer justifying it by her health advice retrospectively enforcing what the government has already decided.


If that is not the case, release the advice. Show us the advice in advance. Release the polling. Release the advice. If that is not the case, I will apologise to the House. My area is being heavily affected by what is going on at the border. They need support. I have businesses going broke. I have people who say they cannot pay their mortgages. This government is making political decisions not based on health advice.

**Mr Bailey:** Look at the outcome, Noddy!

**Mr HART:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Somebody over there just called me 'Noddy'. I take personal offence to that and ask that it be withdrawn.

**Mr BAILEY:** That was certainly me and I withdraw.

### Balmoral State High School

 **Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development) (7.09 pm): We are all so proud of Balmoral State High School in my local community. Seeing it go from strength to strength, particularly in recent years, has been one of the greatest pleasures of my role as the member for Bulimba. I have often taken the opportunity to

speak in this House about this wonderful school and now they have done something else amazing that I need to share and that is the way they have developed their new house system to honour past students, particularly those who have made a major contribution to the community.

In May 2021 there was a community vote to rename the houses based on those criteria and as a result the four new houses are Wilson, Tunstall, Coffey and Toyne. I want to share a little bit about why those names were chosen. I am absolutely delighted that two members of the Coffey family are actually in the gallery tonight: Ray and his daughter Renee. It is absolutely wonderful to have them here to listen to this. Coffey house was named specifically after Dennis Coffey whose world record for flight and his involvement with bringing touch football to Australia are very strong and amazing achievements. However, I also want to mention that Ray Coffey was a foundation student of Balmoral High in 1958. Ray and Dennis' sister Lexanne and their brother Trevor also attended Balmoral High. Renee's older brother Blair also attended. In fact, Ray met his wife Dianne at Balmoral State High School. Ray is very active in the Balmoral State High School Alumni Association.

Jim Tunstall is another foundation student and the long-serving president of the Balmoral State High School Alumni Association. He had a distinguished career in education, culminating in his appointment as director of the Queensland School Curriculum Council. Vicky Wilson, who many of us know, attended Murarrie State School and Balmoral High and she is well known for her accomplishments in netball. At the time of her retirement from representative sport she was the world's greatest goal shooter in netball and the only Australian player to have played in four world championships. Toyne house is named after Fay Toyne who was an accomplished tennis player. She played 44 Wimbledon championships and at the time of her retirement she returned with such success that today she would have been ranked in the top 10 tennis players in the world.

The naming of the houses after these people is an amazing acknowledgement of their achievements. For the students at Balmoral High today to have such role models in front of them is the most wonderful recognition of the principle of 'you cannot be what you cannot see'. I congratulate the house leaders, Julia, Ethan, Kate, Nicholas, Clea, Madeline, Kaden and Pacey, who I know are going to do their houses proud.

### Scenic Rim, Bushfires



**Mr KRAUSE** (Scenic Rim—LNP) (7.13 pm): This week it is two years since the outbreak of the Sarabah, Canungra and Beechmont area bushfires in 2019. As many members will remember, that caused a lot of devastation in that area, in particular burning out a whole lot of national park and the loss of the historic Binna Burra Lodge. Two years on from the bushfires the scars are still there in the community and many people are still remembering and dealing with the trauma of that event every day in their lives.

Rural fire officials in QFES at the time of the bushfire failed to listen to local knowledge on the ground about the conduct of that bushfire and failed to take the advice of locals that could have prevented the fire advancing as much as it did. I table a media report from recent times about the fact that fire officials blocked a crucial back-burn that may have saved Binna Burra Lodge. It outlines in great detail, through good investigative journalism, the story of how locals, the Geiger family and others, put together a plan to back-burn in the Sarabah Valley in the days before the loss of the lodge, but it was not acceded to by the top brass in QFES because there was an order from the top of the tree that there was to be no fire put on the ground and hence no back-burns.

*Tabled paper:* Bundle of articles from the Fassifern Guardian & Tribune online relating to the bushfire in the Gold Coast hinterland region in 2019 [\[1320\]](#).

This was the latest example over many years of QFES not listening to the advice of locals on the ground in communities like mine in Canungra and Sarabah, Boonah and Beaudesert and everywhere who have the knowledge of how fire works, know the lay of the land and know what to do to prevent fires. Indeed, in the days before that back-burn would have taken place, local knowledge stopped the fire advancing on the Canungra township itself.

