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FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

Wednesday, 13 October 2021

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WEDNESDAY, 13 OCTOBER 2021



The Legislative Assembly met at 9.30 am.

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

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

PRIVILEGE

Comments by Member for Logan



Mr WATTS (Toowoomba North—LNP) (9.31 am): Yesterday it was alleged by the member of Logan that I was misleading the House. I would ask that those comments be withdrawn. I am happy to write to you about the matter.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

School Group Tours



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I wish to advise that we will be visited in the gallery this morning by students and teachers from Thangool State School in the electorate of Callide, Rangeville State School in the electorate of Toowoomba South, Burleigh Heads State School in the electorate of Burleigh, St Mary's Catholic Primary School in the electorate of Bundaberg, and Toowoomba State High School in the electorate of Toowoomba North.

PETITIONS

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

Charters Towers, Residential Accommodation

Mr Katter, from 321 petitioners, requesting the House to repurpose the vacant Eventide Residential Aged Care Facility's hostel accommodation area at Charters Towers as desperately needed residential accommodation for elderly low income earners [\[1722\]](#).

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

North Burnett Regional Council

Mr Boyce from 744 petitioners, requesting the House to investigate the internal decision making processes of the North Burnett Regional Council in providing services that are relevant and represent value to the community [\[1723, 1724\]](#).

Gin Gin, Court House Building

Mr Boyce from 1,240 petitioners, requesting the House to retain and not move or demolish the historically listed Courthouse building on the main street of Gin Gin [\[1725, 1726\]](#).

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

Bradfield Scheme and Inland Rail

577 petitioners, requesting the House to undertake a full feasibility and benefits study of the Bradfield Scheme and include the additional cross benefits of a realignment of the Inland Rail to Roma, Emerald and to Gladstone [\[1727\]](#).

Petitions received.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Coronavirus, Update; Coronavirus, Vaccination



Hon. A PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympics) (9.33 am): I can advise that there have been no new community cases overnight. We have had 9,884 tests and 18,020 vaccines were delivered by Queensland Health in the past 24 hours. That means 70.59 per cent of Queenslanders have received their first dose and 53.35 per cent have received their second dose.

Queensland's pathway out of the pandemic is to make sure the pandemic does not have a pathway into Queensland. Keeping COVID out for as long as we can has meant we have been able to keep our schools and businesses open and our lives as close to normal as possible. While we enjoy these freedoms, we vaccinate, vaccinate, vaccinate.


Yesterday I announced that we would open up pop-up clinics in Bunnings. I said we would start with around two dozen and announce more as we are able. We now have 33 Bunnings stores signed up right across the state ready to welcome people from this Saturday.

I can also announce that pharmacists will soon begin vaccinating children in our schools. This will start in Mareeba on Friday with more schools to be announced shortly. This is about bringing the vaccine to the people. From 11 am today, a pop-up clinic will open up in Brisbane's King George Square. It adds to the hundreds of pharmacies, GP clinics and vaccination hubs already open.

During this pandemic, our neighbours have recorded more cases in a couple of days than we have had in almost two years and, tragically, many hundreds of people have died. According to the roadmap, the levels of freedoms enjoyed by Queensland today will not come to New South Wales until December.

I want to speak now to those Queenslanders who are yet to get their first dose. We cannot protect you if you will not protect yourself. I want to say that again: we cannot protect you if you will not protect yourself. We have done all we can to keep you safe, but this next step is entirely up to you. I need you to get vaccinated and I need you to do it now. Everyone else has done their part—the police standing guard on our borders, the nurses and doctors watching over our hospitals—but now we need you. It takes five weeks from the first dose to be completely vaccinated. Five weeks from today is 17 November. That is getting very close to Christmas. None of us are safe until you are safe. Go to Bunnings, go to a local pharmacy or your local GP—go and get vaccinated. We have done as much as we can do. This next step is up to you.

Defence Industries; Manufacturing

 **Ms PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympics) (9.36 am): Manufacturing means jobs—long-term, sustainable jobs in regional Queensland. That is why my government has thrown its support behind Queensland's burgeoning defence manufacturing sector, not only to rebuild Queensland's economy but also to build back better in the Sunshine State or, as the Treasurer likes to say, the Sunrise State, or, as I like to say, the Olympic State. See, we have it all! All that is left is the Hydrogen State. So there we are! So many choices!

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members, there will be licence plates coming out for all of those, I am sure.

Ms PALASZCZUK: In fact, Mr Speaker, I am working on that as well! It is all happening here. We built the Milvehoe factory at Redbank. We supported Rheinmetall to employ more than 300 workers to produce more than 200 Boxer combat reconnaissance vehicles. Today I am proud to announce that Rheinmetall has submitted its best and final offer to the federal Department of Defence for phase 3 of the Land 400 program. This is a major milestone. The phase 3 project is worth up to \$27 billion and could create an additional 500 manufacturing jobs for Queenslanders to deliver 450 infantry fighting vehicles for the Australian Army, built in Queensland, by Queenslanders, for Queenslanders.

Manufacturing is an important part of our economic recovery plan. We are creating good, decent jobs here in Queensland. Last month it was great to be on the Darling Downs where global aviation giant Boeing has selected Toowoomba as the home of its first uncrewed aircraft factory outside of North America. I am quite sure the Treasurer will say more about that. It will create more than 300 local jobs during construction and many more once operational. This week we have partnered with Fortescue Future Industries to build a factory capable of producing hydrogen electrolyzers just outside of Gladstone. This will create another 300 jobs.

We are turbocharging Queensland's manufacturing sector to rebuild our economy and leverage private sector investment in our state. We will continue to partner with firms like Rheinmetall, Boeing and Fortescue to create jobs, jobs, jobs, here in Queensland, particularly regional Queensland.

Coronavirus, Tourism Industry



Hon. A PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympics) (9.38 am): Through our economic recovery plan we are partnering with airlines to secure flights to Queensland from COVID-safe destinations. Today, I am proud to announce that we have secured a deal with Virgin to fly between the Gold Coast and Launceston; the Gold Coast and Hobart; the Gold Coast and Cairns; and Adelaide and the Sunshine Coast.

I have seen firsthand the impact that COVID has had on our tourism industry. We know that more flights from states like Tasmania and South Australia mean more revenue for our struggling tourism businesses, and that means support for tourism jobs. In total, this initiative will generate an extra \$53.7 million for tourism businesses. It will add an extra 146,834 seats into Queensland and support more than 400 local jobs. Since the beginning of the pandemic, we have committed almost a billion dollars to support tourism businesses struggling as a result of COVID-19. We will continue to invest in tourism to support businesses throughout Queensland.

GPs in Schools



Hon. A PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympics) (9.39 am): The health and wellbeing of all Queenslanders is our greatest priority. For many young people, booking in to see a GP is difficult and expensive. That is why at the last election we announced a pilot program to base GPs at a number of state secondary schools throughout Queensland. I can confirm that from the middle of next year GPs will be based at 50 schools throughout the state. Well done, Minister; great work.

Today I can announce that the Department of Education has finalised the list of schools that will participate in the pilot. They are schools from Western Cape College in the far north to Currumbin Community Special School in the south and Charleville State High School in the west. Others school include: North Rockhampton State High; Sarina State High School; Gladstone State High School; Harristown State High School; St George State High School; Gordonvale State High School; Trinity Bay State High School; Bremer State High School; Brisbane State High School; Ipswich State High School; Ripley Valley State Secondary College; Goodna Special School; Everton Park State High School—did we not save that one?—

Ms Grace interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right; we saved that school.

Mr Dick: They sold it; we saved it.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right; they had the 'for sale' sign up—

Mr Mander interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Member for Everton, if you hear a better interjection, we will beat it by 10 per cent.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Other schools include: Redcliffe State High School; Pine Rivers State High School; Woodridge State High School; Park Ridge State High School; Alexandra Hills State High School—just to name a few. I am quite sure members will see the list. They can get on board to support their schools with this fantastic initiative of the Palaszczuk Labor government.

An honourable member interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: We know there are no ideas on that side. I am yet to hear a good idea from that side. I am yet to hear a good policy. Here is a good health policy helping our children. Members would think they would be thanking us.

Mr Dick: Fake Bradfield scheme.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Fake Bradfield scheme, fake Bruce Highway—

Ms Grace: Fake number of teachers.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Yes, that is right—


Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Members, it would help the dignity of the House if the Premier were not having to respond to interjections.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Fit-out and construction will soon start on our fit-for-purpose clinics at each of these schools. I am advised by the Minister for Education that by May next year GPs will be offering consultations to students. If successful, we will look at expanding this \$10 million pilot program to other schools in the future.

Our students have had to overcome great challenges throughout the pandemic. This has undoubtedly had an impact on their health and wellbeing. Through our \$100 million student wellbeing program we will ensure that more young Queenslanders have access to quality care. This is an important investment in the future of our state, and comes off the back of our record \$15.3 billion education budget handed down in June. Delivering quality health care and education for all Queenslanders is what good Labor governments do best. We will continue to invest in programs like this to give all Queenslanders better access to quality health services. I understand that the Deputy Premier is now going to make a very significant announcement.

NRL, Redcliffe Dolphins; Renewable Energy


 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics Infrastructure) (9.44 am): Today is a truly historic day for Queensland. Today the mighty Dolphins take their rightful place in the National Rugby League premiership. Thanks to our health response, Queensland hosted so many NRL games this year, including all three origins and the finals series. It is fitting that we have now secured a new team for Queensland. This news will mean more Queensland games every round. It will mean more Rugby League games every year. It will be very much welcomed throughout the Moreton Bay region. I congratulate club CEO, Tony Murphy, for his vision; bid chief, Terry Reader, for his leadership; Moreton Bay Regional Council mayor, Peter Flannery, for his support; and the NRL for making the right decision and for backing Queensland and the mighty Dolphins.

It is a good day because the Palaszczuk government has announced another pact with one of the world's largest resource companies to work with them to power their operations on renewables. We have signed a statement of cooperation with Rio Tinto that will use their experience to help deliver future green industry for Queensland as part of their global business commitment to net zero carbon emissions by 2050. Together with Rio Tinto and with the support of future partners, we will ensure that right here renewable energy is used to power the industries and the materials that the world will need over the years ahead. We are ensuring that we have the infrastructure and funding in place right now to complement traditional energy and transition seamlessly to benefit Queensland families.

With commitments like the \$2 billion Renewable Energy and Hydrogen Jobs Fund, we are rolling out projects that mean more jobs for Queenslanders in more industries. We are developing exportable know-how as the world shifts to renewable energy. We are setting ourselves up to be the leading manufacturer of the equipment the world needs to use renewable energy such as electrolyzers, batteries and other advanced manufacturing exports. We are exploring ways in which we can build on infrastructure already in place, to enable new battery manufacturing precincts to be built and for existing manufacturers to benefit from access to renewable energy sources. We are approving more wind farms such as the \$1.96 billion MacIntyre Wind Farm precinct near Warwick which will generate enough renewable electricity to supply around 700,000 Queensland homes.

When global investors look to Queensland, they will see a state whose people are making the most of the renewable energy opportunity to deliver more jobs, new products and cheaper energy. This government is working to seize the opportunities we have in front of us, to create sustainable jobs, a stronger economy and ensure a brighter, cleaner future.

Economy; Defence Industries

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (9.47 am): Throughout the pandemic, Queensland's strong health response has given our state a competitive advantage when it comes to economic recovery. The hard work of Queenslanders has seen our economy open while the economies of southern states have been crushed by prolonged and damaging lockdowns. That economic freedom is reflected in the latest NAB monthly business conditions survey released yesterday. In September, business conditions in Queensland remained stronger than New South Wales and Victoria. Of the east coast states, only Queensland saw business confidence in positive territory.


When we look at what is happening in our state, it is not hard to see why. Rheinmetall's final offer for phase 3 of Land 400 now sits with the Morrison government awaiting a decision. If Rheinmetall's bid is successful, it would more than triple the number of vehicles to be built at Rheinmetall's Military Vehicle Centre of Excellence at Redbank. It would extend the life of that contract for many years to come, providing more job security for the highly skilled workers employed there. It would swell the number of those workers by an additional 500 jobs.

Rheinmetall and Milvehoe are just one part of our plan to make defence industries a key part of the Queensland economy. Last month we saw the historic deal between Boeing and the Wagner Corporation to assemble the Loyal Wingman uncrewed aircraft for the Royal Australian Air Force. That is what the Palaszczuk Labor government does. We create the business conditions that build business confidence, and we encourage the investment and deals that create new jobs.

That is what we saw on Monday with the announcement of a feasibility study between Fortescue Future Industries and Incitec Pivot to produce green ammonia in Brisbane. That would not have been possible without our government's historic agreement with FFI to produce the world's largest electrolyser facility at Gladstone.

These deals are not put together overnight. They do not happen by chance. I would like to place on the public record my thanks to the Treasury investment team for their hard work in leading this project. Rheinmetall's Land 400 phase 3 bid, Boeing's Loyal Wingman and FFI's electrolyser plant are the result of deliberate policy initiatives by our government that we have developed over years. The Palaszczuk Labor government develops plans. We deliver on those plans. Then all of Queensland can reap the reward.

GPs in Schools; FamilyLinQ

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (9.50 am): As the Premier said, our GP in schools pilot will be a game changer for Queensland students. It will give our young people access to a doctor on school grounds with appointments free of charge.

Today the Premier announced the 50 high schools that will benefit from this program—not 20 but 50. These schools are spread across the length and breadth of the state and include Murgon State High School in the member for Nanango's electorate, Spinifex State College in the member for Traeger's electorate and Currumbin Community Special School in the member for Currumbin's electorate. All MPs have been advised of the 50 schools in their electorates. I look forward to seeing these GP clinics in action as I visit schools across Queensland.


As the Premier said, delivering quality health care and education for all Queenslanders is what good Labor governments do best. Today it is my pleasure to announce that we are establishing two new integrated community hubs at Kingston State School in the electorate of Woodridge and at the new Logan Reserve primary school in the electorate of Logan. The hubs are an exciting new model that will bring education, health and community services together under one roof.

The Palaszczuk government is investing up to \$19 million to build these hubs, with the Kingston hub opening in 2023 and the Logan Reserve hub opening in 2024. These school based hubs will be known as FamilyLinQ, and they are the first of their kind in Queensland. The hubs will also enable parents to engage in adult education and training programs to build their skills and qualifications. FamilyLinQ supports the strong work we have been doing to give all children a great start by connecting school communities to services and programs enabling them to thrive.

I am also pleased to announce today that we are partnering with the Bryan Foundation to deliver FamilyLinQ. It is great to have Bryan Foundation Managing Director Geoff McMahon here in the gallery this morning. On behalf of the House, I welcome Geoff. We look forward to working with your team. The Bryan Foundation is generously investing \$10 million over 10 years to provide engagement and coordination staff at each site, as well as program development—an exciting project indeed.

Not only does this initiative support our school communities but also it is contributing to our economic recovery. Construction and operation of the two hubs will support ongoing local jobs. We look forward to this exciting design outcome as well. I have no doubt that this initiative will make a positive difference to the lives of local families in the Logan area and broader area and provide a model for the future. Welcome, Geoff and the Bryan Foundation.

NRL, Redcliffe Dolphins; Coronavirus, Vaccination

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (9.53 am): Go the Phins! How good is today? Double-donut day and the Dolphins getting the NRL bid—it does not get any better than that. I congratulate Tony Murphy, Bob Jones and the whole team at the Redcliffe Leagues Club and the Dolphins. For all of their life members and members and supporters right across the region, this is such a great day. Sorry, Minister for Sport, we could not wait. We had to get in and celebrate. I know there are a number of my colleagues across Moreton Bay who will be celebrating this fantastic news. This is great for our local economy and for the economy right across the region as well.

Also great news is that Queensland is rapidly expanding its network of vaccination hubs—maybe we should set one up at the Dolphins!—as we turbocharge our efforts to bring the vaccine to more Queenslanders. Already more than 70 per cent of eligible Queenslanders have received their first dose, with over 52 per cent fully vaccinated. We want to grow those numbers by giving Queenslanders even more vaccination options. It is great that we can partner with Bunnings as part of our mass vaccination push.

This weekend, 33 Bunnings outlets—we have Bunnings popping up everywhere now—will operate as vaccination hubs, offering the vaccine to shoppers or if anyone who just wants to come along for a sausage sizzle and get the vaccine we do not care. Just pop along to your local Bunnings and make sure you get the jab this weekend.

For months now Queensland Health vaccination centres, GPs and community pharmacies have played a crucial role getting Queenslanders vaccinated. Schools also became a part of our vaccination rollout from last weekend, with 18 Queensland high schools administering 4,467 doses of the vaccine on Saturday and Sunday. Thank you to those schools. I know they got a bit competitive. They were competing against each other for vaccination numbers which is fantastic. We want to thank all of the school communities who came out.

Schools of course are a trusted part of so many local communities and the perfect place to increase our vaccination uptake as last weekend shows. That is why I am very pleased to announce, as the Premier has this morning, that our pharmacists will be offering to go into our high schools to vaccinate our kids. These school vaccinations will start in Far North Queensland. We know how important it is to get our vaccination rates up in Far North Queensland. I want to thank the community pharmacies and also the Pharmacy Guild of Queensland for offering this service and for being willing to go into our schools.

This means more students aged 12 and above will be eligible to receive the vaccine in their own school from a trusted local pharmacist. We will work closely with the Pharmacy Guild to get more vaccines into our schools through pharmacists so that more kids can get protected from COVID-19 because we have seen in most recent outbreaks how quickly it can spread through the schools and the school community.

In more great news for our vaccination rollout, from this week there will also be additional pop-up clinics operating across Brisbane. New pop-up clinics will be located at Brisbane City Hall and the Brisbane Disability Expo at the Royal International Convention Centre at Bowen Hills. The Brisbane City Hall pop-up vaccination clinic which commences today is well located to target city workers and visitors. If you are passing by and yet to be vaccinated, or due for your second dose, please come forward. Make it a priority to get vaccinated. Come before or after work or on your lunchbreak. I say to employers: it is in your best interest to give your staff time to pop down during work hours to get vaccinated. It will help support your workplace and the continuity of work when your staff are vaccinated.

The upcoming Brisbane Disability Expo this Friday and Saturday will provide a further opportunity for thousands of people with disability to get the support and information they need to access services and enhance their lives in meaningful and practical ways. Queensland Health staff will be available at the disability expo to talk with people and their carers about the vaccination and to help them make informed decisions about getting vaccinated. Let us be clear: to protect your freedom and map a clear path to the future, we all need to get vaccinated.

Gold Coast Unit Block, QBCC Investigation



Hon. MC de BRENNI (Springwood—ALP) (Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement) (9.57 am): I note today's media report on the QBCC's 2019 investigation into a Gold Coast unit block. Let me reiterate something I have said time and time again: operational decisions are a matter for the QBCC Commissioner. I have not, and no-one in my office has, interfered in this matter or any other matter before the QBCC at any time.

In relation to this matter, a neighbouring property owner did raise safety concerns with me during an unrelated meeting. Those concerns were passed on to the building regulator. When significant safety concerns are brought forward, it is the responsibility of everyone to bring this to the attention of the regulator. To do any less would simply be reckless. At no point did I or my office direct or instruct the independent regulator on this matter. Updates were provided to my office, as is the normal course of business.


Ninety-eight lives were lost when an apartment tower collapsed in Miami, Florida, earlier this year. While this was not the case on the Gold Coast, concerns around structural integrity of buildings must never be dismissed.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members, I am having difficulty hearing the minister. I ask that you keep your noise to a minimum.

Mr de BRENNI: I am advised the commission decided to take action due to what it described as an immediate and serious threat to health and safety from the potential collapse of an exterior brick wall. I am further advised that damage already sustained to the building resulted in the occupants of three neighbouring units being vacated on or before 15 November 2019. The actions taken by the QBCC required the builder to engage an independent engineer to determine corrective action to make the building safe. The regulator also required the builder to engage a contractor to carry out those works and provide engineering reports. I am advised that extensive rectification works, including recent footing repairs and stabilisation works, have occurred to make the building safe. I am also advised that the QBCC's final building inspection is scheduled for 18 October to confirm that all required rectification work is complete.

NRL, Redcliffe Dolphins; Coronavirus, Tourism Industry

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Tourism, Innovation and Sport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics and Paralympics Sport and Engagement) (10.00 am): I would like to commence by congratulating the Dolphins on successfully being awarded the 17th NRL licence. I personally think it is great to see a genuine Queensland Rugby League tradition joining the NRL.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, member for Ipswich! I apologise.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: Mr Speaker, you should name the member for Greenslopes as well; he will be upset too.


As the Premier mentioned earlier, the Palaszczuk government has been working very closely with airlines like Virgin and we have been talking with airports to land more holiday-makers in Queensland's favourite tourism destinations. The pandemic has made this year particularly difficult for tourism operators, but we know that landing more jets in regional Queensland puts more cash in the pockets of tourism businesses for the Palaszczuk government's economic recovery plan.