There have also been recent reports that the RFBAQ is slamming QFES again for spending the last 30 years navel gazing, building up a great bureaucracy in QFES while at the same time allowing volunteers on the ground to be diminished. It needs to change. The government needs to recognise and listen to local knowledge when it comes to the management of fires, whether it is in Canungra, Sarabah, Beechmont or wherever. In relation to the review that took place after that fire, submissions closed while people were still fighting fire in the region. They did not get to have their say. They need to be heard. We need to always listen to local knowledge on the ground when it comes to bushfire management.

### Afghanistan, Australian Defence Force Personnel



**Mr MADDEN** (Ipswich West—ALP) (7.16 pm): Afghanistan was Australia's longest war. More than 26,000 Australian Defence Force personnel served in Afghanistan from 2001 to 2021. They included a fellow member of the 57th Parliament, the member for Buderim, Brent Mickelberg. Australia entered the war alongside its Western allies in response to the 2001 September 11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon. On 16 February 2002 the ADF suffered its first casualty when Sergeant Andrew Russell, a veteran of Timor, Kuwait and Iraq, was killed on patrol when his vehicle struck a land mine. A further 40 ADF personnel died while serving in Afghanistan. They were: Sergeant Andrew Russell, Trooper David Pearce, Sergeant Matthew Locke MG, Private Luke Worsley, Lance Corporal Jason Marks, Signalman Sean McCarthy, Lieutenant Michael Fussell, Private Gregory Michael Sher, Corporal Mathew Hopkins, Sergeant Brett Till, Private Benjamin Ranaudo, Sapper Jacob Moerland, Private Scott Palmer, Private Timothy Aplin, Private Benjamin Chuck, Private Nathan Bewes, Trooper Jason Brown, Private Grant Kirby, Private Tomas Dale, Lance Corporal Jared MacKinney, Corporal Richard Atkinson, Sapper Jamie Larcombe, Sergeant Brett Wood MG, Lance Corporal Andrew Jones, Lieutenant Marcus Sean Case, Sapper Rowan Robinson, Sergeant Todd Langley, Private Matthew Lambert, Captain Bryce Duffy, Corporal Ashley Birt, Lance Corporal Luke Gavin, Sergeant Blaine Diddams MG, Private Nathanael John Aubrey Galagher, Lance Corporal Mervyn John McDonald, Lance Corporal Stjepan Milosevic, Private Robert Hugh Frederick Poate, Sapper James Thomas Martin, Corporal Scott James Smith, Lance Corporal Todd John Chidgey, Corporal Cameron Stewart Baird MG VC and Sapper Darren Smith. Also killed was his explosives detection dog, Herbie.

Explosives detection dogs are trained to locate improvised explosive devices and land mines, walking ahead of infantry and vehicle patrols. As my cousin, Combat Medic Josh Madden, who served in Afghanistan told me, our soldiers always felt much safer and more confident on patrol when they had an explosives detection dog with them. Other explosives detection dogs killed in Afghanistan included Merlin, Razz, Andy, Nova, Quake and Devil. With my list of Australian casualties in Afghanistan, I also acknowledge Rifleman Stuart Nash. Sydney-born Stuart was killed in Afghanistan while serving with the British Army. I also acknowledge the enormous contribution to the Afghanistan War by the RAAF and Army personnel at Amberley RAAF Base. Australia owes a huge debt to these Australians. For them and their families their service in Afghanistan was a time of joy and grief, pride and loss. Lest We Forget.

### Sexual Health Education



**Ms BOLTON** (Noosa—Ind) (7.19 pm): The government's Queensland Sexual Health Strategy 2016-2021 found that within the 15- to 29-year-old age bracket, 60 per cent believed that the oral contraceptive provided protections against STIs, 92 per cent were aware that condoms are an effective form of protection and yet, according to the National Debrief Survey, 75 per cent did not use a condom. The same report noted that the primary source of information for young people is the internet, with *Australia's health 2020* report reporting that 79 per cent of students in years 10, 11 and 12 were using the internet for sexual health information. As the Queensland report noted, schools and GPs can play a greater role around sexual health. However, a response from the education department stated that 'parents and carers make the best choice about educating children about sexuality and relationships'.

With only South Australia and Western Australia collecting data on pregnancy terminations, that data has been used to obtain national averages that indicate that nearly a third of all terminations occurred in the age group up to 24 years. This lack of Queensland-specific information makes it difficult to monitor whether public health interventions are successful in reducing termination rates. During the debate on the decriminalisation of terminations, there was a clear request from members of parliament that sexual health education and access to contraception were to be prioritised in reducing terminations.