In this year's budget we announced \$10 million to support aviation routes and our tourism destinations. We have lift-off and we are rebuilding with confidence. The last time Virgin flew from Adelaide to the Sunshine Coast, nobody had heard of an iPhone. After a 20-year absence, Virgin's direct Adelaide-Sunshine Coast service is making a comeback, with more than 36,700 seats supporting 99 jobs and \$12.7 million for the Sunshine Coast visitor economy. For South Australians, now is the time to plan a COVID-safe summer holiday.

Our deal with Virgin will deliver another intrastate service from the Gold Coast to Cairns and back, with more than 55,000 extra seats supporting 156 jobs and an additional \$20 million for the visitor economy. It also gives Queenslanders more opportunity to explore the Far North's world famous Great Barrier Reef and Daintree or the luxury hotels, sandy beaches and surf breaks of the Gold Coast. A further 164 jobs will be supported with new Virgin summer flights from the Tasmanian cities of Hobart and Launceston coming to the bright lights of the Gold Coast. We are hearing from Tasmanians that the Gold Coast is this summer's top destination: there is sunshine and the Sunshine Coast is a COVID-free destination.

As we do rebuild better we know there is more work to be done to secure additional capacity when the borders to New South Wales and Victoria are open. They are our biggest customers and we are looking forward to welcoming them back when the time is right.

Railways, Manufacturing

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (10.03 am): Many of us are familiar with the Australian Made Campaign and its green and yellow kangaroo logo. It is iconic branding that backs locally made projects and the local jobs they support—something that I note federal Labor is a big supporter of—but it is a strategy that can be taken further. With what is happening across Queensland, it could be time to start a Queensland Made Campaign. There is no better example of this than what is happening on Queensland's rail network.

Just over a week out ago I was out with the member for Bundamba, a strong supporter of local rail jobs, announcing a new multimillion dollar contract for Redbank based Progress Rail. This deal will see the five locomotives that drive our *Spirit of the Outback* and *Westlander* tourist trains across western Queensland upgraded. It will improve engine reliability and performance, reduce fuel use by up to

20 per cent and decrease exhaust emissions and oil consumption. Better yet, it supports 48 local jobs at the Redbank rail yards, including four apprentices who recently transitioned to qualified tradespeople, skilling up our rail industry for what is to come. The Palaszczuk Labor government is continuing to deliver on our rail manufacturing strategy for Queensland.

Bolstering this, today I can announce that we have awarded a three-year multimillion dollar contract to Rockhampton rail manufacturer Austrak. The deal will see Austrak supply concrete sleepers to Queensland Rail over the next three years. I know the member for Rockhampton is a big advocate for regional rail supply chain jobs and will be pleased to know that this gives the 50-worker-strong Rockhampton factory a three-year pipeline of work. This all builds on the 283 jobs saved by the Palaszczuk Labor government in 2017. All up, we have now created a \$1 billion guaranteed pipeline of train building work in Queensland, and I note the assistant minister for rail manufacturing. The \$1 billion pipeline is critical to Queensland's COVID economic recovery plan and will ensure there are efficient, reliable services on our growing train network for Cross River Rail and the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games and beyond.

'Queensland made by Queensland for Queensland'. You can picture it now, a new maroon logo—insert your favourite Queensland wildlife species there, maybe a cassowary—'Queensland made'—

Mr Minnikin: It might be a mango!

Mr BAILEY: Maybe. If the stamp existed. I go with a cassowary, but a 'Queensland made' logo. If the stamp existed you would be seeing it right here across Queensland rail's network because the Palaszczuk Labor government is backing rail manufacturing jobs like never before.

Casinos, Money-Laundering Allegations



Hon. SM FENTIMAN (Waterford—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (10.06 am): The Palaszczuk government places a high priority on transparency, accountability and integrity. In fact, Queensland has one of the most robust—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members to my left!

Ms FENTIMAN: Queensland has one of the most robust casino regulatory frameworks in the country. Unlike other jurisdictions, the Queensland Office of Liquor and Gaming has a team of specialist inspectors permanently based within each of the state's four casinos. Queensland police have a dedicated presence within the Brisbane and Gold Coast casinos to investigate any criminal activity. That being said, the Palaszczuk government takes recent allegations of money laundering and integrity issues very seriously.


I can advise the House that the Office of Liquor and Gaming Regulation is currently undertaking appropriate investigations along with the Queensland police and AUSTRAC, which is the regulator responsible for assessing casino operators' compliance with Commonwealth anti money laundering legislative obligations. These investigations will consider the appropriateness and effectiveness of Star's due diligence processes and how Star approaches exclusions to ensure people are excluded from all properties where appropriate. This is in addition to the further compliance inquiries and activities relating to Queensland casinos that have commenced earlier this year following the Bergin inquiry into Crown Casino, and this work is continuing. I will continue to closely monitor the Finkelstein inquiry in Victoria and the related reviews being undertaken in Western Australia and New South Wales.

We have also recently collaborated with industry on a new gambling harm awareness campaign. The campaign, When gambling took over, shares the real stories of three Queenslanders who have overcome struggles with problem gambling. There is no doubt that gambling is a complex social issue that not only impacts the gambler themselves but their family, workplace and wider community. The harm can also have a ripple effect across all aspects of life with relationships, mental health and finances.

With a growing number of interstate and international gambling operators providing online services and the fast uptake of digital technology, now more than ever we need to make sure Queenslanders have the support they need to seek help as well as the tools to recognise the signs of problem gambling. That is why we have released our four-year gambling harm minimisation plan for Queensland which outlines the shared roles and responsibilities for government, industry and community to reduce gambling related harm, because we all have a role to play in supporting Queenslanders to gamble safely.

I want to thank the responsible gambling advisory committee for their valuable input and feedback on our plan. I encourage everyone to share the message that it is okay to ask for help. Free and confidential support is available right now.

Natural Disasters, Preparedness

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algerie—ALP) (Minister for Communities and Housing, Minister for Digital Economy and Minister for the Arts) (10.09 am): Yesterday this House voted in favour of the Palaszczuk government's commitment to net zero emissions by 2050. We know climate change is intensifying severe weather events across the country, and support for emissions reduction and more jobs in more industries through cheaper, cleaner energy, like hydrogen, are key strategies to combat its effects.


Queensland is no stranger to destructive natural disasters, such as storms, cyclones, flooding and bushfires, and we are well versed in preparing for, recovering from and building resilience to these disasters. This Get Ready Week is an opportunity for all Queenslanders to ensure they are prepared for the upcoming storm season. However, we know there are many Queenslanders—particularly people with disability—who experience barriers and challenges to disaster preparation and recovery. Studies have shown people with disability are twice as likely to be injured and experience social isolation as a result of natural disasters. That is why the Palaszczuk government, through the department of communities, has partnered with the University of Sydney, Community Services Industry Alliance and Queenslanders with Disability Network on a project to put people with disability front and centre in disaster and emergency management activities.

The Disability Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction project considers the lived experiences of people with disability and their support networks in finding better solutions to manage and develop emergency preparedness plans. One of the people with disability who participated in the project is Des. Des is a QDN board member with quadriplegia who has experienced firsthand how disasters can impact people with disability. After a cyclone, Des was unable to be supported by his service provider and was unable to get out of bed. Fortunately, his neighbour came to his aid. For Des, this experience highlighted not only the importance of neighbours and support networks during disasters but also the importance of emergency preparedness plans.

Through this project, people with disability, like Des, have been leading the conversation. Yesterday I joined the minister, Craig Crawford, to showcase a suite of resources that have been created on how to include people with disability and their support networks in local emergency management. I encourage all members of the House to familiarise themselves with these resources and support people with disability in local disaster preparedness.

PARLIAMENTARY CRIME AND CORRUPTION COMMITTEE

Crime and Corruption Commission, Reports

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Scenic Rim—LNP) (10.11 am): I lay upon the table of the House the following Crime and Corruption Commission reports pursuant to section 138 of the Crime and Corruption Act 2001 and section 358 of the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000: *Report to the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee: Section 138(2) Crime and Corruption Act 2001: Controlled Operations Committee: Report on activities: 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021* and a covering letter; and *Report to the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee: Section 358 Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000: Surveillance Device Warrants: Annual Report: 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021*.

Tabled paper: Crime and Corruption Commission: 2020-21 Annual Report to the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee: Controlled Operations Committee—Report on activities from 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021 pursuant to section 138(2) of the Crime and Corruption Act 2001 [\[1728\]](#).

Tabled paper: Crime and Corruption Commission: 2020-21 Annual Report to the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee on aspects of surveillance device warrants pursuant to section 358 of the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000 [\[1729\]](#).

It should be noted that the second of these reports is a revised version of the CCC report I tabled on 16 September 2021. The tabled correspondence includes a version showing changes made to the report that was initially tabled. The CCC wrote to the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee on 21 September advising that the report required correction as there was an error in the data regarding listening devices. The committee requests that the Table Office link the replacement report to the original report in the tabled papers database to ensure that users are able to easily locate the revised report. I am sure many users will be. The committee is required to table the reports within 14 sitting days of receipt. The committee received the reports on 14 September and 21 September 2021 respectively.

NOTICE OF MOTION

Coronavirus, Palaszczuk Labor Government Modelling



Ms BATES (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (10.13 am): I give notice that I shall move—

In accordance with standing order 27 this House orders the Premier to table by 27 October 2021 all modelling and analysis concerning the Queensland government's response to COVID-19 and, in particular, information relating to the Queensland government's plans for the reopening of the Queensland economy as rates of vaccination increase.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Mr SPEAKER: Question time will conclude today at 11.14 am.

Queensland Building and Construction Commission



Mr CRISAFULLI (10.14 am): My question is to the Minister for Public Works.

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members to my right, questions will be heard in silence for the benefit of Hansard and the benefit of the House. The Deputy Premier will cease his interjections. Please start your question again, member for Broadwater.

Mr CRISAFULLI: My question is to the Minister for Public Works. Will the minister advise if he stands by his statement in the Transport and Resources Committee in August where he said—

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.

Mr de BRENNI: Absolutely, and I reiterated that just a few moments ago.

Queensland Building and Construction Commission

Mr CRISAFULLI: My question is to the Minister for Public Works. I table an email proving direct contact between the minister's office and the commissioner of the QBCC on an individual dispute, fast-tracking an investigation. In denying any involvement, has the minister misled parliament?

Tabled paper: Email, dated 21 September 2021, from the Commissioner, Queensland Building and Construction Commission, Mr Brett Bassett, to Ravi Chandra and Ms Melissa Hallam, regarding Kirra Vista apartments [1730].

Mr de BRENNI: I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question. When members of the public raise matters of concern about the building industry with me, it is a duty for me to refer that to the appropriate regulatory authority, especially when it comes to matters of safety. I will stand by the decision that, when a citizen of this state refers significant concerns to me, I will refer those to the regulator. I reiterate that it is not a matter for the minister, the minister's office or the board of the commission to have anything to do with the decisions of the commission.

Our record on ensuring the safety of Queenslanders is beyond reproach. This state has been the first in this nation to move on combustible cladding laws. We have nation-leading laws in place in relation to support for workers and tradies on construction sites across this state, and we are incredibly proud of that. Every single time a citizen raises a concern about their safety or about the construction of their building, we will refer those to the independent regulator. We do that every single time.

When vulnerable Queenslanders raise concerns with us, we will refer them to the appropriate regulator. This gives me the opportunity to reflect on what those opposite did when vulnerable Queenslanders came seeking their assistance. I can recall what the then public works minister did when public housing tenants came to that minister seeking support. Shamefully, he attacked the most vulnerable people in this state—those with a disability—and taxed their carers allowance, taxed their pharmaceutical allowance and took 25—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members to my left, I am hearing the minister answering the question. I believe he is actually being responsive to the question as asked. I request that you listen to the answer being provided by the minister.

Mr de BRENNI: When tradies in this state—

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

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

Mr de BRENNI: When tradies in this state were on their knees with record high levels of insolvency and underpayment of tradies in the construction sector, they went to the then LNP government and begged for their support. What did they do to provide security of payment to Queensland tradies, to the 250,000 people who work in the industry? They ignored them. It was this government that was elected to protect the rights of tradies in the construction industry and ensure the very best standards in this state. They campaigned against security of payment for tradies. In fact, those opposite have sat silent or voted against every single reform to improve building standards in this state. That is their record. It is shameful.

They come into this place today and complain because I referred a matter in relation to safety concerns about the conduct of a developer. It just goes to show who they stand up for. They are still taking dodgy developer donations. They will back their mates at the big end of town no matter how much risk is put on the safety of Queenslanders.

(Time expired)

Regional Queensland, Biofutures

Mrs GILBERT: My question is of the Premier and the Minister for the Olympics. Will the Premier update the House on how new industries such as biofutures are creating new jobs in regions like Mackay?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Mackay for the question. Of course, we know how important it is to diversify our economy and make sure that we grow jobs in the regions. I noticed comments today by Bridget Mackenzie from the National Party where she is very concerned about net zero emissions by 2050 and about jobs in the regions. Let me say very clearly that our government has demonstrated that we back the regions. We will make sure that there are jobs in the regions and will diversify the economy to make sure that there are jobs in the regions. That is why in 2015 we announced our biofutures road map, recognising that Mackay had huge potential when it comes to developing a biofutures industry in Queensland.

Today, we are one step closer to that \$1 billion sustainable, export orientated industrial biotechnology and bioproduct sector. I can advise that in 2017 I met with Mercurius, a very good company, as it was looking at investing in Queensland. We invited the company to come to Queensland. I can confirm that Mercurius is about to commence operations at its pilot plant at the Queensland University of Technology's biocommodities facility in Mackay to produce valuable renewable chemicals, diesel and jet fuel from sugarcane waste. That is what it is all about. It is about having a government that can facilitate working with the private sector to invest in Queensland. We know how important those jobs are. I know how much the member backs these regional jobs. We even had a roundtable up there. We held a cabinet subcommittee where we went up there and looked at the opportunities that this industry has for the regions.

We know that Mackay is the heart of sugarcane country. It is the perfect place for this trial to take place. Yesterday we heard when talking about Gladstone the opportunity for a manufacturing facility, and today there is a biofutures future as well for Mackay. This government backs the regions. On the other side, they are completely divided. The Nationals and the Liberals cannot come together to work out a clear policy about net zero emissions by 2050. Glasgow is coming up. I understand that today some meetings are happening in Canberra to look at how they can get a unity ticket. It has taken so long to come together on a unity ticket. Wasn't it wonderful to see the House support that yesterday? It was wonderful to see the House support our motion to back in net zero emissions by 2050.

Mercurius CEO and technology development director Karl Seck said Queensland was the—

Mr SPEAKER: Premier, your time has expired.

Ms PALASZCZUK: So much more to say, Mr Speaker!

Mr SPEAKER: You will have to wait, Premier!

Queensland Building and Construction Commission

Mr MANDER: My question is to the Minister for Public Works. I refer to the minister's diary which proves that the minister met Toni Bowler regarding the Kirra Vista apartments on the Gold Coast. Within hours, the QBCC directed that her matter be investigated. What relationship does the minister or his family have with this complainant?

Mr de BRENNI: That is a new sort of bizarre question from the member for Everton. As I said earlier—and the member for Everton may not have been listening—the complainant in that particular matter is a constituent of mine who approached me in relation to an entirely separate matter and put in front of me information about serious and significant safety concerns. We referred those to the independent regulator just as we do when members of the opposition raise similar concerns. We refer all of those to the independent regulator in every single instance.

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition.

Hydrogen Industry

Mr McCALLUM: Mr Speaker—

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Sorry, members to my right are still speaking, member for Bundamba. Member for Bundamba, you have the call.

Mr McCALLUM: Thank you, Mr Speaker. My question is to the Premier and Minister for the Olympics. Will the Premier update the House on how the Palaszczuk government is providing real leadership in its quest to become a hydrogen superpower? Is the Premier aware of any alternative views?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for the question. Of course, Queensland is once again leading the way when it comes to hydrogen. I understand that some discussions are happening in Canberra where they are looking at also jumping on the hydrogen bandwagon, but Queensland was first out of the blocks. A bit like the Olympics, Queensland was first out of the blocks for getting the games and was first out of the blocks when it comes to hydrogen. Why? Once again, because we have been at the forefront of understanding that this is new technology the world is hungry for.

There is a huge demand for renewable green hydrogen. We have had discussions of course on my trade missions as Premier when I was minister for trade in both Japan and South Korea about the demand for long-term, secure contracts for the production of green renewable hydrogen. That is why we were absolutely delighted to work with Andrew Forrest in terms of his massive announcement about a \$1 billion injection into Gladstone, recognising that this is a path to future, long-term, secure jobs.

On Monday we went to Incitec Pivot once again where we are looking at how industry is also moving in this direction when it comes to hydrogen. That means other industrial facilities will follow. If a company such as Incitec Pivot can support hydrogen, this opens it up for other mass industrial centres as well. Of course, the Deputy Premier worked on that agreement with Rio Tinto. Yesterday we also announced a new hydrogen plant owned by the state government at Chinchilla.

Today I have another hydrogen announcement—it just keeps coming—in that Queensland could soon be exporting hydrogen to Europe's biggest port after our government agreed to the terms of an MOU with the Port of Rotterdam in the Netherlands. As Europe's largest port, the Port of Rotterdam has an ambition to import—

Honourable members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Obviously there is no interest from those opposite. It is only about jobs in Queensland. It is only about the economy. It is only about the economy being able to work and recover because of our strong health response. As Europe's largest port, the Port of Rotterdam has an ambition to import up to 20 million tonnes of hydrogen by 2050, starting with imports of ammonia in 2025. This agreement will see Queensland and the Port of Rotterdam collaborate on opportunities to develop a hydrogen export chain. Once again, it is more business for Queensland.

(Time expired)

Queensland Building and Construction Commission

Mr HART: My question without notice is to the Minister for Public Works. Given the well-documented history of the QBCC failing to take prompt action for mum-and-dad home owners when dealing with complaints about dodgy builders, can the minister explain why the commissioner took action on this matter late on a Friday night just hours after a call from the minister's office?

Mr de BRENNI: I thank the member for the question. I categorically refute the imputation that the commission failed to take action on behalf of home owners.

Mrs Gerber interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, member for Currumbin!

Mr de BRENNI: Let me reiterate—the information provided to me was that potentially a building was about to collapse and that there was a risk to the lives of construction workers and occupants of that building. For those reasons, I think it is entirely appropriate that immediate action is taken. If members opposite think that people might want to wait another day to take action in respect of the safety and lives of Queenslanders, let that be their position.

Mr Mickelberg interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, member for Buderim!

Renewable Energy, Job Creation

Ms BUSH: My question is of the Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics Infrastructure. Can the Deputy Premier outline to the House what the Palaszczuk government is doing to secure Queensland's fair share of renewable energy jobs of the future? Is the Deputy Premier aware of any alternative approaches?

Dr MILES: I thank the member for Cooper for her question. I know how committed she is to making sure that Queenslanders get the jobs of the future and how reliant those jobs will be on renewable energy and on hydrogen. Queensland is already the best place in the world to live and work, but our natural resources—both below and above the ground—mean that our future is bright. We will grow jobs off the back of renewable energy and hydrogen well into the foreseeable future. Our expertise in mining, in energy, in resources gives us a head start on the economy of the future that will rely on our resources like vanadium, wind, sun and of course the hydrogen that we will make here in Queensland.

Queenslanders stand to benefit as the world races to net zero emissions in 2050, and the world really is embracing this goal. Let us run through them. New South Wales, Tasmania, Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia and the Northern Territory have all signed up to net zero emissions by 2050. BHP, Qantas, Rio Tinto, Shell, the National Farmers' Federation, Meat and Livestock Australia, AgForce and APPEA have all signed up to net zero emissions by 2050. News Corporation signed up to net zero emissions by 2050. Our major trading partners are all pursuing net zero emissions. Prince Charles, the future king, is pursuing net zero emissions. He has sent a telegram to the member for Kawana; he just has not got it yet. Yesterday this House endorsed our goal—

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

Mr SPEAKER: This had better be good.

Mr BLEIJIE: It is a zinger! Mr Speaker, there is protocol in the House in terms of not reflecting on members of the Royal Family, including the future heir.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Kawana. There is no point of order.

Dr MILES: Who would have thought the person objecting to me quoting Prince Charles would be the member for Kawana? Yesterday this House endorsed the Palaszczuk government's goal of net zero emissions by 2050. Those opposite did not like it, to be fair. The Leader of the Opposition could not bring himself to say whether he was for it or against it. We had the sight of all of the Nats running around saying, 'What should we do? What should we do?' and in the end deciding they should hide. We even know that the Prime Minister wants to sign up to net zero emissions by 2050 but he cannot because of those opposite and their mates in the Queensland Nationals. They are standing in his way. Now that you were not game to stand up against this motion, you should tell your colleagues that they should support the Prime Minister—

Mr SPEAKER: Through the chair.

Dr MILES:—and support net zero emissions by 2050.

(Time expired)

Mr SPEAKER: I give a reminder that members should direct their comments through the chair.

Minister for Public Works and Procurement

Mr JANETZKI: My question is to the Premier. With allegations of dodgy deals, whistleblowers, fleeing senior executives and Queensland home owners being ignored by the QBCC, how can Queenslanders trust that this Minister for Public Works is acting in their best interests?