A male year 10 student in my electorate shared that, in his 10 years of Queensland public education, he recalled only two sexual education lessons, both of which took place in primary school. Those focussed predominantly on the reproductive system and lifecycle, not on the dangers of STIs and protective measures or the importance of sexual consent. Now in Grade 10, he feels he has been left in the dark at one of the most critical times in his life.

With online pornographic material becoming the education medium of choice for many of our young people, understanding consent and what a healthy relationship looks like is a confusing and sometimes dangerous prospect. All of these issues highlight the need for our children to have a safe space to find the information they need to make informed choices and ask the tricky questions about sex, sexual health and relationships. Whilst the government has implemented a number of reforms and initiatives into schools, including the Respectful Relationships program, there remains a significant gap

in sex education for our adolescent and preteen kids. Our education system is the most accessible and effective platform to deliver credible information from trusted and appropriate sources. This includes Life Education and Healthy Harold. However, these are voluntary. We need to mandate those programs into all Queensland schools, providing access regardless of a school's socioeconomic rating, geographic location or individual school decision.

### Springwood Electorate, Environmental Advocacy



**Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement) (7.22 pm): I think most members in this place will dispute the claim I am about to make, but I believe that the Springwood electorate has some of the brightest students in Queensland and Australia. They are passionate about the future of our community and they are committed to making a difference in the lives of Queenslanders. Of course, they have some of the best principals, teachers, teacher aides and school staff in the state and in the nation. I acknowledge their unions: the United Workers Union, the QTU, the QIEU and the Together Union.

Recently one of those terrific principals, Ms Karen Kusky, invited me to meet one of her promising students and a terrific Queenslander, Jay Sebasio, who is in year 6 at Shailer Park State School. Jay recently took out third place for a poem that she entered in the Independent Education Union Literary Competition. Jay wrote a moving poem about pollution and I want to share a snippet of it with the House today. It is an important message on what is an historic day for environmental protection—

We have to find a solution, a new year's resolution, to stop all this pollution, before we lose it!

Lose the water, The Earth! AND ALL OF OUR NATURE!

We have to stick together hand and hand, to figure out a plan, maybe find a different flavour to feel safer with less denature and more of the nature!

Those are powerful words from a passionate young Queenslander who is deeply concerned about the future of our planet and our community. In order to record in perpetuity the deep concern for our environment that young people hold, I table the full copy of Jay's poem for the record.

*Tabled paper:* Poem by Jay Sebasio, titled 'Polution!? It has to stop!' [\[1321\]](#).

To Jay I say that hers is a concern that members on this side of the House share. Our local community has long campaigned to reduce pollution and the waste being left behind in our local environment. Our community supported efforts to bring back the 10 cent container deposit scheme. Locals backed our push to phase out single-use plastic shopping bags and we are very proud of that. Today we have taken another important step with the ban on single-use plastics coming into effect. I congratulate our incredibly hard-working Minister for the Environment for taking another very important step in protecting Queensland's environment. On behalf of the community I represent and young Queenslanders such as Jay, I thank the minister for listening to their concerns and for taking action.

I also want to thank local representatives from organisations such as the Australian Youth Climate Coalition, the ACF and the Marine Conservation Society for coming to see me and lobbying for these important reforms. I again congratulate Jay and acknowledge her hardworking and dedicated principal, Ms Karen Kusky, as well as her teachers, teacher aides and school staff, particularly given that this week is Teacher Aide Appreciation Week. I am confident that with the Palaszczuk government's record investment in Queensland schools and teachers our young students will continue to impress us all.

### Gympie, Health Services



**Mr PERRETT** (Gympie—LNP) (7.25 pm): Despite record health budgets, Gympie health services are being squeezed with stealthy changes. Constituents and the medical profession contact me with their concerns about declining services and, in some cases, the removal of services altogether—although no-one finds out until they notice a change in what is provided or a loss of service. When you ask a question, you are met with secrecy, cover-ups, or stalling.

Services in the paediatric ward are reduced. If you need to stay overnight or your child is sick out of hours, parents are told to go to the Sunshine Coast or to come back tomorrow. It better not happen on a weekend. Anxious families are forced to drive their sick and injured children up to 100 kilometres away to receive attention. It puts enormous pressure on them. This has been going on for the whole year. Up to 8,000 people have supported a petition started by mother Emily McGourty. The paediatric ward, including staffing issues, needs to be addressed now. The health minister cannot keep ignoring

this. More than six weeks ago the federal member for Wide Bay and I wrote to the minister. There has been silence. Last week I wrote again asking for this to be urgently addressed. Silence is not good enough.