Ms PALASZCZUK: The minister made a very comprehensive statement to this parliament. He received a complaint. He forwarded that complaint and there has been no evidence from those opposite that he has done anything ill toward.

Mr Mander: Just wait!

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members! Member for Everton, if you are going to make interjections like that, at least give us a spoiler alert.

Economy

Mr KELLY: My question is of the Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment. Will the Treasurer please update the House on how the Palaszczuk government is working with business and unions to support jobs and the Queensland economy, and is the Treasurer aware of any other policy approaches?

Mr DICK: I thank the member for Greenslopes for his question and commiserate with his loss today. The member for Greenslopes knows well that we get the best results for Queensland when we get the best results for both businesses and for workers. That means more secure jobs. That is why I was pleased to see representatives of the Australian Workers' Union at Monday's announcement by Incitec Pivot and Fortescue Future Industries. When gas prices were high and fertiliser prices were low, our government worked with Incitec Pivot and the Australian Workers' Union to support 400 jobs at the Gibson Island manufacturing plant, because that is what Labor governments do and that is what real unions do. Real unions like the Queensland Nurses and Midwives' Union have worked to support their members every single step of the way through the pandemic.

Mr Lister interjected.

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

Mr DICK: Real unions are not like the NPAQ, whose secretary goes on radio talking down vaccines. Queenslanders know a fake when they see one. They know NPAQ is fake and they know the Leader of the Opposition is also a fake. The Leader of the Opposition was meant to be different. The Leader of the Opposition promised new politics. The Leader of the Opposition promised to be positive. The Leader of the Opposition promised to stand up to Scott Morrison, and he has done none of it.

The Leader of the Opposition comes in here and cries his crocodile tears for the health system in Queensland and does nothing to call Scott Morrison and get proper federal funding for Queensland. He comes in here and says that he supports vaccination, yet he allows his health spokesperson to be a member of NPAQ. If NPAQ gets its way, there will be no way out of the pandemic, because if the NPA gets its way then many Queenslanders will not get vaccinated. They will suffer lifelong health problems or worse as a consequence. If NPAQ gets its way, Queensland will not be able to open the border to remaining states and that will cost small and family businesses.

The Leader of the Opposition has to choose: is he for the health system or is he against it? The Leader of the Opposition has to choose: is he for vaccination or is he against it? If he is for vaccination, then he must tell the member for Mudgeeraba to resign and make the choice.

Ms BATES: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DICK: He must tell the member for Mudgeeraba—

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Minister, resume your seat.

Mr DICK:—to make the choice.

Mr SPEAKER: Resume your seat please. What is your point of order, member for Mudgeeraba?

Ms BATES: Those comments made by the Treasurer are defamatory; they are untrue. I have written to the Australian Press Council. I find them personally offensive and I ask for an unqualified withdrawal.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, member. In future please get to the point of order as opposed to making a statement. The member has found those comments offensive. Will you withdraw?

Mr DICK: I withdraw. The Leader of the Opposition must tell the member for Mudgeeraba to choose: either resign from NPAQ or resign from the front bench. That is the choice she must make today.

Ms BATES: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Those comments were defamatory and untrue and I asked for an unqualified withdrawal—

Mr SPEAKER: No.

Ms BATES:—and I take personal offence, Mr Speaker.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Mudgeeraba, I appreciate the fact that you have found those comments personally offensive, and you are well within your rights to ask for a withdrawal. I have very clearly given you guidance only moments ago to not make a statement. You are warned under the standing orders. Treasurer, the member for Mudgeeraba has found those comments offensive. Will you withdraw?

Mr DICK: I withdraw. I call on the Leader of the Opposition to act today to give Queenslanders confidence about vaccination, to respond to the scandalous campaign by NPAQ and to be a leader and reject this outrageous position—this membership taken by the member for Mudgeeraba.

Mackay Hospital; Caboolture Hospital

Ms BATES: My question is to the Minister for Health. Following revelations of alleged botched surgeries at yet another Queensland hospital, can the minister confirm how many doctors have been stood down at Mackay and Caboolture hospitals and why?

Mrs D'ATH: I thank the member for her question. I can advise that I have been informed this morning that the Mackay HHS has put out a statement about its independent clinical review that it is undertaking and it has also advised that there is one doctor who has been suspended. I am not aware of any suspension in relation to the Caboolture Hospital.

While I am on my feet I want to table, based on the claims that the member for Mudgeeraba just made, her register of interests that shows that she is a member of the Nurses' Professional Association of Queensland.

Tabled paper: Extract from the Register of Members' Interests for the member for Mudgeeraba, Ms Ros Bates MP [\[1731\]](#).

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members to my right! Member for Sandgate, member for Woodridge, you will cease your interjections or you will be warned under the standing orders.

Wage Theft

Mr SAUNDERS: My question is to the Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing. Can the minister update the House on how the government is responding to the scourge of wage theft and advise if there are any other alternative approaches?

Ms GRACE: I thank the member for Maryborough for the question. He knows that wage theft is damaging to workers in this country. After the hostile takeover by the federal government of our industrial relations system it has surged in this country. Do members know which government actually addressed wage theft? This Palaszczuk Labor government! We put in wage theft laws that made it illegal for wage theft and we did that knowing of the impact on workers to address this issue. So far we have had 54 claims for wage recovery under our new model—an easy way to do that—and most of those, 37 of them, have been under the federal industrial relations system because they cannot get any kind of recompense under that system. That was in spite of the Morrison government promising to introduce wage theft laws, having it in a bill before the House, and then ceremoniously dumping those conditions from the IR Bill at the last minute where there is no protection under the federal system. Let me say to workers in this state that the Palaszczuk Labor government will protect your rights and we will give you access when it comes to wage theft.

When one looks at alternative approaches, all I say to workers is caveat emptor: buyer beware. Do not join the fake unions that are out there. The only thing the LNP is doing to protect workers is creating these fake organisations. They are hiding behind these fake organisations, making out that they are there to protect workers. If I were a member of NPAQ I would take offence too. If I were a member of NPAQ I would be asking that it be withdrawn in this House and I would be taking offence because it is pretty offensive to join an organisation that is not registered in the Industrial Relations Commission. They are not accountable to anyone.

Mr Mander interjected.

Ms GRACE: They are not registered with the Registered Organisations Commission and they are sponsoring the LNP's anti-vax campaign in this state.

Mr Mickelberg interjected.

Ms GRACE: As a registered nurse I would be taking offence as well. Not once, not twice, but three times I would be taking great offence at joining an organisation that does that. Let us say one thing in relation to this: when it comes to representing workers, the only alternative they have is to infiltrate a fake organisation.

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

Ms GRACE: What a great policy drive that is for the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr SPEAKER: The minister's time has expired. Members for Everton and Buderim, your interjections were designed to disrupt the member on their feet. You are both warned under the standing orders.

Caboolture Hospital

Mr POWELL: My question is to the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services. Can the minister advise if the Caboolture Hospital surgery review team has identified any incidents of notifiable conduct, including actions that have placed the public at harm because of a significant departure from professional standards?

Mrs D'ATH: As I said in this House yesterday, and I have said previously, there is a review ongoing at the moment. The review has been extended at the request of the reviewer for a further two weeks and we await that report.

Coronavirus, Vaccination

Ms HOWARD: My question is to the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services. Can the minister update the House on the status of the vaccine rollout and any other challenges it may face?

Mrs D'ATH: I thank the member for her question. It was a pleasure to join her, the members for Ipswich West and Bundamba, along with the Premier and the Chief Health Officer last week in visiting the new Ipswich vaccination centre to see how well it was going. It is so important that members of parliament are not just posting a photo saying 'I have been vaccinated', but are strongly encouraging their communities to get out and get vaccinated. This is not just the pathway to our freedoms and opening up our economy and opening up all of our borders; it is actually about keeping alive. It is about the safety of our community. It also ensures that businesses can keep their doors open, that they have the workforce there and not in hospital sick, to ensure that people still have jobs and the economy continues to grow and boom.

It was wonderful to be in Mackay with the members for Mackay and Rockhampton and the Chief Health Officer to see the great work that they are doing and the mobile van hitting the road that can pop up anywhere in Central Queensland and around Mackay to offer the vaccine on the side of the road to encourage people to come out. At the same time I heard that George Christensen was out holding a candlelight vigil about not getting vaccinated. The anti-vaccination campaign and sentiment out there is extremely irresponsible and dangerous. We need everyone to be getting behind the vaccination and encouraging people to do it. It is not enough to simply be silent. You must come out and condemn these sentiments. The member for Mudgeeraba should come out and say whether she supports mandatory vaccination for the health workforce. Does the member support mandatory vaccination for the health workforce?

Opposition members interjected.

Mrs D'ATH: 115,000 health workers have died around the world from COVID. New South Wales people have gone into the health system, contracted it in the hospitals and died. It is important that our health workforce is vaccinated. It is important that our patients are protected. The president of the organisation that the member belongs to—the fake union—is out there standing in front of banners that have anti-vax logos on them and the shadow health spokesperson in Queensland parliament is silent. The member should condemn these statements, the position, and she should resign from the organisation or she should resign from the front bench. If she does not, the Leader of the Opposition should force her to resign.

Ms Bates interjected.

(Time expired)

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Mudgeeraba, I believe that you were using a member's name as opposed to their title. I ask you to withdraw that statement.

Ms BATES: I withdraw.

Coal-Fired Power

Mr BERKMAN: My question is to the Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning. As environment minister, the Deputy Premier oversaw approval of Adani's Carmichael coalmine while the then deputy premier and planning minister called in a bad development in her own electorate. Instead of just pretending it will never be built, will the deputy premier get off the fence and call in Clive Palmer's proposed coal-fired power station?

Dr MILES: I thank the member for Maiwar for his question, although I must say that in a week in which this government has stood up every day and talked about how we are embracing a clean energy future, how we are delivering the projects that will create jobs and deliver zero net emissions by 2050, the Greens are yet again determined to fall for Clive Palmer's trap, determined to be distracted by his stunt for the sake of their own political differentiation with no regard whatsoever for the ultimate policy outcome, with no regard whatsoever for our efforts to deliver a better negotiating platform from Australia at the COP.

The ultimate outcome in terms of reducing emissions will not be affected by any of Clive Palmer's projects—not the Titanic that he will not build, not the dinosaur park that he will not build and not this proposal which is simply designed to distract the environment movement into another culture war. That is a culture war that wins votes for those two up there, but it does nothing for our state, it does nothing for our environment, it does nothing to deliver action on climate change and it does nothing to bring Queenslanders with us and secure their support for the kind of ambitious climate action that we support and that we think will deliver jobs here in Queensland.

Instead of coming in here and trying to make sure they are sufficiently differentiated to get their inner-city votes, they should come in here and ask questions about how we are going to build hydrogen electrolyzers in Gladstone. They should ask about how we are delivering the solar and the wind farm projects that will create jobs in local industries and that will convert electricity that we can use here and export to our trading partners who need it. From the performance of the member for Maiwar, it is clear that the only party in this place that will deliver real emissions reduction is the Australian Labor Party.

Respect@Work Report

Ms PUGH: My question is of the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence. Will the Attorney-General update the House on how the Palaszczuk government is implementing recommendations of the Respect@Work report and is the Attorney aware of any alternative approaches?

Ms FENTIMAN: I thank the member for Mount Ommaney for her question and for her dedication to tackling sexual harassment at work. On this side of the House we are committed to ensuring that all Queenslanders feel safe at work. Although the majority of the Respect@Work recommendations relate to the Commonwealth, we have taken swift action to address recommendations that have been directed to the state. We have even picked up the federal government's slack and continued to fund the Working Women's Service as Scott Morrison still has not committed to funding it despite the recommendation in the Respect@Work report. We have done that because we believe that all Queenslanders should be free from harassment in the workplace.

Sadly, however, it would seem that those values are not shared by those opposite. Just last week the Queensland LNP lost its state director. Why? According to media reports, it was because of a toxic culture. That follows a well-respected accountant quitting the LNP headquarters after just two days of being there. It turns out that it took several women, including the state director and finance manager, quitting before the LNP took any action. Are we surprised though? Time and time again, the LNP has shown that respect for women in the workplace is not a priority.

Let us not forget that the very week before the national summit to tackle violence against women and children, Scott Morrison was resoundingly criticised for failing to legislate critical recommendations from Respect@Work. They blocked amendments to implement a key recommendation to place positive duties on employers to prevent sexual harassment. As Brittany Higgins said at the time—

These aren't radical policies. It's simply an explicit declaration that Australia will no longer tolerate sexual harassment in the workplace.

Again, we are not surprised that the LNP are not prioritising women's safety at work. Let us not forget the member for Burleigh who talked about how it was difficult for him that he must now be mindful when he is around young women staffers because the pendulum had swung too far.

Mr HART: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I find the member's statement personally offensive and I ask her to withdraw.

Mr SPEAKER: Was the member mentioned in reference directly?

Ms FENTIMAN: Yes.

Mr SPEAKER: I ask you to withdraw, please.

Ms FENTIMAN: I withdraw.

Mr Hart interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Burleigh, there is no need for interjections. You have made your point of order and the minister has withdrawn.

Mr Hart interjected.

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

Ms FENTIMAN: Again, the Leader of the Opposition has absolutely refused to bring the member for Burleigh into line for his offensive comments. Let us not forget that the Leader of the Opposition has staked his leadership on getting more women into the LNP team but has not delivered one policy to get any more women into his party. There are still only six women in the LNP. When will the Leader of the Opposition admit that he has failed the leadership test that he has set himself and when will they finally have a policy to bring more women into the parliament on that side of the House?

Renewable Energy, Environmental Rehabilitation

Ms BOLTON: My question without notice is to the Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning. In reference to the recent announcement for a renewable energy green hydrogen manufacturing facility, will the minister advise what the government is implementing to ensure that all renewable energy projects undertake the environmental rehabilitation of sites at the end of operations, including the disposal of redundant equipment such as solar panels or turbine blades?

Dr MILES: I thank the member for Noosa for her question. It is an important question as we race to embrace renewable energy. As we race to deliver new large-scale renewable energy projects, we need to make sure that there are not unintentional environmental impacts. In assessing these projects, depending on the nature of the project they will go through different approval processes. Large-scale wind farms are assessed by the state through the State Assessment and Referral Agency, SARA. SARA requires that those projects have a decommissioning and rehabilitation plan in place six months before their commissioning. Projects that are considered and assessed at a state level do have the kinds of requirements that would ensure that the land is rehabilitated, including all of the other assessments that you would expect of those projects, such as the ecological impact, whether there is a need for any tree clearing, potential acoustic impacts on neighbours and that kind of thing.

Most solar projects would go through a local government managed approval process. The department has guidelines for local government in assessing and considering those kinds of projects. Those guidelines provide advice to local government about how they can ensure that sites are remediated and rehabilitated after use and that equipment is removed. Of course, we would like to see—and I am sure we will see over time—greater and new technology to allow for that equipment to be recycled. Clearly there is an environmental impact in terms of the ability to recycle decommissioned equipment. Particularly as the large scales get to the end of their useful life I am sure we will see that kind of technology come online and developed here in Queensland.

While I think it is entirely reasonable that we should aim to foresee any unintentional environmental impacts of these projects, in net terms they are massively positive for the state, for our existing industries and for the new industries that we want to attract. We will continue to work with approving agencies to minimise those impacts where we can and, as I said, we will encourage and support the kind of technology that will allow us to recycle equipment over time. The member should rest assured that it is a matter that is very central to our consideration of these approvals.

Ports

Mr TANTARI: My question is of the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. Can the minister update the House on how Queensland's publicly owned ports are supporting jobs and our state's economic recovery?

Mr BAILEY: I thank the member for Hervey Bay who is a very strong advocate and supporter of our publicly owned ports, which play a really important role in the Queensland economy. Whether it is the big wind turbines around Cairns and Bundaberg, the biggest expansion of the Townsville port in a century or record exports of LNG through the Gladstone Port, ports are a very important part of our economy. However, they are not so much supported by those opposite who tried to sell them off through Strong Choices. That was the Leader of the Opposition and his mentor, Campbell Newman. We know he was described as very special in the Campbell Newman biography. They tried to sell them off; they were saved by Labor.

Recently, we had an instance of Senator Matt Canavan—‘Fake Tradie Canavan’—who wanted to play a bit of dress-up outside Gladstone Port to prop up the member for Callide’s campaign to try to be silent in the federal parliament as well as the state parliament. When you think about the dress-up stuff going on, the federal National Party have a mortgage on it, whether it is the checked shirts and the big hats or, in Matt Canavan’s case, the immaculately laundered fluoro shirts.

Look where they are coming from. To be a federal National Party leader these days—Barnaby Joyce is an accountant, his deputy leader is a banker and Matt Canavan is an economist. The last time a federal National Party leader had dirt under their fingernails was at little lunch. The glory days of the federal National Party of Doug Anthony, Tim Fischer and John Anderson are over. The white-collar federal Nats are in control, and Senator Canavan is a classic example of that.

He wanted to shoot a video to prop up the member for Callide—we remember him—four hours at estimates in my committee and he did not say a word. He gets \$24,000 extra to sit on the committee and he did not say a word. He wants to take the Marcel Marceau approach to federal parliament. He has Matt Canavan trying to prop him up out there. Senator Canavan suggested I was keeping him out of Gladstone Port. The only problem was he had not written to me to request permission.

I say to Senator Canavan: forget the fake tradie stuff, forget the dress-up, just write me a letter and, if you want to use our publicly owned ports as a prop for your presser to support Marcel Marceau over there, go for it. Just write to me and I will respond to you and treat you appropriately.

This is just another piece of spin from the federal government. They have had eight years in power. They are all spin and no substance. They do not take responsibility for anything. They are scrabbling around on net zero at the last minute. You know they will never do anything about it and we know that it is—

(Time expired)

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, I ask that you refrain from using other titles for members.

Mr BAILEY: Certainly, Mr Speaker.

Coronavirus, Border Restrictions

Mr BLEIJIE: My question is to the Premier. Lenny is a six-year-old Sunshine Coast boy with cerebral palsy and is currently holed up in a Sydney hotel with his dad, Fabio, after they returned from the US for Lenny’s life-saving brain surgery. In July I wrote to the Chief Health Officer and the Minister for Health requesting home quarantine after Lenny’s surgery, on his doctor’s advice. I table that letter.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 22 July 2021, from the member for Kawana, Mr Jarrod Bleijie MP, to the Chief Health Officer, Dr Jeannette Young, regarding exemption to quarantine [\[1732\]](#).

Not only was Lenny’s exemption denied, he is now stuck in Sydney unable to come home. Why won’t the Premier let Lenny follow his health advice and come home?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for the question. I can advise that the Minister for Health has advised me that the matter has been resolved.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Members to my left.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: When members are finished.

Mr Bleijie: Yes, I am angry!

Mr SPEAKER: The member for Kawana is warned under the standing orders. I will wait for silence, members.

Hydrogen Industry, Water Infrastructure

Mr O'ROURKE: My question is of the Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water. Will the minister update the House on water infrastructure to support the Queensland hydrogen jobs boom and is the minister aware of any alternatives?

Mr BUTCHER: I thank the member for the question. I know that he is certainly very passionate about water security for his region and particularly the water security that this government has delivered. In the six years that we have been in government, there has been a \$2 billion investment in water security, as he knows full well. He is seeing unfolding in front of him up there the Rookwood Weir, which we know is delivering valuable jobs on the ground and valuable water security for Central Queensland. In saying that, it is absolutely amazing to see that project coming out of the ground as we saw on a visit recently. The Rookwood Weir never would have happened without the Palaszczuk government's investment this year.

Mr Millar interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Gregory!

Mr BUTCHER: The opposition can go on and on. We get a person like Michelle Landry, the federal member for Capricornia, saying that she has—

Mr Millar interjected.

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

Mr BUTCHER: Michelle Landry says she has been the lead on Rookwood Weir for 10 years. It was a wasted 10 years because under them nothing happened until the Palaszczuk Labor government made the first investment of cash to get the project going. Only then did the federal government—with Michelle Landry and Ken O'Dowd—come along, kicking and screaming, and put some money into Rookwood Weir. It is because of this government that we are delivering now on that fabulous project.

On the back of that fabulous project, we are now starting to move forward with the combined Fitzroy to Gladstone pipeline. That will mean more water for the future hydrogen industry, particularly in the Gladstone region, as we have heard over the last couple of days. I am happy to say also that there is currently a briefing on the pipeline for pre-construction that is now open under QTenders which will be happening on Thursday, 21 October. It is because of our economic plan for recovery that this project has got off the ground and now the investigation into the business case for that pipeline to come to Gladstone for water security for hydrogen is continuing here in Queensland. As I say, we have been creating those job opportunities not only in that project that the member for Rockhampton has seen there in Rockhampton but also into a pipeline potential coming to Gladstone.

Unfortunately, the LNP here in Queensland has failed to support investment in cheaper, cleaner energy to power more jobs and that track record goes right across the LNP, including the federal government. Last Friday at the Gladstone Engineering Alliance hydrogen forum, the federal member Ken O'Dowd was heckling the hydrogen minister while he was up on stage. That is right: he was at a hydrogen forum, with big players from Queensland and from around the world there and, where instead of making a constructive contribution to the debate that was going on, he stood at the back of the hall and heckled the minister for hydrogen in Queensland. It is lucky he introduced himself at the conference because nobody there even knew who he was. He did have one person there: the member for Callide was there with him trying to say that he supports the industry as well.

(Time expired)

Mr Millar interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Gregory, you are warned under the standing orders already. You can leave the chamber for one hour.

Whereupon the honourable member for Gregory withdrew from the chamber at 11.07 am.

Infrastructure Projects, Costs

Mr MINNIKIN: My question is to the Minister for Public Works. Out of the \$600 million cost blowout for the Coomera Connector and the \$334 million cost blowout for Gold Coast Light Rail, how much of the cost blowouts can be attributed to the best practice industry conditions?

Mr de BRENNI: I thank the member for Chatsworth for the question. Let the record show that the opposition objects to better wages for workers in this state. It is in their DNA. They will do everything in their power. They get up every single morning and think about how to reduce wages and working

conditions for workers in this state and in this country. In fact, their federal leader, Prime Minister Scott Morrison, and his predecessors have overseen a period of lowest wages growth in living memory, and here they are in the Queensland parliament advocating for lower wages for working people.

Not just that, our policy requires the highest standard of safety. Let the record show that the member for Chatsworth, with the imprimatur of the Leader of the Opposition, has come into this House today and called on us to reduce safety at work for construction workers—lower wages, less safe conditions.

It goes even further. Those who work for the Queensland government under contract on these major projects invest in apprentices and trainees. In asking that question, it is clear the member for Chatsworth and the opposition do not support major projects in this state investing in apprentices and trainees. Not only that, their maths is always wrong.

Mr Stevens interjected.

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

Mr de BRENNI: Construction projects contain a range of interests—materials, land, equipment. They are made up of a maximum of about 30 per cent in labour costs. If we say that investment in better safety, better wages and apprentices and trainees might add about 10 per cent—that is the estimated rate—to those labour costs, then I can inform the member for Chatsworth that 10 per cent of 30 per cent is around three per cent.

We are very comfortable with our investment in better working conditions here in this state. We are very comfortable with our investment in apprentices and trainees in this state. We are very comfortable with our Buy Queensland policy, that those opposite voted against, which sees us prefer that work go to companies that are based in Queensland and employ Queenslanders. We should never forget, and Queensland workers will never forget, that those opposite came into this House and voted against a policy that said that Queensland workers should get Queensland jobs first.

Coronavirus, Tourism Industry

Ms LUI: My question is of the Minister for Tourism, Innovation and Sport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics and Paralympics Sport and Engagement. Will the minister inform the House of the latest assistance the government is providing to tourism operators to help them through the global pandemic?

Mr HINCHLIFFE: I thank the member for her question. We know that tourism operators in the member's electorate have been hit hard by the pandemic. As I mentioned earlier, the Palaszczuk government has committed more than \$1 billion to assist Queensland tourism operators. Our focus on recovery is more determined than ever.

The \$110 million Tourism and Hospitality Sector Hardship Program opened on Monday. It is part of the \$600 million joint Australian government and Palaszczuk government COVID-19 business support package. We want to help tourism businesses stay afloat at this crucial time. Since opening the program on Monday, 350 applications have been received, with 221 already processed. So far that is just over \$5 million in requests for assistance. Businesses can get help either through the \$80 million Tourism and Hospitality Sector Hardship Grant program or the \$30 million Major Tourism Experiences Hardship Grant program.

Support available within the \$80 million program increases with payroll size from \$30,000 for small businesses to up to \$50,000 for medium businesses and up to \$100,000 for large businesses. Grants are there for operators including zoos, marine tour operators, whitewater rafting operators, cafes, travel agents and accommodation providers where they have experienced significant hardship and economic downturn as a consequence of the pandemic.

The \$30 million Major Tourism Experiences Hardship Grant program is aimed at major Queensland tourism businesses. These are those key attractions for significant interstate and international tourism and they are also significant major local employers. We know that if employers can keep their staff and skills most will be able to scale up once tourism numbers return.

It is vitally important for the future of our tourism industry that we encourage vaccination. I reiterate to everyone in this House and to the whole tourism industry, as I have done on a number of occasions, how important vaccination is to our pathway out of this challenge. I know that the industry has been a great leader in advocating for and talking about vaccination, but there is more that we can all do. We can make sure that we have conversations with all of our employees, with all of our clients

and with all of the businesses that we work with to encourage them and their staff to get vaccinated and to further attack and remove those cancers from within our community who are undermining the vaccination regime, including certain fake unions.

Minister for Public Works and Procurement

Dr ROBINSON: My question is to the Minister for Public Works. I refer to the minister's sports rorts saga where the Grange Thistle club missed out on two rounds of grants. What confidence do the residents of Grange have that the minister is acting in their best interests?

Mr BAILEY: I rise to a point of order, Mr Speaker. There are clear imputations in that question.

Mr SPEAKER: Please resume your seat. Allow me to give some guidance to the member. Member, I ask you to rephrase that question without the inferences.

Dr ROBINSON: I refer to the government's sports funding saga where the Grange Thistle club missed out on two rounds of grants. What confidence do the residents of Grange have that the minister is acting in their best interests?


Mr SPEAKER: The period for question time has expired.

RESOURCES AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from 12 October (see p. 2945), on motion of Mr Stewart—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Hon. SJ STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (Minister for Resources) (11.15 am), in reply: First of all, I thank all honourable members for their participation in this debate. The Resources and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2021 will provide certainty to stakeholders by clarifying provisions in the Mineral Resources Act 1989 and the Petroleum Act 1923. In particular, this bill seeks to remove ambiguities about the validity of mining leases impacted by certain administrative issues relating to the issue of hard copy instruments of lease. I note that the affected mining leases were all granted before 2010. The amendment will provide certainty for holders of these mining leases that they can continue to operate with confidence.

The bill also clarifies the legislative framework for production lease renewals under the Petroleum Act 1923 and brings them into line with provisions for renewals of other equivalent resource authorities in the Mineral Resources Act 1989 and the Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004. The bill will also amend the Petroleum Act 1923 to provide holders of authorities to prospect, which have associated production lease applications over them, with the confidence that their tenure will continue in force beyond 1 November 2021. It will also ensure that any outstanding decisions on the associated production lease applications can be made after 1 November 2021.

The bill also contains amendments to improve the operation of water legislation by standardising the water restrictions regulatory framework across South-East Queensland and amending reporting requirements in order to better protect all water service providers from potential cybersecurity attacks. As I noted in my second reading speech, these amendments will help to ensure our precious water resources are managed appropriately for the benefit of the entire community. The amendments also aim to protect all Queensland water service providers from possible malicious cybersecurity attacks by excluding the requirement for the publication of sensitive information and reporting metrics to be made publicly available.

I now turn to specific issues raised during the debate. I thank all members opposite for their contributions to the debate and support for the bill. As members are aware, my department has responded to the concerns raised by the Environmental Defenders Office and the Queensland Resources Council during the committee process regarding consultation on these amendments. My department and I are committed to consulting broadly on regulatory proposals that have a material impact on stakeholders, and such proposals would rightly be subject to broad consultation with enough time to allow stakeholders to consider any issues that may arise. However, as I outlined in my second reading speech, the matters presented in this bill do not represent a material change in policy or direction. They simply preserve and clarify existing rights.

Also, as I outlined in my second reading speech, the concerns with the wording of the amendments to the Petroleum Act 1923 are misplaced. The amendments simply empower the relevant minister to exercise the powers under section 40 as they currently exist. These provisions require the minister to grant a lease in the listed circumstances.

The member for Toowoomba North also noted that the Land Court is currently considering a matter that relates to the Petroleum Act 1923. The current matter before the Land Court of Queensland in which the applicants are, among broader claims about compensation, raising issues about what leaseholder rights exist where the underlying lease expires before a decision to renew is made. If the amendments to the Petroleum Act 1923 are passed by parliament today, the legal position about the rights that exist in this situation will be clarified. The proposed amendments do not change the department's historic interpretation of the Petroleum Act 1923. Importantly, the amendments will not negate the applicants' right to a fair hearing or their request to review their current compensation arrangement due to changes in circumstances and activities.

I thank the member for Gregory for raising the issue of transparency and the concerns of the Rolleston community about the Mahalo gas fields. I note that many of his remarks were outside the scope of the bill. The Department of Resources takes the issue of transparency very seriously.

I also note the member for Maiwar's concerns and his remarks about the views of stakeholders that believe this indicates a broad failure of transparency. I am pleased to confirm to members that the Department of Resources already maintains a publicly available register in the form of MyMinesOnline. The register contains a vast amount of information about applications and existing resource authorities and, as mentioned, the department would be happy to discuss the register and its content with any interested stakeholders.

I thank members for their comments about investment attraction and sovereign risk in Queensland. It is important to put these remarks into context. Exploration expenditure reached \$706 million in Queensland during the 12 months to June 2021, up by 10.3 per cent over the preceding 12 months and up by 60 per cent since June 2018. The increase was driven by growth in exploration for minerals and oil and gas, while coal exploration expenditure was down by almost 20 per cent over the year to June 2021. This increase occurred in exploration expenditure in Queensland over the same year it fell in the Northern Territory, South Australia, New South Wales and Victoria.

An opposition member: Time's up!

Mr STEWART: You're dreaming.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Order, Minister! Please address your comments through the chair.

Mr STEWART: They are dreaming, Mr Deputy Speaker. This investment and the contribution of the sector are why it is so important that we provide certainty to the industry. In the 12 months to June, the resources sector added \$39.6 billion in gross value to Queensland and attracted \$8 billion in private capital expenditure. This demonstrates strong confidence in the future of Queensland's resources sector at a time when exploration expenditure is contracting in most other states and territories. The resources sector is the backbone of the Queensland economy. Queensland's resources sector generated \$44.6 billion in export revenue for the state during the 2020-21 financial year, accounting for 77 per cent of our merchandise exports over that period.

I thank the member for Maiwar for his contributions to the debate, and I would like to address a few of the points that the member raised. In relation to compliance with the authority to prospect work programs, as I have previously advised, all production lease applications and renewals are subject to a rigorous statutory assessment process to ensure the application complies with the relevant legislative framework. As these matters are currently under consideration, I will not discuss the particulars of the applications and their underlying tenures. However, it is important to note that, for applications for a production lease under the Petroleum Act 1923, compliance with a work program is not a relevant criteria for consideration.

I note the member for Maiwar also raised concerns about the open-ended period to decide the remaining production lease applications under the Petroleum Act 1923. This is necessary to avoid imposing arbitrary time frames for a decision to be made and to provide sufficient time for any necessary assessment and investigation to be completed prior to making a decision. This approach allows for flexibility and is consistent with the treatment of other petroleum tenures which remain in force until any associated application for renewal or higher tenure is decided. We will be methodical, we will be thorough and we will be deliberate in our decision-making processes. We will not be rushed to meet a time frame. We need to weigh up all the applications to make sure we make the right decision.

Finally, the member also raised some points about the Lake Eyre Basin, which is currently subject to an ongoing policy development process seeking to balance environmental protections and economic development activities. The process is currently being led by the Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Youth Affairs and is beyond the scope of this bill. These amendments only address issues relating to ensuring existing tenures to ensure that they continue in force and relevant applications can be decided. I note that they do not confer any additional rights or obligations upon stakeholders.

We have heard attack after attack from those opposite on a former member who is not in this House. Maybe this is because they could not land any attack when he was here. It should be noted that the former minister for natural resources, Dr Anthony Lynham, achieved more for the safety and health of Queensland's resource workers than the entire opposition could ever claim.

As I highlighted in my second reading speech, when appropriate I will seek leave of the House to introduce amendments that are outside the long title of the bill. If leave is granted, I intend to move amendments in consideration in detail relating to statutory role requirements for coalmining operations. These amendments will amend the Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999 to extend the transitional arrangements for a further 12 months to 25 November 2022. This 12 months will enable further advice regarding concerns raised by industry. To this end, I have asked the independent Resources Safety and Health Commissioner to establish a tripartite working group, comprised of representatives from industry, workers' representatives and the regulator to provide advice on the implications of the implementation challenges and practical solutions to these. This work has already commenced.

To be clear, this amendment is not repealing the legislation, despite what the member for Burdekin wants. The intent of the provisions is to strengthen the safety culture in the resources industry. Our government believes in the intent of this legislation. Larger operations have already transitioned to these new arrangements. These amendments are the government's response to implementation challenges identified by medium and small operations under the current transitional time frame. The Palaszczuk government promised that we would listen, and that is exactly what we are doing.

Regarding the member for Burdekin's comments on North Goonyella, I would expect better from a former shadow mines minister given that he voted for the creation of the independent Resources Safety and Health Queensland. He also knows that any compliance or enforcement action is a matter for the independent Resources Safety and Health Queensland.

I would like to commend the work undertaken by the Department of Resources and the Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water in bringing this bill to the House. I would also like to reiterate my thanks to the Transport and Resources Committee for their feedback and recommendation that the bill be passed. I commend the bill to the House.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Consideration in Detail

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Members, please note that clauses 15, 16 and 21 have been ruled out of order, in accordance with standing order 87. Therefore, these clauses and their associated part headings no longer form part of the bill.

Clause 1, as read, agreed to.

Insertion of new clauses—



Mr STEWART (11.28 am): I seek leave to move an amendment outside the long title of the bill.

Leave granted.

Mr STEWART: I move the following amendment—

1 **After clause 1**

Page 4, after line 5—

insert—

Part 1A **Amendment of Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999**

1A **Act amended**

This part amends the *Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999*.

1B Amendment of s 319 (Deferral of obligation of coal mine operators to ensure employees are appointed to particular positions)

Section 319, '18 months after the commencement'—

omit, insert—

25 November 2022

1C Amendment of s 320 (Particular appointments of persons who are not employees of coal mine operators made before commencement)

(1) Section 320, heading, after 'commencement'—

insert—

and during transitional period

(2) Section 320—

insert—

(1A) This section also applies if a person (also the **appointee**) holds an appointment mentioned in subsection (1)(a) to (j), in relation to a coal mine, made in the period starting on 25 May 2020 and ending on 25 November 2022.

(3) Section 320(3), from 'the day' to 'commencement'—

omit, insert—

25 November 2022

I table the explanatory notes to my amendments and statement of compatibility with human rights.

Tabled paper: Resources and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2021, explanatory notes to Hon. Scott Stewart's amendments [\[1733\]](#).

Tabled paper: Resources and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2021, statement of compatibility with human rights contained in Hon. Scott Stewart's amendments [\[1734\]](#).

The amendment inserts a new part 1A into the bill, which makes amendments to the Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999 to commence on assent.

Clause 1B extends transitional arrangements under section 319 of the Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999 relating to statutory role requirements for coalmining operations by 12 months to 25 November 2022. This amendment provides that coalmining operators will have until 25 November 2022 to comply with the requirement that statutory office holders under the Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999 must be employees of the coalmine operator.

Clause 1C extends transitional arrangements under section 320 of the Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999 relating to statutory role requirements for coalmining operations by 12 months to 25 November 2022. This amendment provides that, if after 25 November 2022 a statutory office holder under the Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999 is not an employee of a coalmine operator, their appointment as a statutory office holder ends and the coalmine operator will be in breach of the act. The extension to the transitional period will enable industry stakeholders to address identified implementation challenges.

Mr WEIR: As I said during my contribution, I do have concerns around this section. I am pleased to hear that the minister has put together a committee that is a bit broader than what was initially discussed, because as we understood it during the committee hearing this came from the AWU and CFMEU, and that was it. They went to the minister and the department and that was included in the bill. The industry had no idea this was coming. During the committee hearing it was mentioned that this is something that would be very difficult, if not impossible, to implement. While I am encouraged that there will be consultation, the minister's comments about the finality of that time and statutory officers' employment ceasing if they are not under the employ of a mine owner still concerns me. I would like to quote from the original committee report. AngloAmerican commented that—

This is a complex area where there has been no consultation with the industry to understand the likely implications, including a shortage of statutory positions in Queensland that cannot be filled under the current system. The requirement would also necessitate changes to hundreds of contractual arrangements for mining services, which apart from the compliance burden, may also have other unintended consequences for our operations that we have not yet had the opportunity to consider.

That has become a reality. Making this apply to every mine owner is going to be very difficult because the ownership of some of these mines is complex. There are multiple companies involved. I appreciate the consultation. I hope it comes back here to this House before it is finalised or that it goes through a committee process to be thoroughly examined.

I have had statutory office holders contact me who have been forced to change their employer and they said, 'It's not the role of government to tell me who I should work for, but that is what's being imposed on me.' We have a shortage of these statutory office holders in the industry. They are in short

supply. The industrial manslaughter legislation has already put a great burden upon them and now this is on top of that, so I do have serious worries about this. I am not convinced that this will be resolved in that 12-month period. If it cannot be, the minister may have to come in here and completely amend the legislation. I will not be opposing it, but there are some serious hurdles in front of this.

Mr MICKELBERG: I raise my concerns in the debate with respect to this particular issue. I would just like to get some clarity from the minister in relation to the working group that he mentioned in his previous comments. He said there would be representation from the QRC and workers' representative bodies, presumably the unions AWU and CFMEU. My question is: will those who occupy those positions, senior site executives and other office holders, be represented on that working group? Many of them are small and family businesses. They are independent contractors. They were the most impacted by the changes that were imposed in previous legislation which this amendment seeks to kick down the road for a further period.

The simple fact is that this was an initiative of the previous minister, at the urging of the AWU, which was not considered. It was reactive, and as a consequence we are now dealing with the impacts on small and family businesses. It is simply not good enough. It was an attack on the rights of individuals which is, in my view, a breach of their human rights and not justified and not warranted. That said, now we are seeing the effects of that decision. Now what we are seeing is that you cannot get those senior site executives, those statutory officer holders. Many of the most experienced operators are going to walk away from the industry because they are not prepared to move over and work for a mine—that is the simple reality of it—particularly some of the smaller mines and smaller operators.

I would really urge the minister to reconsider his comments with respect to the former minister's actions because they were ill-conceived. He did not consult with anyone other than the AWU and the CFMEU, and as a consequence small and family business owners are wearing the cost. In 12 months time we will be back here, hopefully, amending the legislation to get rid of the provision because it does not make sense. It will not help workers' safety. It will only drive the most experienced operators out of the industry, and they are the people who have the most to offer when it comes to ensuring workers' safety and ensuring that their experience is leveraged so that mistakes that have happened in the past do not happen again.

I would ask the minister to clarify whether or not senior site executives and statutory office holders will be represented on the working group. It is all well and good to have the QRC there but, to be frank, the QRC did not make these concerns widely known at the time these amendments were moved so I do not have a great faith that they will advocate for SSEs at an individual level. They will absolutely advocate for mines and mining companies, but I want to see SSEs have a seat at the table. I would ask the minister to clarify whether that will be the case.

Mr STEWART: As I said, this will be a tripartite committee and I have already outlined the membership of that particular group. There were a number of mining organisations that wrote to us, including Mastermyne, Coronado and Kestrel. We will be inviting them to present to the working group as well. What we need to do is make sure that we achieve the intent of the bill, which is to ensure that: every one of our workers comes home each and every shift; every one of our workers knows that when they turn up to work it is a safe working place; they know they can actually stand up and say there is something wrong; they can identify risks; and they know that through this legislation something will be done to address that, because so many times in the past we have seen there is a fear of raising issues. This is about keeping our workers safe, making sure they have ten fingers and toes, that they come home to their family and friends, and making sure that we get this right. That is what this is all about.

Amendment agreed to.

Clauses 2 and 3, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 4 to 7—



Mr BERKMAN (11.38 am): As I indicated in my second reading contribution, we will not support this part of the bill. It is very different from those parts of the bill that address deficiencies with mining leases under the Mineral Resources Act in that those provisions do not provide any simple way for us to differentiate between mining leases that exist for thermal coal and for the rest of the mineral resources sector.

Members in this debate have gone to pretty great lengths to misrepresent the Greens' position on mining generally, suggesting that we want to see the end of the mining industry, which is absolutely not the case. It has never been the case. In fact, attempts to paint that picture either demonstrate members' inability to understand pretty simple policy positions or an interest in completely misrepresenting the position we have consistently taken.

As I said in my second reading contribution, we absolutely support the expansion of those parts of the mineral resources sector that are going to be necessary for the transition to our clean energy future. What we do not support—and what no sensible policy-making should support—is the ongoing expansion of fossil fuels extraction in this state or anywhere in the world. The evidence is in. It is absolutely clear that we need to draw a line under fossil fuels expansion.

These parts—part 3, clauses 4 to 7 specifically—relate only to the petroleum sector. They relate only to fossil fuels. It is simple to say that these are clauses that we should not pass. We should not continue to support the expansion of coal seam gas in Queensland. We should not continue to support the expansion of fracking in Queensland, given the impacts we know that will have not just on the climate but on our precious groundwater resources across the state. I will leave my comments there.