A delegation of local doctors raised with me concerns about the reduction in surgeries with the loss of specialist services. In December they highlighted the reduction in paediatric, orthopaedic, gynaecological and obstetric services. At that time others raised concerns about the level of services at the emergency department. I was also told that some dental procedures that need access to a theatre are no longer performed in the region. I have been told that patients are told to find a GP or to make a 185-kilometre round trip to the Sunshine Coast. Some are transferred to SCUH and then discharged late at night. They are left to sit and wait until morning when someone can pick them up or they have to pay exorbitant taxi bills to travel home.

At my stand at the Gympie Show in May, members of the medical profession raised more concerns. This cannot keep going on. Waiting lists are like a game of Snakes and Ladders. Ambulance ramping is unacceptable. The review of Gympie and the Cooloola Coast healthcare needs, the Master Clinical Services Plan, was due in February last year. We were then told it would be ready by June this year. It is 18 months later and we have seen nothing. Gympie needs local services. Our hospital is on a constrained site at the top of a steep hill and parking is poor. Our private hospital closed 30 months ago. If Gympie Hospital cannot meet its community service delivery obligations, then planning for a new hospital needs to start now.

### **Sweet Dreams and Good Night Wishes, Care Bag Appeal**



**Mr KING** (Kurwongbah—ALP) (7.28 pm): Tonight I rise to speak on a cause that is becoming an annual adjournment topic for me, the Care Bag Appeal by community organisation Sweet Dreams and Good Night Wishes.

**Ms Pugh:** Hear, hear!

**Mr KING:** Thank you. Care bags are put together for children aged two to 16 who are entering foster care, many of whom have no choice but to leave home with no spare clothes, no possessions and no comfort items. These wonderful care bags include a full set of clothes, pyjamas, underwear, socks, a toothbrush, a hairbrush and a comfort item like a stuffed toy, blanket, journal or book, all enclosed in the child's very own new backpack. Many of the bags also include optional extras like hats and water bottles. All the items in care bags are brand new so that each recipient knows they were purchased especially for them.

Despite shorter notice than usual for the appeal this year due to restrictions imposed to shut down the spread of COVID-19, the delta spread here in Queensland, the response and generosity of our community was overwhelming. In total, my office—which I should point out is only one community drop-off point in our area—collected over 200 bags. It was a phenomenal response. Our deepest thanks goes to everyone who donated this year, especially when a lot of people are still doing it tough. I could not move inside my office for about a week, but it was for a worthy cause. Luckily, I had gotten used to using Zoom anyway!

A massive shout-out to Melissa, who started this movement, inspired by her work in child safety, and Melissa's mum, Vicki, who works tirelessly to collect, sort and pack the bags for further distribution. Quite a number of people who brought bags into my office this year said they had capacity to collect a lot more through work, school and social networks if they had more notice, so I have a feeling in 2022 I will need a bigger office and Vicki will need a bigger car. I look forward to reporting back during an adjournment next year.

As a proud dad and granddad, I know how important it is for kids to get a good start in the first years of their life. Sadly, some kids do not get the love, care and attention they desperately need in this time of vulnerability. Sadly, some parents do not have the skills necessary to look after a child. Other times there are substance abuse or family violence issues that sadly cause neglect and/or harm to children. It is especially heartbreaking when this becomes a generational issue.

With Child Protection Week coming up next week, it is a great time to think about what we can do to raise awareness about early intervention and promote the message that protecting children is everyone's business. I want to end with a plug to a special virtual event coming up—Colour Our Community in Moreton Bay—run by Intercept Youth and Family Program, Accoras, and Mercy Community. I am really proud to be one of the sponsors this year. I encourage my fellow members and anyone watching at home to visit my Facebook for the link to get involved in this Child Protection Week initiative.

The House adjourned at 7.31 pm.

**ATTENDANCE**

Andrew, Bailey, Bates, Berkman, Bleijie, Bolton, Boothman, 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, Howard, Janetzki, Katter, Kelly, King A, King S, Knuth, Krause, Last, Lauga, Leahy, Linard, Lister, Lui, MacMahon, Madden, Mander, Martin, McCallum, McDonald, McMahon, 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, Stevens, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Watts, Weir, Whiting