I would suggest that, if the government wants to be taken seriously on its climate commitments, we need tougher, stronger targets obviously than net zero by 2050, but we also need to start taking really serious steps around our resource sector's contribution to climate change. That is not the entire sector by any stretch of the imagination, but it does mean we have to step away from thermal coal and gas as soon as we conceivably can and support those communities that are dependent on those industries and provide them with a real plan to transition, rather than leaving them exposed to the whims of a market that is quickly moving away from fossil fuels.

Mr STEWART: I thank the member for his comments. I cannot make this any clearer than what I have said probably six or seven times during my introductory speech, my contribution in the second reading debate and my summation. I will say it again. These changes will afford no additional rights whatsoever. This is about making sure that we have got the time necessary to make the most informed decisions around the future of these applications. The intent of this is just about giving extra time to allow that to happen to make sure we have the fullest available information and we get the correct information. As I have said previously, we will be methodical, deliberate and thorough when it comes to making these decisions. That is why we have asked for the additional time beyond 1 November. It is also worth noting that it is not in our best interests to have these applications on our books, nor is it in the best interests of the proponents to have these applications on our books for extended periods of time. Having said that, we will not be rushed into making a decision that meets a particular time line.

Clauses 4 to 7, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 8 to 14, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 17 to 20, as read, agreed to.

Third Reading



Hon. SJ STEWART (Townsville—ALP) (Minister for Resources) (11.43 am): I move—

That the bill, as amended, be now read a third time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

Long Title



Hon. SJ STEWART (Townsville—ALP) (Minister for Resources) (11.43 am): I move the following amendments—

2 Long title

Long title, after 'to amend'—

insert—

the Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999,

3 Long title

Long title, from 'the Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Act 1994'—

omit, insert—

and the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008 for particular purposes

Amendments agreed to.

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

Motion agreed to.

HOUSING LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Resumed from 18 June (see p. 2122).

Second Reading



Hon. LM ENOCH (Algeria—ALP) (Minister for Communities and Housing, Minister for Digital Economy and Minister for the Arts) (11.44 am): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

I would like to thank the Community Support and Services Committee for its report tabled on 16 August 2021 regarding the Housing Legislation Amendment Bill 2021. I would also like to thank those who made submissions to the committee and those who appeared as witnesses as part of the committee's inquiry. I am pleased to table the government's response to the committee's report on this bill, accepting all the recommendations which I will detail later.

Tabled paper: Community Support and Services Committee: Report No. 7, 57th Parliament—Housing Legislation Amendment Bill 2021, government response [\[1735\]](#).

In 2010, seven-week-old baby Isabella Diefenbach died after falling through the balcony of her parents' rental home in Yeppoon. Isabella was being held by her father when his foot fell through a rotten wooden plank on the house's deck, causing Isabella to fall from his arms. Isabella's parents, Adam and Jenny, had made complaints to their real estate agent and landlord about the state of the deck prior to Isabella's death. This tragedy could have been avoided if there were enforceable minimum housing standards for rental properties in Queensland.

I remind the House of this story to draw members' attention to the importance of what we are debating here today. This bill proposes changes to ensure that rental accommodation is safe, secure and functional, as well as supporting renters to enforce their tenancy rights to repairs and maintenance. It is the government's hope that, through passage of this bill, we might avoid similar tragedies in the future as well as protect the rights of renters more broadly and property owners in a balanced way. An increasing number of Queenslanders rely on the private rental market for safe, secure and affordable housing. Around a third of Queensland households rent, and many Queenslanders also invest in rental properties. With more Queenslanders renting and renting for longer, Queensland needs modern laws that meet the changing needs of renters and rental property owners.

The Housing Legislation Amendment Bill 2021 fulfils the Palaszczuk government's commitments to deliver stage 1 rental law reforms and implement amendments to the Retirement Villages Act 1999 to exempt resident operated freehold retirement villages from mandatory buyback provisions. From the comprehensive consultation we undertook with Queenslanders over many years, we know that there are strongly held views on renting and appropriate rental legislation. I believe that the bill we are debating today finds the acceptable and appropriate balance. Despite that balance, what we have seen here in the House this week is the LNP and the Greens on a unity ticket to create confusion and mayhem for renters. They came into this place yesterday and voted together on the business program motion. If ever we needed further evidence that the Greens and the LNP have formed a political alliance, there it was.

This bill we are debating progresses several important reforms to the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008 to provide better protections for renters and owners and improve stability in the rental market. Importantly, we are ending owner initiated without-grounds evictions. Rights to end tenancy agreements will be amended to provide greater certainty about the circumstances in which renters and rental property owners can end their tenancies. These changes introduce an expanded suite of approved reasons for renters and owners to end tenancies.

In addition, minimum housing standards will be prescribed for Queensland rental properties to meet basic safety, security and functionality standards that all Queenslanders deserve and have a right to expect in their homes. I am aware of public comments by some in the LNP who think renters have become spoilt for wanting to live in a property that is safe and secure, is free of vermin and will keep their family dry during a storm—what most would consider are minimum standards. I would say to those opposite that everyone deserves the dignity of a safe and secure home. No-one deserves to live in squalid conditions. While members of the LNP may think that basic living standards are a privilege for the few, as a Labor government we are proud to progress reforms like this that support people who do not own their own home and that ensure they have a safe place to live. The amendments in this bill establish minimum standards because, just as tenants are expected to pay their rent on time, property owners should be expected to ensure their property meets a minimum standard of livability.

Minimum housing standards will commence from 1 September 2023 for new tenancies and from 1 September 2024 for all tenancies. This will allow property owners adequate time to meet the required standards. As I said earlier, these amendments also support renters to enforce their tenancy rights to repairs and maintenance on their property. The bill establishes an offence of up to 50 penalty units for failing to comply with a repair order, unless the person has a reasonable excuse, as well as a continuing offence with a maximum penalty of five penalty units for each week the offence continues after a person is convicted by the Magistrates Court of failing to comply with the repair order. I can inform the House that comprehensive economic analysis found that these stage 1 rental law reforms in aggregate will not significantly impact rent supply or affordability in Queensland's rental market.

In 2020 the Queensland government established a set of temporary COVID-19 regulatory measures for the residential rental market, including protections for renters experiencing domestic and family violence. These included the ability to end their interest in a tenancy quickly with limited liability for end-of-lease costs and the ability to change locks in a rental property without the owner's consent to ensure their safety. This bill proposes to make these vital domestic and family violence provisions enduring. These provisions will commence on assent of the bill.

Importantly for thousands of Queenslanders, the proposed changes in the bill will also make it easier for renters to request and keep a pet at their property. A property owner must respond in writing within 14 days of a renter's request to keep a pet. If the owner does not respond within 14 days, the request will be deemed to be approved. It is easy to get wrapped up in the technical details of legislation but, in reality, this is about people—like the renter from Cairns who contacted my office last year who had lived in the same rental property for 10 years. They had previously kept a dog at the property with no issues; however, a few years later the renter asked for permission to keep a rescue dog as a companion and was refused. This refusal was distressing for the renter. This legislation will make it easier for requests such as this to be made in the future and ensure that owners provide a prompt response and outline reasons for a refusal. We know that this change will make a big difference to the lives of many people. Property owners will be required to have a prescribed ground to refuse a request to keep a pet or be able to give approvals subject to conditions other than additional bond or rent.

COVID has reinforced how important pets can be for people's wellbeing, which is why this is an important inclusion in the bill. A renter can dispute a refusal using existing processes, including conciliation through the RTA, before applying to the tribunal if conciliation is unsuccessful. I note that in the dissenting committee report the LNP has made clear that it does not support this amendment as it believes that a lessor should be allowed to reject applications to have pets without stating a reason. Here again is another example of how out of touch the LNP is with Queenslanders. To oppose such a simple courtesy really shows how little it cares about renters in Queensland. We see the same disinterest in the wellbeing of renters from the federal LNP government. It is walking away from the National Rental Affordability Scheme, leaving thousands of Queensland renters to pay higher rents. That same disregard for those people is now being seen from those opposite.

A power to require property owners to disclose information about the tenancy and rental property will also help to ensure both parties have access to the information they need to make informed decisions about their tenancy arrangements before they enter a tenancy agreement.

The bill also amends the Retirement Villages Act 1999 to create a regulation-making power to exempt resident operated retirement villages from mandatory buyback requirements and establishes a range of matters to be considered when deciding whether an exemption is appropriate.

The Community Support and Services Committee states in its report that the submissions received to its inquiry into the bill clearly demonstrate that the rental market is difficult and that there are differing views about the proposed reforms. However, the committee concluded that rental reform is needed to ensure every Queenslanders has access to a safe and stable home.

The committee supported the removal of without-grounds as an approved reason for property owners to end a tenancy and the introduction of additional approved grounds as an important step towards providing more certainty, transparency and accountability for all parties in the rental sector. The committee noted the calls from stakeholders representing renter interests for this reform to go further and concerns raised by stakeholders representing property owner interests about potential impacts on periodic leases.

As my department articulated in its submission to the committee, to allow renters to retain possession of properties at the end of agreed fixed-term tenancies would affect longstanding property, tenancy and contract laws. It would deprive property owners of a protected human right to the ownership of property and would have insufficient regard to the rights of individuals for the purposes of fundamental legislative principles. Not recognising the end of a fixed-term tenancy would have the legal

effect of depriving the owner of the right to possess the property again and giving it to the renter, except in certain limited circumstances, without compensation for the deprivation of the right. A lease is a contract. The owner and the renter will agree the term of the renter's possession of the property and set it down in their contract. A renter is not regarded as being evicted at the end of a fixed-term tenancy; rather, the mutually agreed period of the renter's possession ends. The parties are free to agree another period of possession—or not, depending on the circumstances.

This bill provides renters with more certainty about their rights during the agreed term and the limited circumstances that a tenancy can end. Let me be clear, because there is a lot of misinformation that has been spread about these reforms: we are ending without-grounds evictions. Proposals put forward in the Greens' private member's bill demonstrate that they are not and never will be a party of government. Their complete disregard for Queensland's own Human Rights Act and basic contract law is telling. When we are experiencing extremely tight rental markets across the state, the fact that they would make proposals that would lead to fewer, not more, available rental properties beggars belief. Their assertion that this is all about big corporate interests ignores all the mum-and-dad investors who have put their life savings into rental property in the hope of generating some income in retirement.

The committee concluded that, on balance, the ending tenancies amendments proposed in the bill achieve an appropriate balance between renter and property owner rights and was satisfied that the offence provisions for these reforms are relevant and appropriate.

The committee recommended that implementation be monitored through the development of a framework for data collection about how residential tenancies are managed and ended and that the Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy work closely with community housing providers to align headleasing contractual practices with the changes in the bill.

The committee supported the proposed amendments to support renters experiencing domestic and family violence and was heartened by evidence to the inquiry that demonstrated these reforms have been effective at the front line. The committee noted and welcomed the department's advice that it will continue to work with relevant stakeholders to develop and support implementation of measures to support better outcomes for renters experiencing domestic and family violence.

The committee also supported the proposed amendments to prescribe minimum housing standards for all Queensland rental accommodation to meet basic safety, security and functionality standards but recommended that close monitoring and evaluation be undertaken of these reforms to inform consideration of whether stronger compliance mechanisms are needed in the future.

The committee acknowledged the important role that pets play for many Queensland households and supported the proposed amendments in the bill to make it easier for people to rent with pets. The committee report also noted calls for reform that would enable renters to make minor changes to their homes and the impact this would have on the renters' wellbeing and safety and encouraged the department to ensure the views expressed to the inquiry by stakeholders are considered in the development of future minor modification reform proposals.

The committee noted the broad support for the proposed amendments to the Retirement Villages Act 1999 to exempt resident operated retirement villages from mandatory buyback requirements and recommended that the department ensure accessible advice is provided to villages that may be eligible to ensure they can navigate the exemption process efficiently and effectively.

I again thank the members of the Community Support and Services Committee for their detailed review of the bill. I welcome the committee's recommendations emphasising the importance of clear implementation guidance for affected stakeholders and sectors as well as ongoing monitoring and evaluation of reform outcomes.

If the bill is passed, the department will work with government and sector partners to develop and implement a monitoring and evaluation framework to measure the effectiveness and impact of rental law reforms and to ensure materials are available to support stakeholders to transition to and implement these important reforms to Queensland's rental laws. The department will also closely engage with community housing providers to ensure headleasing contractual arrangements are aligned with the changes progressed in the bill and with resident operated retirement villages to ensure they can easily navigate the process for seeking an exemption from the buyback requirements.

The committee noted in its report that many submissions to its inquiry highlighted that renters needed reforms to make it easier for them to make minor changes to their rental property, particularly people with disability and those experiencing domestic and family violence who need these modifications to live independently and safely in their homes. The Palaszczuk government is committed to progressing stage 2 rental law reforms. We recognise that there are benefits for all stakeholders in

engaging in detailed planning work to ensure a smooth and effective implementation of stage 1 reforms, which must be the immediate focus of our efforts. Importantly, I can confirm for the House that minor modifications reform will continue to be progressed as a priority in stage 2 of our renting reforms.

Further engagement is needed with stakeholders to determine where the appropriate balance lies between renter and property owner interests on this issue. Significant work is also being progressed nationally to improve accessible housing, particularly for seniors and people with disability. That will impact what needs to be achieved in Queensland's rental laws to support and encourage accessible housing in the rental market. As such, it was important for these reforms to be part of the next stage of reform in order to allow that national work to develop. In progressing stage 2 reforms in the first half of 2022, the Queensland government will engage with key stakeholders to define the next tranche of issues to be addressed, explore reform options and design workable solutions and of course consult on them.

Minor issues have been identified in the bill, and I intend to move amendments during consideration in detail to address these. Stakeholder submissions to the committee's inquiry into the bill suggested several amendments to improve clarity and enhance implementation of the reforms. I will move an amendment to include an explicit statement in proposed new sections 308E and 381E providing for the effect of a notice ending tenancy interest if there is more than one renter, that the tenancy agreement continues on the same terms between the rental property owner and the remaining renters. This will remove any doubt about the operation of the domestic and family violence reforms and the impact of a notice ending tenancy interest where there is more than one renter named in a tenancy agreement.

Concerns were also raised that the definition of 'immediate family' for the proposed additional ground of owner occupation in new section 290G was too narrow and did not take into account the family structures and relationships of culturally diverse communities like, for instance, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. I will move an amendment to ensure the family relationships to be recognised for the purposes of a notice to leave for owner occupation align with existing terms in the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008. This change will reduce legislative complexity and recognise a wider range of family relationships, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's traditional and customary family relationships.

I will also move amendments to apply offences and penalties for misuse of notices to leave for rooming accommodation agreements. This will ensure offences proposed in the bill for ending tenancies reforms apply to both residential and tenancy and rooming accommodation to ensure all renters are protected from misuse of notices to leave.

I will also move two additional amendments to correct minor drafting issues identified in the bill. The first will correct a minor cross-referencing error between amendments to section 253 of the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008 commencing on assent and later amendments to the same section that will commence on proclamation. This amendment will ensure accurate cross-referencing when all amendments have commenced.

The second set of these amendments will ensure appropriate arrangements are in place for matters considered urgent applications to the tribunal that account for the differing commencement of reforms implemented by the bill. These amendments will correct drafting errors to ensure that applications to the tribunal about notices to leave without-grounds continue to be urgent applications until the ending tenancies reforms commence by proclamation and are then omitted by the act.


This bill fulfils the Palaszczuk government's election commitment to deliver stage 1 of *A better renting future reform roadmap*. This includes reforms requiring reasonable grounds for all tenancy termination, making it easier to keep pets and ensuring all rental homes adhere to basic standards of safety and security. It also delivers our election commitment to swiftly implement amendments to the Retirement Villages Act to exempt resident operated retirement villages from mandatory buyback provisions to address the findings of the independent review of the time frame for exit payments in retirement villages.

Of course, these reforms are part of the Palaszczuk government's broader Housing Strategy, which includes our current action plan, released earlier this year and supported by a \$2.9 billion investment including a \$1 billion Housing Investment Fund. This is the largest concentrated investment in social housing in Queensland's history, and I am very proud to be part of a government that is committed to social and affordable housing in this way.

I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to this bill, including those who submitted the more than 150,000 responses received through extensive community and stakeholder consultation in 2018 and 2019. These submissions, as well as those received during the parliamentary committee

process, included the personal stories of thousands of Queenslanders, and their contributions have been incredibly valuable. A wide range of stakeholders and peak bodies have also been committed to this journey of reform with the government for a number of years, and I would also like to thank them for their hard work. I also take this opportunity to recognise Minister Mick de Brenni for his hard work on these reforms in the last term of government as the former minister for housing.

This bill proposes a balanced set of reforms that modernises Queensland's rental laws and provides the solid groundwork for further reform during the term of government. I look forward to the debate today. Obviously, as I have already stated, I continue to look to the horizon in terms of stage 2 of the reforms, which we have made the commitment to work very swiftly to progress in the near future. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (12.07 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate of the Housing Legislation Amendment Bill 2021. Over one-third of the estimated 1.65 million households in Queensland rent. Families with children are the largest renting cohort, followed by lone persons and couples without children. Ninety per cent of Queensland's rental housing is provided by private property owners. In 2018-19, 13 per cent of Queensland taxpayers reported having a stake in rental property, increasing by 18 per cent over the previous 10 years. Across Australia, 1.86 million households owned a residential property other than their usual residence, and 17 per cent of those households were Queensland based. Rental property vacancy rates have tightened across almost every council or region in Queensland, with vacancy rates in most regions below 1.5 per cent. The rental market is considered tight when the vacancy rate is below 2.5 per cent. Laws that govern the renting sector are important. For all these reasons, this chamber must get this legislation right. It is very important that we strike a fair and reasonable balance between the rights of tenants and the rights of landlords/property owners.

Tenants deserve a property that is safe and fit for living. They deserve to have the security of living in a house for the length of their agreed lease. As much as possible, they deserve to make this house their home. Property owners expect that their property will be maintained well, that the tenant will be a good neighbour and that the rent is paid on time. Neither tenants nor landlords should be demonised. Very few tenants cause problems and very few landlords are unreasonable and it is wrong to demonise either. If we get the balance wrong, we risk unintended consequences. If there are unnecessary and unreasonable impositions put on property owners who wish to rent their home, there will be consequences. We should not forget that most landlords are mum-and-dad investors; they are not property moguls, and the consequence if we get the balance wrong is that these property owners will take their houses off the rental market and that will affect the very people who can be the most vulnerable—those who wish to rent.

The LNP believes that there is a number of changes in this legislation that are positive, including the amendments pertaining to domestic violence issues, and we wholeheartedly support them. Similarly, the LNP is supportive of the amendments to the Retirement Villages Act 1999 which exempt freehold resident operated retirement villages from existing statutory buyback requirements. This is why the LNP will not oppose the Housing Legislation Amendment Bill. However, we will be moving amendments on two key issues of this bill, and those two issues concern keeping pets and the proposed changes to periodic agreements.

I think it is important to go through the journey of getting to this legislation. In November 2019 the Queensland government released *A better renting future reform roadmap* and the government set out a two-stage reform pathway, and this road map followed on from the 2018 Open Doors to Renting Reform consultation. During these processes—and there are no other words for it—radical aspects of rental reform were canvassed, including the right for tenants to make renovations to a property, the right for tenants to keep pets and a push for long-term fixed leases and regulating rent increases.

One of the issues that was canvassed was that the end of a lease term would not be grounds to end that lease. Thanks to a campaign run by the LNP opposition and the Real Estate Institute of Queensland, those more radical views canvassed did not progress to this bill, but that allowed the more radical elements of this parliament—the Greens—to act as proxies for the left of the Labor Party that would have loved to get those so-called reforms put through, but for once the Left lost the vote and the Greens had to take the mantle for them. I thought this minister had an ounce of credibility, but that was totally eliminated during her speech when she talked about the nonsense of the LNP having some sort of alliance with the Greens. Talk about the pot calling the kettle black!

Government members interjected.

Mr MANDER: I take that interjection, because in the short time that the minister spoke I thought that I would go through the election results and look at how many Labor seats benefited from Greens preferences. We start in alphabetical order: Aspley, Barron River, Bulimba, Cairns, Caloundra,

Capalaba, Cook, Cooper. I got to the Cs and I ran out of time. Then I thought that I would look at some of the ministers: the member for McConnel got 35 per cent of the primary vote and the Greens 28 per cent. They are coming after you! You will not be here next time! Greenslopes, Springwood, Gaven, Redcliffe—all of these ministers are over there because of Greens preferences, and they have the hide to come in here and say that they are not affiliated with the Greens. The Greens are running the radical elements of this bill that they would love to run but have somehow lost.

Ms ENOCH: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance to the bill that we are debating. Can I get your guidance on that please?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Member for Everton, I acknowledge that you were, in your most recent comments, responding to some provocation from members on my right, including the member for McConnel, but I would ask you to please bring your comments back to the bill at hand.

Mr MANDER: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I got out what I wanted to say. Thank you. I appreciate that.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr MANDER: I have to take the interjection, Mr Deputy Speaker. Yes, they have a lot of them because of Greens preferences, so let us never forget that. To have the temerity and the hide to come into this House and claim that the LNP has some alliance with the Greens, man oh man do they have a hide!

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

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister, I think I know what your point of order is going to be, and that is relevance?

Ms ENOCH: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes. Member for Everton, you have had a pretty good go in responding to those interjections, and you did have another go just then. Could I ask you, again, with the greatest sternness, to please confine your comments to the long title of the bill?

Mr MANDER: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I do want to make mention of the Greens bill that, as I said, adopted the more radical elements that the Labor government would have loved to introduce but did not have the courage to do it.

The REIQ noted that the reforms proposed in the Greens bill, if passed, would have an adverse consequence for the Queensland property sector as a whole and specific consequences for the rental sector, and I agree with that. Further to this, the REIQ and the Property Owners Association of Queensland stated that the proposed amendments would destabilise the Queensland rental market, with lessors and property owners considering selling their rental properties. That hits the nail on the head in that it is incredibly important that we get the balance right and that we also respect the rights of landlords and property owners, because if we do not it is the tenants who will be the victims of having fewer properties on the market, and that is the last thing we need at the moment in this current climate.

Let us talk about this bill. This bill will amend the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008, the Retirement Villages Act 1999, the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Regulation 2009 and the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Regulation 2020. As I flagged, the LNP supports a number of the proposals in this bill. The domestic violence protections introduced for tenants experiencing domestic and family violence to end their tenancy quickly are fair and reasonable. The intent is for the tenant experiencing domestic and family violence to stay safely or leave quickly, with liability for end-of-tenancy costs capped to seven days notice.

Likewise, the bill makes a number of amendments to the Retirement Villages Act 1999 to exempt freehold resident operated retirement villages from existing statutory buyback requirements. Introducing exemptions for these types of retirement villages was flagged by LNP members in 2017 and 2019 respectively and I am glad that the government has finally seen the sense in this and made these changes, albeit years later. I want to give credit to the former shadow minister for housing, the member for Burleigh, who highlighted these issues when these changes were being made; but he was ignored.

The changes to minimum housing standards are, on the whole, sensible. The changes to the RTRA Act to encourage compliance, clarify repair and maintenance obligations and support enforcement will be supported by the LNP, but the execution of this legislation cannot go unchecked.

The LNP has concerns in relation to a couple of issues in the bill. This bill establishes the following as the only grounds for a lessor to refuse a tenant's request for approval to keep a pet at the premises—

- (a) keeping the pet would exceed a reasonable number of animals being kept at the premises;
- (b) the premises are unsuitable for keeping the pet because of a lack of appropriate fencing, open space or another thing necessary to humanely accommodate the pet;
- (c) keeping the pet is likely to cause damage to the premises or inclusions that could not practicably be repaired for a cost that is less than the amount of the rental bond for the premises;
- (d) keeping the pet would pose an unacceptable risk to the health and safety of a person, including, for example, because the pet is venomous;
- (e) keeping the pet would contravene a law;
- (f) keeping the pet would contravene a body corporate by-law or park rule applying to the premises;
- (g) the tenant has not agreed to the reasonable conditions proposed by the lessor for approval to keep the pet;
- (h) the animal stated in the request is not a pet;
- (i) if the premises is a moveable dwelling premises—keeping the pet would contravene a condition of a licence applying to the premises;
- (j) another ground prescribed by regulation.

These changes remove a lessor's right to simply refuse a tenant outright to have a pet without reason. Many landlords entering into new rental agreements once this legislation is passed could rightly feel aggrieved that they will no longer have the final right to advise the tenants whether or not they can have a pet on their property.

Our serious concern is that the amendments will require that a lessor can only refuse a pet request from a tenant on these prescribed reasonable grounds that cannot be rectified by reasonable conditions. This bill means that the onus has now flipped totally onto the landlord to justify why they do not want an animal on the property that they own. To make it even more difficult, the property owner must respond to a request to keep the pet within 14 days and if they do not respond within that specified time the request will be deemed to be approved.

The LNP strongly believe in property rights. We believe that people who own a rental property should not have to go through this type of rigmarole to knock back a request for a pet. Many landlords will choose to allow their tenants to have pets on their properties. It is their right to do that. We also believe that the opposite should still apply. The current legislation is that they should not have to state a reason to reject the request for a pet. We all know that animals cause damage. We all know that you can enter a house and know immediately that a dog or a cat has been in the house because of the odour. The property owner deserves to retain the right for that not to happen. We are very much against the fact that the onus has been flipped around totally so that the landlord now has to have reasons for why the pet cannot be accepted.

Of great concern to us are the changes to the tenancy laws that are relevant to periodic tenancy. Again just so we know the journey, a recommendation in the review, which is also part of the Greens bill—and now their amendments, I imagine—is that in a fixed-term contract the end of the term was not to be a grounds for finishing the lease. I have not heard anything more ridiculous in my life. In a fixed-term contract—a one-year lease, a two-year lease, a six-month lease—the end date was not to be a valid reason to end the lease. That is ridiculous!

The left of the Labor party lost that fight, they realised that that was a battle that they were not going to win, so they took that out. However, they have applied basically the same requirements for a periodic tenancy. We have fixed-term leases and we have periodic leases. Fixed-term leases are usually longer term leases. Periodic leases are exactly that: for a period—usually a shorter period because that suits both the tenants and the landlords. They do not want to be locked in to a longer term lease for whatever reasons there might be.

This bill proposes to give tenants a right to remain in the tenanted premises—that is, to end a periodic agreement without-grounds is no longer possible. This would prevent lessors having control in relation to the length of tenancy agreements. It would severely impact the lessor's right to tenant selection. Currently lessors must give two months notice to move a tenant on and a tenant may give 14 days notice. This will put an end to flexible rental agreements.

The REIQ says this bill is proposing to give tenants a unilateral right to remain in the tenanted premises for as long as they wish. In a submission to the committee one lessor commented that tenants who refused to sign a new lease would be forced into a periodic tenancy and the lessor or owner would have no means to remove the tenant. They are right. This bill will basically create a lease in perpetuity.


As I mentioned earlier, this will have a negative impact for both landlords and tenants. In fact, I predict it will be the end of periodic leases. What landlord is going to engage in a periodic lease when they have no certainty that they can end that lease? It will be tenants who will be disadvantaged by this. This is a crazy change to legislation. It will have unintended consequences.

To go back to the beginning, changes to laws in the rental sector are important. There are changes in this bill that the LNP supports. We will support the bill because the majority of it is fair and reasonable. The aspects that I have mentioned today are not fair and reasonable and lean towards tenants rather than landlords and therefore are not fair and reasonable for both parties. Ultimately I think it will lead to disadvantaging tenants because there will be less motivation for people to invest in the property market for rental if they feel that these impositions are too hard and not worth the trouble. We will introduce amendments to change those two aspects to keep the status quo.

It worries me to hear the minister talk about future reforms. I do not know if my colleagues know what some of those future reforms might look like. Some reforms that have been canvassed are rental controls—controlling rent increases—and allowing people to make modifications to a house that they do not own without even telling the landlord. These reforms were obviously too crazy to get through the first stage. Those opposite are hoping that over a period they might soften their own people to get this through the Labor caucus. I have some fear and trepidation about stage 2 rental reforms. Once again we support the bill, but we will be moving amendments to change those aspects that are clearly unfair.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Order, members. Member for Kawana, if you are going to interject, please do it from your own seat.

 **Ms McMILLAN** (Mansfield—ALP) (12.29 pm): Whilst I rise to support the Housing Legislation Amendment Bill 2021, I begin by taking a moment to reflect on the contribution made by the member for Everton. Some of the content shared by the member, as always, was silenced by the behaviour he chose. When I think about the psychology of that approach, the following questions emerge: is yelling reflective of a frustration with a personal lack of repertoire of language; is it a belief that the louder one yells the more others will listen; or is it a deliberate intent to intimidate? Regardless, yelling at others has never been acceptable, with the exception perhaps of a sporting context or to warn someone facing a dangerous situation. This continued pattern of behaviour—yelling in this professional environment, yelling at others including many women who sit opposite, yelling at a public servant during estimates—

Mr MANDER: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance. What has this got to do with the bill?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Member for Mansfield, you have had a little bit of leeway in terms of a response to the member. I ask that you please demonstrate relevance to the bill before the House. Continue your address but make it relevant to the bill.

Ms McMILLAN: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I appreciate your guidance. I commend the minister for her courageous leadership while often the victim of being yelled at—disgracefully—as a First Nations woman. I commend her for her leadership during this unprecedented economic context.

The Queensland rental market continues to experience very low vacancy rates. That is not unique to Queensland or to Australia. Annual price growth and yield are reaching record highs in areas of the United States, New Zealand and Europe. The increase in the price of residential property is far outperforming wage growth. As we transition out of the COVID-19 pandemic, we must have modern rental laws that protect renters and support stability in the market.

In November 2019, the Queensland government released *A better renting future reform roadmap*. The government set out a two-stage reform pathway. Stage 1 of the reform focuses on tenants and residents to enforce their existing rights and to ensure all Queensland rental accommodation is safe, secure and functional. During the consultation process for the stage 1 reform and the Housing Legislation Amendment Bill 2021, there was widespread support for the establishment of minimum housing standards. The legislative reforms implemented by the bill are supported by the significant \$1.9 billion Queensland Housing and Homelessness Action Plan 2021-2025 and the \$1 billion Housing Investment Fund to boost supply and increase housing and homelessness support across Queensland. The Palaszczuk Labor government is proud of its record and of this important investment.

The Queensland Housing Strategy 2017-2027 is a 10-year framework driving key reforms and targeted investment across the housing continuum to ensure Queenslanders have access to safe, secure and affordable housing. The Housing Strategy aims to ensure confidence in housing markets and improve protections and certainty for consumers and industry alike by reforming and modernising

the housing legislation framework. The Queensland Housing Strategy Action Plan 2017-2020 detailed a commitment to regulatory reforms to improve consumer protections for all Queenslanders accessing houses in the rental market and to provide greater certainty for industry.

The Queensland Housing and Homelessness Action Plan 2021-2025 reaffirms the Palaszczuk Labor government's commitment to deliver rental law reform, including minimum housing standards, that better protects renters and property owners alike and that improves stability in Queensland's rental market. The Housing Legislation Amendment Bill 2021 delivers key housing strategy objectives, including to review and modernise rental laws, to ensure vulnerable community members are supported to sustain tenancies to facilitate their social, economic and cultural participation—values that are important to a Labor government—and to support a fair and responsive housing system that enhances the safety and dignity of all Queenslanders.

The bill delivers stage 1 rental law reforms to improve safety, security and certainty for the Queensland rental market by ending without-grounds evictions and providing appropriate approved reasons to end a tenancy. This is a much needed and important step towards providing more certainty, transparency and accountability for all parties in the rental sector.

The amendments around the managing and ending of tenancies achieve an appropriate balance between the rights of renters and the rights of lessors, making it easier for renters to have a pet by requiring that property owners can refuse only on prescribed grounds. It is a Labor government that understands the importance of pets and other animals for many individuals and families across Queensland. Just because a Queenslanders is renting does not mean they should be denied the warmth and love that owning a pet provides.

The bill will ensure that renters have confidence that their rental property is safe, secure and functional by prescribing minimum housing standards. This is a basic need and a basic right of tenants and renters. The introduction of these prescribed minimum housing standards will require all Queensland rental accommodation to meet minimum safety, security and functionality standards.

Ensuring renters experiencing domestic and family violence have options to end a tenancy quickly is important and to be able to do so with limited liability for end-of-lease costs or to change the locks in their rental property without the owner's consent. These amendments make permanent the temporary domestic and family violence protections introduced through the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Regulation 2020.

Where views were diverse, particularly the managing and ending of tenancy agreements and keeping of pets at a premise, the bill seeks to strike the appropriate balance between the rights of the tenant and the rights of the lessor. I welcome the comments made by our minister that some of the issues raised during the consultation process for this bill and the submitters' comments on those issues raised during this inquiry will further inform stage 2 of the government's renting reforms, particularly in relation to minor modifications.

On behalf of the committee I thank those individuals and organisations who have made written submissions on the bill and who have provided their evidence at the public hearings. I also thank sincerely our parliamentary services staff and the Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy for their guidance and support. I congratulate the minister on this work and I commend this bill to the House.



Mr BENNETT (Burnett—LNP) (12.37 pm): Carrying on from the chair, it is only appropriate that the committee and the secretariat are acknowledged when commenting on these reforms. A lot of work has gone into this. I rise to make my contribution to the bill and, like many, support some of the proposals and reforms. On the key objectives in the reforms, no-one would object to rental properties being safe and secure and meeting minimum housing standards, especially when people are experiencing domestic and family violence. I make that clear. However, I have some reservations about several of the reforms.

In trying to legislate in the interests of tenants, I think the government is effectively eroding the fundamental rights and decision-making powers of owners in respect to many matters that affect them and their properties. Many have reported that these changes will see current investors leaving the rental market, that its reforms will introduce disincentives for future investment decisions and that, with the government now fully responsible for what is seen as a housing crisis, this legislation may have detrimental effects and impacts on the rental market. It has been reported that Queensland will see a further reduction in housing supply for renters, increased rent and a further contribution to the strain that we are all seeing in our electorates. Many have raised concerns about the lack of clarity and have

highlighted the failure to take into account relevant legal and practical considerations. We consider that the bill inappropriately tips the balance towards the rights of the tenant and we worry about the impacts on lessors.

During the inquiry, the committee received hundreds of submissions from individual lessors, property managers and industry groups such as the Real Estate Institute Queensland, the Property Owners' Association of Queensland, the Urban Development Institute of Australia, and many more. They all put their concerns to the committee in submissions. It was important to understand the impacts of the legislation and many talked about the statistics.

Through the Australian Bureau of Statistics, we know that 36 per cent of Queenslanders rent. It is a significant number and we really do need to make sure that legislation to deal with this large cohort of sometimes vulnerable Queenslanders is done and done properly. As private property owners provide over 90 per cent of Queensland rental housing, they are critical to any solutions that may affect them, so my concerns about the legislation are around the serious issues that are not being addressed.

There has already been talk about the periodic agreements. We share submitters' concerns that the removal of a lessor's right to issue without-grounds notices, we hope, are not problematic, but I guess we will wait and see with the review periods. The bill eliminating these agreements is something which will disadvantage tenants and lessors alike, and we hope that there are some flexibilities that will allow this important reform to be dealt with.

We question the perverse outcomes that will undermine the very tenet that we are trying to save and provide an opportunity. It is important that we look at what the Queensland Law Society said in their submission—

It would seem likely that lessors will prefer not to enter into periodic tenancies with a tenant when the fixed term agreement expires, given that under the Bill, there will be limited capacity to bring the periodic tenancy to an end. Instead, if a lessor is not in a position to grant a further fixed term, a lessor will likely require a tenant to leave at the end of the fixed term agreement ...

and on it goes. At the public hearing we also heard from the Law Society that—

We are concerned that the legislation will have adverse unintended consequences; for example, discouraging periodic tenancy, increasing the loss of housing stock for short-term rental, and requiring parties in conflict to remain in a landlord/tenant relationship. The law generally aims to facilitate the resolution of conflict, but this bill has the potential to entrench a conflictual relationship.

The REIQ made a submission that I felt was fairly on point—

The abolition of the ability to terminate a periodic tenancy undermines the whole point of parties entering periodic tenancy ...

They went on to talk about the matter using a lot of emotive language. I think at the end of the day their concerns have been mirrored by many who talk about it, removing the landlord's ability to terminate at the end of a term and questioning the whole point of the periodic tenancies.

The pets issue will be talked about at length during the debate. I do not have a rental property—I have in the past—but I cannot believe that we cannot get some sensibility around acknowledging the issue and how important pets are to people in Queensland in some cases. However, we must find the right balance with the owners' rights being a strong input into the discussion. The whole thing about pushing it off to QCAT or another arbitrary body to resolve I find somewhat frustrating. The REIQ talked about insurance not automatically covering damage or maybe accidental damage, and on it goes.

I notice that we have not put much time into the amendments to the Retirement Villages Act in contributions to date, but I do want to make sure that we talk about that at length as one of the areas I am very interested in. The amendments to the Retirement Villages Act to exempt freehold resident operated retirement villages from the statutory buyback requirement are very welcomed.

The opposition members of the committee, as we said in our statements, welcomed the changes. A lot of historical matters are thrown around this place, but we note that the government was warned about the adverse impact of the mandatory buyback provisions both in 2017 and 2019. I will talk about some of those villages in a moment, but many would question how long it took for the government to sort out the issue because those impacts have affected vulnerable Queenslanders, members of our community and a lot of business owners.

The objectives of the bill in relation to the Retirement Villages Act include getting rid of the very issues that we warned about on numerous occasions—the buyback requirements. I want to be clear that I fully support the process of people in retirement villages not having to wait for their appropriate settlement payments. I acknowledge the work that the government put in with consultation and in trying to navigate these very difficult and technical legislation areas.

The first errors came in 2017 with the Housing Legislation (Building Better Futures) Amendment Act. Again in 2019 the Retirement Villages Act was further amended by an omnibus bill, the Health and Other Legislation Amendment Act, and the government also had an independent review panel tell them again what was happening. We know that that report was given to the minister in September 2020. The summary of the report's recommendations around exemptions from buybacks for retirement villages was spoken about at length. With that historic context, I want to provide some examples of this side of the House wanting to move reasoned and sensible amendments during the debate and that the same changes have now been enacted some five years on.

On 3 April 2019, during the debate the member for Kawana mentioned the amendments that we were going to move. He used the words 'reasoned and sensible amendments' and the need to correct the errors of the minister. Shadow minister Bates, during the same debate on 3 April 2019, talked about the proposed amendments and the need to fix the issues that were going to confront us. The member for Burleigh also spoke about the problems identified in the 2017 legislation, highlighting the impacts particularly on the Pebble Beach Freehold Retirement Community at Bribie with the legislation requiring freehold title holders—these are individuals—under the government buyback proposals having to raise \$25 million to pay out exit provisions. How did we possibly expect people who live in these villages to come up with that sort of money? That is what we were trying to get across in very detailed and sensible amendments.

Speeches by the then members for Caloundra and Nicklin highlighted that during committee hearings it was explained many times that at least 10 retirement villages that were owned essentially by residents would be impacted by the problems that the legislation was going to cause. The members for Scenic Rim and Coomera, during the debate on 3 April 2019, raised many issues including the part 9 changes that were never really listened to. The members for Southern Downs and Southport, during the debate, spoke to the support of a better system of buyback, but highlighted the need for government to support the opposition amendments.

It was not just the LNP exposing the problems that the Labor legislation caused; many media reports highlighted the flaws. The *Brisbane Times* on 4 April reported the problems identified. The *Gold Coast Bulletin* on 12 November 2019 had the headline: 'Gold Coast retirement: "We are seriously stressed financially and mentally but the government doesn't seem to care."' The story focuses on the serious impacts at Sunny Ridge Garden Retirement Village. In a media release, the shadow minister, the member for Burleigh, stated—


The changes made to the Retirement Village Act have no place in the Health Bill.

The Palaszczuk Labor Government is out of touch and doesn't understand the damages these changes will cause to freehold retirement villages operated by residents.

Labor failed to get the previous Bill right in 2017 and the Minister should have realised that a freehold title sale process does not involve an exit entitlement.

The LNP is concerned these villages may be forced to close or remove themselves from the protection ..."

I have run out of time.

 **Ms LUI** (Cook—ALP) (12.47 pm): I rise to speak on the Housing Legislation Amendment Bill 2021. In doing so I would like to acknowledge the Minister for Housing, the Hon. Leeanne Enoch, for her hard work and commitment to making housing fairer to protect the rights and liberty of all Queenslanders and in particular those who are most vulnerable.

The Housing Legislation Amendment Bill 2021 was introduced into the Legislative Assembly and referred to the Community Support and Services Committee on 18 June 2021 for examination of the bill. Between 18 June and 20 July this year, the committee received a written briefing on the bill, written advice from the department in response to matters raised in submissions, held a public hearing and received a public briefing on the bill from the Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy. I note that a transcript of the proceedings is published on the committee's website.

On 25 July 2021, the committee invited stakeholders and subscribers to make written submissions on the bill with almost 900 submissions received. The committee conducted a number of public hearings and consulted a wide range of submitters from renters, lessors and property managers who shared their experiences of the rental sector in Queensland. A number of common themes were shared with the committee including calls for accessible, sustainable and affordable housing and certainty in tenure, the ability to rent with pets and better housing standards. Many submitters expressed their wishes to make minor modifications to their homes and better support the most vulnerable groups in society. Submissions also talked about the actions of property managers and landlords' management practices, including entry and privacy issues, notices and evictions and dispute resolution processes.

The bill's objective is to deliver key elements of the government's Queensland Housing Strategy 2017-2027. The bill aims to do this by amending the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008, the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Regulation 2009 and the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Regulation 2020 to: support tenants and residents to enforce their existing rights by removing the ability for lessors and providers to end tenancies without-grounds; provide an expanded suite of additional approved reasons for lessors/providers and tenants/residents to end a tenancy; ensure all Queensland rental properties are safe, secure and functional by prescribing minimum housing standards and introducing compliance mechanisms to strengthen the ability to enforce these standards; strengthen rental law protections for people experiencing domestic and family violence; and support parties to residential leases reach agreement about renting with pets.

The bill also amends the Retirement Villages Act 1999 to: provide certainty, security and peace of mind to residents of freehold resident operated retirement villages; implement the intent of recommendations made during an independent review of time frames for payment of exit entitlements in Queensland retirement villages; and create a framework to exempt freehold resident operated retirement villages from the 18-month mandatory buyback requirements under the Retirement Villages Act 1999.


Everyone deserves a safe and secure place to call home. The government's objectives for minimum housing standards will ensure that renters are supported to enforce their existing tenancy rights to repairs and maintenance, including to ensure the property is clean, in good repair and fit for habitation; that rental accommodation is safe, secure and functional; that livability of rental accommodation is improved; and that rental laws protect vulnerable people in the rental market. The minimum housing standards are categorised under safety, security and reasonable functionality and apply to all tenancy arrangements and housing types.

This bill will ensure that safety and security are met so that premises are weatherproof and structurally sound, fixtures and fittings must be in good repair and not likely to cause injuries to a person, there are locks on windows and doors, the property is free of vermin, damp and mould and includes privacy coverings. Reasonable functionality will ensure that properties have adequate plumbing and drainage, bathrooms and toilets are functioning, connected and private, if a kitchen is supplied then a functioning cooktop must be provided and if a laundry is included it should have fixtures necessary for a functional laundry other than whitegoods.

These standards will be supported by several amendments to the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008 to encourage compliance, clarify repair and maintenance obligations and support enforcement. These include: extending the time the renter has to return the entry condition report from three days to seven days to allow them sufficient time to inspect the premises; requiring the property owner to provide details about nominated repairers for emergency repairs; increasing the cost that can be authorised by the renter for emergency repairs from the equivalent of two weeks rent to the equivalent of four weeks rent; allowing property managers to arrange emergency repairs to the amount allowed for renters to arrange emergency repairs; introducing tribunal repair orders with a continuing penalty offence for contravening a repair order, which will be provided to the RTA for enforcement; introducing additional grounds for renters to end an agreement in some circumstances if a property does not comply with minimum housing standards or the owner has not complied with the tribunal repair order; and allowing property owners to apply to the tribunal for an extension of time to comply with the repair order.

The minimum housing standards will be phased in to allow property owners sufficient time to meet their obligations applying to new tenancies entered into from 1 September 2023 and to all tenancies from 1 September 2024. These reforms will achieve a good balance between property owners and renters and give renters and property owners the confidence that their rental properties meet basic safety, security and functionality standards.

In closing, I thank my committee for their hard work in the examination of the bill. I thank committee chair, Corrine McMillan, the member for Mansfield, other committee members, the committee secretariat, Hansard and all involved in bringing this bill together. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Scenic Rim—LNP) (12.54 pm): With a couple of exceptions in relation to the minimum standards for housing and those relating to pets, this bill provides a lot of false hope for renters. I say that as someone who has worked in an industry as a solicitor where we have often had to deal with matters of residential tenancies and also as someone who rented extensively while I was

studying about 20 years ago and as someone who has been in the position of a lessor. This bill provides false hope to renters because of the unintended consequences that it will have on the rental market. The member for Everton went into some of them.

The issue confronting the rental market, especially around Brisbane and South-East Queensland, is one of high demand and not enough supply. That is driving the price up. The only answer to that is more supply and not the ham-fisted, half-baked reforms to the residential tenancy laws contained in this bill. What the residential tenancy market needs is more supply. That means more private investment or more government investment. We know that government investment is failing and that the social housing waiting list across the whole of the state continues to blow out. With reforms like this it will make it even harder to entice people to enter into the private housing market as lessors.

The biggest issue in this bill that will affect the market is the changes to periodic tenancies. I think that is a misnomer. They are wrongly named as periodic tenancies. What they should be called after this bill passes is perpetual tenancies or perpetual leases. The grounds upon which they can be ended by a lessor are so narrow that they almost become a perpetual lease—only to be ended when the tenant chooses to end them. What person in their right mind would, as a lessor, willingly enter into such an arrangement?

There are conditions in the bill that can be triggered to enable a periodic tenancy to end, but they are extremely tight. They entail a course of action that many people, as landlords or property owners, will not want to take. They are things like selling the house or undertaking extensive renovations or moving back into the property themselves. If a person has brought a property as an investor for the purposes of renting it, these are not options they will take lightly. They will find themselves in a situation where it is very difficult to end a periodic tenancy. That will lead to more fixed-term agreements being entered into.

Fixed-term agreements can obviously be ended at the end of the fixed term. The ability to end a fixed-term agreement at the end of a fixed term is maintained in this bill. I know there are those in the government and the Greens who want to take away that ability as well—that is, for fixed-term agreements to end at the end of the fixed term. The unintended consequence is that we are going to see landlords or lessors always end fixed-term agreements at the end of the fixed term rather than in the situation now where if a fixed-term agreement comes to an end it rolls into a periodic tenancy, whether it be fortnightly or monthly. At the moment lessors can end that with some notice. If they cannot end that arrangement in the future after this bill passes what we are going to see is every fixed-term agreement terminated at the end of the term because no landlord in their right mind will allow that arrangement to roll into a periodic tenancy that they cannot get out of or if they can get out of it it takes a lot of time, effort and money. I know that there are penalty provisions where lessors give false notices about the need to move into a property or to renovate it. That is good. That is about putting some teeth behind the provisions, but the provisions should not be there in the first place.

What we are going to see is students and other families who need the flexibility of periodic tenancies not being able to access them as easily in the future. Not only will we see all of those tenancies terminating at the end of fixed terms, but we will see less flexibility for the very people who need them. The REIQ agreed in the committee hearings that this is not going to do anything to address the supply issues we have in the market. Nor is it going to do anything to fix the issues when it comes to people being forced to leave premises with short notice or in circumstances where they do not have anywhere to go.

This bill offers a lot of false hope for renters and a number of major blows for lessors as well. The biggest one is the ability for periodic tenancies to be ended on notice being taken out of the law of Queensland. It should not occur. It will not assist the overall rental market situation.

Before I close, I want to pick up on a comment made by the minister in relation to the Human Rights Act and the fact that the government has taken the view that it cannot legislate away the ability of a property owner to terminate a fixed-term agreement at the end of the term because it would impact their human rights. In this bill they are proposing that a property owner cannot end a tenancy agreement that is meant to go from month to month when they choose to do so. I do not know what the difference is between one and the other. There is no difference. That is just a red herring. It is just an excuse to curry favour with the Greens and some of the lefties in the Labor Party—some of the socialists and communists in the Labor Party who do not believe in private property rights and never will because it is not in their DNA, whereas we on this side of the House believe in private property rights and will always stand up for those property rights because it is the absolute backbone of the economy in Australia that has been—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Bush): Member, I will ask you to pause there.

Mr KRAUSE: Madam Deputy Speaker, I am actually concluding. If you allow me to say one more sentence, I will be finished. This offers false hope for renters. We are supporting the bill because there are some good provisions in it, but the amendments to be moved by the member for Everton should be supported.

Sitting suspended from 1.01 pm to 2.00 pm.



Mr SKELTON (Nicklin—ALP) (2.00 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Housing Legislation Amendment Bill 2021. In a climate where equity is being lost due to increased pressure on the housing market, this is an important piece of legislation. The Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008 regulates the residential rental market in Queensland and sets out the rights and obligations of renters and property owners in their tenancy arrangements.

On 24 April 2020, the Queensland government made the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Regulation 2020 to implement temporary regulatory measures to support the residential rental sector manage COVID-19 pandemic impacts on their tenancy arrangements, including protections for renters experiencing domestic and family violence. From 30 September 2020, the transition back to normal tenancy arrangements commenced with the eviction moratorium and measures implemented to support it coming to an end. Some important measures continue to 30 April 2022, including domestic and family violence protections, limited reletting costs for eligible renters and protection for renters against being listed in a tenancy database for COVID-19 rent arrears.

This bill is informed by the Queensland Housing Strategy 2017-2027, which is a 10-year framework driving key reforms and targeted investment across the housing continuum to ensure Queenslanders have access to safe, secure and affordable housing. The Housing Strategy aims to ensure confidence in housing markets, improve protections and certainty for consumers and industry by reforming and modernising the housing legislation framework.

The Queensland Housing Strategy Action Plan 2017-2020 committed to regulatory reforms to improve consumer protections for all Queenslanders accessing housing in the rental market and provide greater certainty for industry. The Queensland Housing and Homelessness Action Plan 2021-2025 reaffirms the Queensland government's commitment to deliver rental law reform, including minimum housing standards, that better protects renters and property owners, and improves stability in Queensland's rental market, which we all know is very volatile at present.

The Housing Legislation Amendment Bill 2021 delivers key Housing Strategy objectives including to review and modernise rental laws; ensure vulnerable community members are supported to sustain tenancies to facilitate their social, economic and cultural participation; and support a fair and responsive housing system that enhances the safety and dignity of all Queenslanders.

I recognise the role of the Community Support and Services Committee, of which I am a member, and my comrades on that committee.

An honourable member interjected.

Mr SKELTON: Of course. I acknowledge the work of the chair, the member for Mansfield, the secretariat and their hard work, Hansard, the departments and of course Minister Enoch—and what a comprehensive opening statement she made! Unfortunately, some members on the other side were not listening. I would also like to thank the thousands of individuals and representative bodies who contributed to the rental reform process either through the Open Doors to Renting Reform consultation program, providing feedback to the consultation regulatory impact statement or by making submissions to the committee.

The committee took into consideration almost 900 separate submissions including those from Tenants Queensland, Q Shelter, the Queensland Youth Housing Coalition, the Queensland Law Society, REIQ, the Urban Development Institute of Australia Queensland and the Property Council of Australia. There are so many groups that I cannot mention them all. I am proud to be a part of the Palaszczuk Labor government delivering on its commitment to make renting fairer for the 1.8 million Queenslanders who rent in this state. I am one of them and consider myself fortunate to have a good relationship with my landlord.

These new laws will ensure all Queensland rental premises meet minimum quality standards, ensuring homes are weatherproof and structurally sound; fixtures and fittings are in good repair; locks are appropriately fitted to all external doors and windows; premises are free of damp, mould or vermin—unless you have the LNP organiser living two doors down; and the tenant's privacy is adequately provided for.

The bill provides clear approved grounds for how a tenancy can be terminated. For a lessor, this can include: end of the agreed term under a fixed-term lease, significant repair or renovation needing to occur, sale of property and owner occupation.

Mr Mickelberg interjected.

Mr SKELTON: I take that interjection from the member for Buderim, but it appears he is mumbling. For a tenant, this can include property not being in good repair and not complying with minimum standards, or the lessor provided false or misleading information about the lease or property.

Mr Mickelberg: I'm surprised you can read.

Mr SKELTON: I take that interjection from the member for Buderim. I had the benefit of a great state school education, so I can read. Most importantly, this bill removes the ability for lessors to issue a notice to leave without-grounds, providing tenants with increased certainty and stability in a time of increased housing volatility.

The bill makes it easier for tenants to keep a pet, requiring a lessor to have reasonable grounds to refuse and respond in writing to any request within 14 days. The lessor will not be able to charge a pet bond or increase the rent in response to a request to keep a pet, ensuring renters with pets are on the same level playing field as those without pets.

This provision for the keeping of pets recognises the very real need for people in our community to have a place to call home. There are so many who are living alone or coping with illness. It is a fact that animals are therapeutic. It is also a fact that, for young families, pet ownership teaches children responsibility and care. It is long overdue in this country where pets mean so much that people now have a right to keep them in a rental property.

Also, the bill gives the landlord rights to refuse if the pets are unsuitable for the property—obviously no horses in flats and that type of thing.

Mr King: No ponies in flats.

Mr SKELTON: Yes. It opens a constructive dialogue between both parties that aims to protect the rights of both.

An honourable member: Small horses.

Mr SKELTON: There are mini horses. I take that interjection from the member.

Considerations have been made within the bill for those Queenslanders experiencing domestic and family violence while living in a rental property, making permanent the temporary provisions included in the COVID-19 regulations to enable those experiencing DFV to end their tenancies with seven days notice, with costs capped to that period, more easily accessing their bond refund without notifying other parties and ensuring that their information is handled confidentially. All parties agree to that. I think that is very important. This is a very important protection for people who are most in need from a compassionate government that is looking after vulnerable Queenslanders.

There are many more amendments that enhance the bill that it replaces. It is a significant piece of work. Like the other tenants in this state, I am glad of the changes and feel easier in knowing my rights as well as what is fair and reasonable to the people whose home I rent in. They are mum-and-dad investors like those we have heard about. It is my belief that most people whom this bill affects do the right thing.

This could have been contentious legislation—and some are trying to say that it is—if you are inclined to watch *A Current Affair* and see neglectful and destructive tenants or, in reverse, property owner slum lords. These types of incidents are rare and in the minority. This bill should go some way to allaying the fears and anxieties that are promoted by some in the media.

This is another great example of the Palaszczuk Labor government 'getting things done' for the people of Queensland. This legislation, alongside a record \$2.9 billion commitment to social housing, is indicative of a government turning every wheel to provide equitable housing and look after the welfare of all Queenslanders.

With this bill we have been come at by the far right and the extreme left. There were some interesting conversations before when a member in the chamber alluded to the fact that I might be a communist. If he is aware, Karl Marx famously said that property is theft, and we are aiming to protect those who own property—so go figure.

It is my view that the bill meets the aims it is designed to reach, the legislation is adequately balanced and considered, and the rights of lessors have not been unduly compromised, whilst inclusions have been made to accommodate tenants' rights. I will concur with the deputy chair that until tested we will not know where we are at, but we have to make these changes. I commend this bill to the House.



Dr MacMAHON (South Brisbane—Grn) (2.09 pm): Queensland is in the midst of a housing crisis. This is not a warning. This is not something coming down the track. The housing crisis is a reality for thousands of Queenslanders right now. For thousands of Queensland families who rent it is a daily battle to find and secure affordable, safe and secure housing. Meanwhile, we have a growing divide between those who can afford to own property and those who cannot.

While we have people in this chamber who own two, three or four investment properties, we have Queensland families struggling to find affordable rental homes, sleeping in cars or tents or couch surfing with friends. While it is easier for investors to buy their fourth or fifth investment property, we have kids being pulled out of school because their lease has not been renewed and they have been priced out of their neighbourhoods. As Queensland has started to recover from COVID-19 we have seen our state's housing market increasingly squeezed as investors take advantage of low interest rates. We have heard hundreds of stories over the past few months from renting families on the struggling side of the wealth divide. A renter in Miller, a parent of young children who has had to move seven times in 12 years, wrote, 'The shortages are real, the wealth divide is growing exponentially and the fact is housing is the absolute foundation for everything.'

The minister acknowledged that more Queenslanders are renting, and renting for longer, and we need modern laws, but where are these modern laws? To be clear, the government bill does next to nothing to change this growing wealth divide. It does nothing to address the unequal power relationship between lessors and tenants. There are no changes to lessors' powers to increase rents; no-grounds evictions continue. Renters are still not allowed to make minor modifications. The power around pets sits firmly with property investors and landlords. The committee noted that the government bill will have negligible impact on rents, supply and affordability.

Yesterday I gave the government the opportunity to properly debate the measures that Queensland really needs: to debate this bill and my private member's bill in cognate, but that was refused. It is clear that the government lacks the courage to take on their real estate lobby mates. Off the back of this performance why should Queensland renters believe that stage 2 will include anything of substance? In choosing to do nothing about affordability or security of tenure Labor concedes to the power of the real estate lobby—an industry that cares little for 1.8 million Queensland renters. The member for Everton basically confirmed that this morning. The government concedes that they are completely disconnected from the lives of these 1.8 million Queenslanders. They concede that the profits of the property investors among their own ranks are more important than the thousands of Queensland families doing it tough.

If you think this bill strikes the right balance you have no idea what Queensland renters are going through, which is why I will be moving that the second reading debate be halted until MPs who are landlords who own investment properties recuse themselves from the debate. That is one in three members in this chamber. It is unacceptable that MPs who directly benefit from skyrocketing rents and lax eviction laws are allowed to take part in this debate or to vote on this bill. I will be moving to amend the second reading motion. I move—

That the words 'now read a second time' be deleted and the following words be inserted:

'considered further once all members of parliament who are landlords excuse themselves from voting on this legislation due to a conflict of interest.'

As landlords, you have a clear conflict of interest when it comes to renters' rights—

Ms Richards: Are you a renter?

Dr MacMAHON: I am a renter. You benefit from retaining the status quo when renters have such little power, and it is because renters lack power in the relationship. Let's hear from some of the voices Labor does not want to hear in this chamber: the renters on the other side of this wealth divide. A renter in Cooper said—

After a storm, the walls of my room were damaged and covered in black mould. The owners agreed to fix it, but told me it would take a couple of weeks. I said fair enough, but I obviously would not be paying rent in the meantime and referred them to the relevant law on the RTA website. They told me if I didn't suck it up they'd kick us all out in a few weeks when the lease was up. I slept in the living room, paying full rent, for weeks.

The minister says they have removed no-grounds evictions, but they have simply given them a new name. In fact, landlords have an expanded suite of reasons to evict tenants without addressing this power differential. All renters' rights are undermined by the continuing fear of eviction without fair reason.

The inquiry into this bill and my private member's bill heard fanciful arguments about the nature of property. It was argued that ending no-grounds evictions would breach landlords' human rights. Thankfully, the Human Rights Commissioner put these arguments to bed. In balancing Queenslanders' rights to housing with the property rights of landlords, the Human Rights Commissioner cited the housing crisis and the rights of families and children as clear justification for limiting landlords' rights.

Originally, the government was going to allow tenants to make minor modifications to their homes. This would help parents of young children to install baby gates; elderly people could install safety aids; people with disability could install vital fixtures like grab rails, allowing them to live independently; and survivors of family violence could install safety equipment. A young mum with a baby son living in Algeester told us how, as he becomes more active, she is wary of seeking her landlord's permission to put in furniture anchors. She cannot enforce the rights she has because of the terrible consequences of being evicted. She asks, 'When will people have to stop worrying about being evicted from somewhere for simply wanting to be able to feel at home in a house?'

Sixty-five per cent of respondents to the Open Doors to Renting Reform consultation thought the government should make these changes. The changes even appeared in the government's 2019 regulatory impact statement, but in response to pressure from the real estate lobby they have mysteriously disappeared. Is the government here to represent renters or craft legislation for the REIQ? We are seeing the answer now.

I will also be moving a broader suite of amendments to this bill, including a genuine end to no-grounds evictions. My broader amendments will allow tenants to make minor modifications to their homes. There will be an end to rent bidding, which is still perfectly legal for landlords to accept, and a cap on rent increases to CPI to be applied no more than once every two years. A renter from the Mansfield electorate told us—

During an inspection my wife asked the agent what we could do to make our application look better. 'Offer rent up-front' was his answer. To get our current property she was encouraged to offer more weekly rent in our application.

My broader amendments will ensure tenants can keep pets unless the landlord successfully applies to QCAT for an order to the contrary. They will ensure that minimum housing standards cover topics like lighting and ventilation. They will prohibit discriminatory rental applications and require landlords to disclose better information about the property. They will extend notice periods for entry to the property, in some case doubling them from 24 to 48 hours. They will require landlords to forward water bills in a timely way, ensure tenants are not required to use third-party payment platforms and enhance the protections available to survivors of family violence. These longer amendments include critical rental law reforms that will transform the lives of hundreds of thousands of Queenslanders who are doing it tough. These reforms are critical to tackling the housing crisis.

But these reforms could also cut into the profits of property investor MPs, so before we debate them I am moving that every MP who owns two, three, four or more properties recuse themselves from the debate. Only then can we have a fair debate on rental law reform. Rents are skyrocketing, 50,000 people are waiting for social housing and there is a severe lack of affordable housing right across Queensland. Tonight families across Queensland will sleep in their cars and tents as a result of the growing rental crisis, but not everyone is struggling.

Over the last year there has been a surge in wealth for property owners as house prices across Australia have spiked. Currently, home owners and investors receive 90 per cent of the benefits from housing policies, such as negative gearing and capital gain tax concessions, while renters receive next to no benefits. There is a huge divide and a massive power imbalance between property investors and renters, and property investors stand to profit. When we have property investors making the laws, it is little surprise these laws are stacked against renters. Today I am giving the government a final chance to do something to tackle the housing crisis: get your property investor MPs to recuse themselves and let's debate real rental reform.

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

In division—

Mr ANDREW: I would like to declare a conflict of interest. I am a landlord—not a rich one.

Resolved in the negative under special sessional orders.

Non-government amendment (Dr MacMahon) negatived.



Ms PUGH (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (2.25 pm): Mr Speaker, I beg your indulgence for a moment and recognise one of the wonderful mums in my life—my mother-in-law, Julie—whose birthday it is today and who is sitting in the gallery with my baby girl now. Julie and David, my in-laws, come down and look after Elyse each parliamentary sitting week. I could not do this job without them, and I am so very lucky to have them. Happy birthday, Julie, and thank you very much.

That actually ties neatly into my speech, because one of the unexpected challenges of COVID for people trying to buy a property has been the rapidly escalating price of homes in Australia. I remember early last year that there was some speculation and concern that housing prices could drop. However, it is fair to say that almost two years down the track we have found the opposite to be true around Australia, particularly on the eastern seaboard. Housing prices have rocketed upwards during COVID as more people return home to Australia and, in particular, as we have seen, more people move to Queensland or return home to Queensland. It is now harder than ever for people to purchase a home, especially your first home.

According to Digital Finance Analytics, the ninth biggest lender in the market is that well-known financial institution, the bank of mum and dad. The issue with this is that the bank of mum and dad does not lend to just anyone. Some people can borrow a substantial amount from this financial institution and others nothing at all. The bank of mum and dad, according to a March article in the *Australian Financial Review*, has provided approximately \$34 billion in loans. Unlike other banks, it does not necessarily ask for earning summaries, proof of savings, proof of income or employment history, but the contracts are written in blood. The bank of mum and dad is a bigger lender than both AMP and the Bank of Queensland, so it is fair to say that the bank of mum and dad has a significant stake in the Australian housing market.

It is with this backdrop of understanding that we view the importance of this housing legislation. For some renters, they will be renting for many, many years. As the member for Everton observed, the largest cohort of renters is in fact people with children. Some renters will be renting while they give birth to their children, they have pets and they go about their lives. For many renters, this is not just their house; it is their long-term home. It is where they are going to bring their baby home from hospital, leave for work each morning, raise their family and create a community.


Getting the balance right between tenants and landlords is key. Now more than ever, these relationships between landlords and tenants can be long term. Sometimes for reasons beyond the tenant or the landlord's control, those relationships may be cut short. Sometimes a tenant who is a victim of domestic violence may need to flee their property at short notice. This legislation enables them to do just that. Renters with evidence that they are experiencing domestic violence should be able to terminate their lease with just seven days notice. Importantly, their liability for the lease costs will be capped at a seven-day period. We know that when someone is leaving a violent situation it can be a time of great danger physically, but it is also a time of great financial insecurity. The last thing anybody in this House wants is for people and families who are considering leaving—knowing what a dangerous time that is for them as they flee domestic violence—needing to weigh up their economic security as well as their physical security. This will give them that peace of mind that they can safely leave and their liability is capped at seven days.

Pulling together funds at short notice to find a new home is difficult at the best of times for many renters, let alone when you are trying to reorganise your entire life—ensuring your children can still get to school and you can still get to work. I know that many members in this House would have assisted community members to do just that in the course of their roles.

Importantly, rather than requiring a DVO in order to access these benefits, this legislation is going to allow a variety of specialised professionals—such as social workers, refuge or crisis workers and other such professionals—to be able to provide that critical supporting evidence required to quickly terminate that lease. Those renters can then apply to the RTA so they can have their portion of their rental bond fund that has been held for the tenancy released and they can then use that to keep themselves liquid as they search and apply for a new property or for whatever they need as they get their lives back in order and back on track.

If the victims of domestic violence choose to stay in the property, which is also a fantastic option for many people, they will be able to fortify their homes in order to stay and look at changing locks without the landlord's permission so that they can take that time-sensitive work to do that as quickly as they need to. We often are talking about things needing to be done in a matter of hours. They do not have days or weeks. Sometimes even the most responsive landlords might not be able to get back to them quickly enough. We need to make sure that that is taken care of.

I am really proud that these changes strongly support the Palaszczuk government's agenda of empowering domestic violence victims. I am also really proud of the support from all the different stakeholder groups on this. Everybody in this House recognises that domestic violence survivors have enough on their plate when trying to extract themselves from a really critically dangerous situation. Whether that is staying in the property they call home or getting out and finding a new property to call home, we have put both sides of that puzzle in place. We have looked at both sides of the equation to make sure that, whichever way they choose to go, we can quickly and safely accommodate them. I think that is incredibly important. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (2.32 pm): I, too, rise to talk about the housing legislation. Before I get into that, I want to comment on the earlier Greens contribution. If we all lived in the nirvana that they live in, there would be no rental properties left.

An honourable member: Correct.

Mr HART: I take that interjection. Everybody would be living in public housing, which is probably what the Greens would like to see happen. After all, if people rely on governments for housing, that would be something that they would really appreciate. We have to admire the nerve of the Greens in coming in here with this nirvana that they live in.

We do have a rental crisis at the moment. There are a number of reasons for that rental crisis. It is important for people to declare that they are landlords. I am not a landlord, so I will not be so declaring. It is important to recognise that a lack of confidence in the ownership of rental properties does more harm than good. I am glad that the government has not gone as far with this bill as it originally intended. A couple of years ago, they were talking about rental reform and about far more extreme measures than we see today. After a campaign run by the LNP and the Real Estate Institute of Queensland, the majority of those extreme reforms that were proposed have been removed as part of this bill.

We all admit that there are bad renters and bad landlords. We know that there are issues in this respect. We do need some changes to rental laws. I want to talk about some of the things that I do not agree with in this bill. I do not agree that people should have a unilateral right to have animals in their properties and I do not agree with the elimination of periodic agreements, because I think that will lead to a whole lot of unintended consequences.

This government continually brings bills to this House but has to return later to fix them. In terms of the elimination of periodic agreements, the REIQ made a very succinct statement—

The Bill is proposing to give tenants a unilateral right to remain in the tenanted premises for as long as they wish.

When these more severe rental reforms were going through, as the shadow minister for housing at the time I spoke to a lot of renters. A lot of renters gave me the impression they would be leaving the landlord market. A lot of landlords would be selling their rental properties because they did not want anyone telling them what they could or could not do with their properties. After all, they own them, have mortgages on them, control them and should have the right to decide who lives there and under what conditions.

I also want to talk about proposed retirement villages changes. This is a prime example of this government getting things wrong. It is not like they were not warned about it. In 2017 when the original bill around the buyback situation came to fruition, the LNP supported that. They were sensible laws, but in 2019 when the government went back and tried to fix something it had apparently made a mistake with—bringing freehold properties into the same condition—we warned very succinctly that there would be issues. I will table a press release that I put out at the time which warned of that.

Tabled paper: Media release, dated 4 April 2019, by the member for Burleigh, Mr Michael Hart MP, relating to the Retirement Villages Act [\[1736\]](#).

The press release states—

The changes made to the Retirement Village Act have no place in the Health Bill—

to start with they were in the middle of a health bill—

The Palaszczuk Labor Government is out of touch and doesn't understand the damage these changes will cause to freehold retirement villages operated by residents.

That is what this is all about. Further—

Labor failed to get the previous bill right in 2017 and the minister should have realised that a freehold title sale process does not involve an exit entitlement.

That is what the original bill was about—an exit entitlement. People who have freehold title to their property do not have an exit entitlement. That was never going to work. The press release continues—

The LNP is concerned these villages may be forced to close or remove themselves from the protection of the Retirement Villages Act under Labor's changes.

That is exactly what the Labor Party did. They said to these retirement villages, 'Go to QCAT and get an extension of the 18 months allowed under this legislation.' By the way, that legislation was retrospective to 2017, so it kicked in a couple of months after this bill passed the House. A couple of months later, people were forced to buy back these properties. At the time, we warned very clearly that some of these properties would close or declare themselves no longer retirement villages. Members, what happened? Exactly that—villages closed. There was a village at Tin Can Bay that I mentioned specifically in parliament at that time. It was originally started by a doctor and his wife. It was their philanthropic exercise in starting a retirement village—because there was not a retirement village in Tin Can Bay, so they started one up—but they were caught out by this legislation. Then the doctor passed away and his wife was running that particular facility. She was forced to sell her house in order to comply with the buyback legislation.


She sold her house and ended up moving into that property. I spoke to her and her son a number of times. She was in tears on the phone, 'How am I going to buy back these properties as the government is forcing me to do? It will cost me money to go to QCAT.' That process does not work. Quite frankly, at the end of the day she closed the village. Those people no longer have access to that retirement village in Tin Can Bay. That happened at a number of facilities around Queensland. I table some media reports about those particular villages closing.

Tabled paper: Bundle of newspaper articles relating to retirement villages [\[1737\]](#).

The original legislation required a review within two years, so the government decided it would do a review on this in 2020. The interim report to the minister in relation to the impact of time frames for the mandatory purchase of units in resident operated retirement villages is dated September 2020, and a redacted version—to preserve privacy, apparently—was released to key stakeholders, including the resident operated retirement villages, in February 2021. It was not released to the opposition. Apparently we are not stakeholders in this whole process. I ask the minister to table the report so we can all read it. After all, we each represent approximately 36,000 constituents in our electorates. They want to know what is in that report.

What did the report basically say? It basically said that this does not work. We told the government that in 2019. We told them that villages would close. We told them that other villages would remove themselves from the Retirement Villages Act. That is exactly what happened. The problem with this government is that they do not listen to anybody but their arrogant selves. They do not listen to anybody. That is exactly the problem. This has become a dictatorship, where the Premier thinks she can just decide whatever she wants and the parliament goes completely out the window at the end of the day.

I have said it in this House before: why are members of parliament in this House if the government is not going to listen to us at the end of the day? They are not going to take input from people who have been landlords, people who have had rental properties, people who have been in business, people who actually know what they are talking about and have not just been some sort of union rep their whole life—people who have lived in the real world. They will not listen to them. Then a year or two down the track we are back here fixing the problems created by the Labor Party in Queensland to the detriment of the people of Queensland. Meanwhile, people have lost their livelihoods, they have had banks foreclose on them and they are out of work. Also as part of this bill we saw people out of retirement villages. Is that the result this government wanted to achieve? I doubt it, but they made the mistake and we are here today to fix it.

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (2.42 pm): Once again, we have seen what can only be described as an amateurish performance from the member for South Brisbane. I would say that it is only a short walk from the member's office to the Clerk's office to seek some advice in relation to conflicts of interest. If the member took the opportunity to do that—every member of parliament can avail themselves of that, and I certainly have on occasion—she would learn that somebody simply having an interest in common with a range of other people does not render them in conflict and unable to vote on a bill. The motion that was moved was completely ridiculous.

I was part of the Ethics Committee that recommended that minor parties and crossbenchers be given resources so they could better contribute to parliament. Clearly, the Greens are not using their resources very effectively. Without the benefit of those resources, I was able to wander downstairs to the Clerk's office and have a very similar conversation about a very similar issue and find that just because I own an investment property does not render me incapable of participating in this debate.

The amateurship of this parliament is staggering. If you analyse the policies the Greens took to the last election in my area you will see that the sum total impact on the issue of housing would be to simply drive up the cost of housing for young people who are trying to buy a house. They claim to be the party that is out there championing people getting into a house!

This bill is about balancing the rights of landlords and tenants. There is a whole range of other work that needs to be done to address housing affordability and access and social housing. I am proud to say that I am part of a government that is actually doing that work. In fact, if the Greens were serious about housing affordability they would not show up, every time someone proposed to increase density in an area, with their placards and signs and try to stop that going ahead. In this they are on a unity ticket with the Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast LNP members, who now also seem to be amazingly opposed to high-density development. It is incredible.

I want to focus on the provisions in the bill that require landlords to maintain minimum housing standards. I have been living away from my parents' house for over three decades now. Even though I own an investment property, a third of that time was spent living as a renter. While the member for South Brisbane might determine that I have no right to participate in this debate, I experienced all the highs and lows you can experience as a renter. I had good landlords and I had very poor landlords during that time.

I am really proud to be part of the party of Wayne Goss, who brought in the RTA. When I first started renting, for the first four or five years, working-class people on low incomes, like myself and the people I generally shared my accommodation with, pretty much knew we would just lose our bonds. No matter what you did in that property and no matter how hard you tried, you knew that you were going to kiss that bond goodbye. That was hard when you were on pretty low incomes. Enter the RTA and that stopped happening overnight. It changed the way we treated properties. It was common that people who felt they were going to lose their bond took no care of the property, because they knew they were not going to get the bond back. It was a vicious and ridiculous cycle. Fast-forward to a system that ensured fairness for people, and suddenly people knew that if they did the right thing they would get their bond back. That was a great Labor reform, and these are great Labor reforms we are dealing with here.

Requiring landlords to ensure that people have a minimum standard of housing is an important step forward. As I said, the Greens would have you believe that someone like me who owns an investment property cannot have a view on this without being conflicted. I have made no secret of the fact—in fact, it is in my register of interests, as it is required to be—that I spent a decade or more in rental properties, and I come from a culture where many of my family and friends were or still are in rental properties. My nephews, nieces and friends' kids are in rental properties, and it is probably very highly likely that my own kids will end up in rental properties at some point.

Yes, I am a landlord and I have one house, and I want to tell members why I am a landlord. After working for 25 years—longer for my wife—my wife and I had a conversation with our financial adviser about how best to prepare for retirement, and the suggestion was made that we consider an investment property. After several years of saving and forgoing many things, we were able to do that.


Recently I was at a community event about housing affordability and someone suggested that people who own investment properties do not care about people or society. I think that is ridiculous. We do care. Firstly, my wife and I care about each other and about providing for each other in retirement. We also care about our kids and want to use this to try to help them get a good start in life. We also feel that if we can take care of ourselves in our retirement we do not need to be drawing on the social welfare benefits of this country and we can leave that for other people. Finally, we actually do care about our tenants, and we have endeavoured to be good landlords. We make all the repairs when they are requested or required, and we have employed a professional management agent to make sure that we comply with everything we are to comply with. We upgrade our property. We also offer two-year rental agreements. Amazingly, we can never find anybody who actually wants to sign those.

I know that not all landlords are good. This bill is about trying to strike the balance that we need. Not all tenants are good, either. We have had the experience of having over \$20,000 damage done to our property. That was tough. The reality is that this bill strikes a really good balance between the rights

of property owners, which are important, and the rights of tenants, which are also important. It is what we face in considering many of the bills that are brought before this parliament: striking a balance between competing interests. I have experienced this issue from both perspectives, and I believe that this bill improves the rights of tenants and strikes a good balance.

When the Greens political party say they are on the side of renters, I think people should take that with a grain of salt. Labor has delivered for renters and continues to deliver for renters. We also respect and support landlords. We are not like the Greens: we do not seek to divide our community. We saw that today. They want to come in here and divide this parliament. It is a politics of envy and division that they are so good at.

Labor keeps an eye on the main game, and what does that mean for us? How do we make things fair and safe for people who rent? How do we support people who do the renting? How do we support people who, if they choose to, can become property owners? How do we even support those people if they choose to become investors? How do we help people to have a dignified retirement? Those are all of the questions that Labor is trying to answer and we try to answer those in a way that brings our society together, not drives it apart. These are the things that Labor focuses on. This bill helps to deliver this, and I commend it to the House.

 **Ms CAMM** (Whitsunday—LNP) (2.49 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Housing Legislation Amendment Bill 2021. This legislation is important. It will impact a large proportion of our communities, whether that be electorate by electorate or more broadly across the state, with regard to those who rent property and those who own rental properties. In the Northern Beaches of Mackay, which sits in the southern part of the Whitsunday electorate where I live, one in six Mackay region residents resides there. It has the highest proportion of residents in the Mackay local government area and 39.5 per cent of the dwellings are rental properties. It is home to a large proportion of the mining sector's drive-in drive-out workforce. The area has one of the highest suburban rental localities across the region compared to the Mackay city area of 31.5 per cent, so I know that the changes in this bill will have a direct impact on my local community.

In the northern part of the electorate in Cannonvale and the Whitsundays we have seen a shift in population and demographic and a significant increase due to the incredible lifestyle that people can achieve and experience in the Whitsundays and also the attractive remote working options as an outcome of the COVID-19 pandemic. We have seen a significant increase in population growth, and in that part of the community that means that a significant number of properties that were rental properties have now transitioned to owner-occupier properties. That is putting significant pressure on the rental property market in that we have seen a significant decrease in availability which is causing significant impacts in my local community when it comes to affordable housing and also being able to even access a rental property.

Today on realestate.com.au in the Cannonvale and Airlie Beach area there are only 23 properties for rent and in Mackay and the Northern Beaches of Mackay where there are 22,000 residents there are only 34 properties currently available for rent. Why that is important to provide context is that the obligations and responsibilities that both parties have—whether you are a landlord or whether you are a tenant—are that of a symbiotic nature. It is a relationship that needs to be managed carefully. It is also very important that any legislation that passes in this House ensures the rights of both parties are upheld and respected, and that is why the LNP will not be opposing this legislation.

There are parts of this legislation that we strongly support, and I want to talk more about the domestic violence amendments in this legislation. One in six women have experienced physical or sexual violence by a current or previous partner from the age of 15. Family and domestic violence is the primary reason that women and children seek specialist homelessness services and it is the leading cause of homelessness. Where women have had to return to the home where a perpetrator lives or where they are trapped because the cost is too great to escape a home, the measures and amendments in this bill will ensure that women and victims of domestic and family violence have choice and have options.

Housing is a critical factor in ensuring safety when escaping domestic violence and the cost implications, at times, can be a deterrent to sourcing a safe place. The Women's Legal Service of Queensland submission also outlined its support for these amendments. It is important to note and highlight in the legislation and demonstrate my support for the way in which the assessment of domestic and family violence within these amendments can be granted—that is, a report by a specialist, whether it be a health practitioner, social worker, refuge or crisis worker, domestic violence support worker, caseworker or solicitor and even Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander medical services. There is a

much broader and more specialised way in which evidence can be provided in representing victims of domestic and family violence, and that is incredibly important. It is important to ensure that the system is not abused yet provides safeguards for victims of domestic violence.


One issue that I will raise as a matter of clarification I seek from the minister is around sexual assault and whether that is a sexual assault in a domestic violence setting or if it is a standalone sexual assault. That was raised in the submission by the Cairns Sexual Assault Service. For the benefit of sexual assault services across the state in terms of an isolated incident of sexual assault that may occur in a rental property, whether that be a room-mate or whatever the situation may be, it is important that we seek clarification in the legislation around that because I know that that is something sexual assault advocates will be keen to understand.

I also raise concerns around the unintended consequences to what potentially could happen to victims of domestic and family violence with regard to the broader real estate sector, and the concerns that I raise are ones of just caution. It is very important that with this legislation and these amendments education across the real estate sector is undertaken in conjunction with these changes. As was reported by the committee, many across the sector were not even aware of the COVID-19 changes and therefore, in response, advocates had to work a little harder on behalf of domestic violence victims to be able to advocate when sometimes they cannot advocate for themselves.

It is also very important to highlight that a potential unintended consequence is potential discrimination of, in particular, women and single mothers with children when it comes to rental applications in the future knowing that the terms to be able to end a lease now are within seven days. Like many members in the House, I can declare that I do not own a rental property but have owned rental properties in the past. In terms of the way in which a landlord is represented by their agent, sometimes they may not know the full details in the way in which their agent represents them. Therefore, I wanted to raise this issue and put on the public record that this practice and the way in which the regulations are implemented should be monitored to ensure that natural justice occurs and that the intended provisions are delivering safety and security in the way that they are intended.

As outlined by the shadow minister and member for Everton, the LNP will not be opposing the housing legislation but in fact will be moving two amendments. I certainly support those amendments. It is important that the House considers these amendments given our rental vacancy rates across the entire state and the housing pressure that exists in social housing given the lack of community housing investment that we have seen and the need for flexibility. Therefore, we seek the support of the House with regard to the amendments, in particular around the elimination of periodic agreements. Currently those agreements provide flexibility to not only landlords but also tenants in some instances. It is important that we ensure that we look at things in a holistic manner whilst also understanding that there are many tools in the toolbox that may need to be utilised in a time when we are under enormous pressure in the housing market.

I also want to acknowledge and thank the committee. I went through a significant number of submissions and I thank the committee for the thoroughness in the way in which stakeholders' views have been articulated and have been developed in line with policy for domestic violence victims and survivors. This is a modern element to housing legislation and is something that women across the state will very much value. With that, I will be supporting the bill.

 **Mr O'ROURKE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (2.59 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Housing Legislation Amendment Bill. As members of the House would be aware, there have been a number of housing related strategies released over the years, more recently the Queensland Housing and Homelessness Action Plan 2021-2025. This action plan is backed by a \$2.9 billion investment and is the biggest investment in social housing since World War II.

For over 30 years prior to entering parliament I worked in the provision of housing. I have a good understanding of the requirements of tenants and of landlords, in particular mum-and-dad landlord investors. Any amendments that we make to legislation need to be balanced, in particular for our mum-and-dad landlords who are absolutely essential for the provision of housing. Currently approximately a third of residents in Queensland are living in rental accommodation.


It is important to make sure that we have properties that are safe and secure to live in. I have heard stories over the years where landlords have done very little maintenance and tenants end up living in substandard accommodation. I have heard stories of properties that have rotten floorboards and walls and sewerage systems that back up regularly. Tenants should be able to live in properties that are weatherproof and structurally sound and have fixtures and fittings, such as a stoves and taps, that actually work. This is not about gold-plated fittings. Having minimum standards for rentals is important not only for the tenants but also for landlords.

Many times I have seen long-term tenants in private rentals, in particular our elderly, where the landlord has done very little maintenance on the property and it becomes unsafe, whether it be the steps rotting or the handrails being wobbly, making it much more difficult for our elderly. It is about having what you and I would call standard fittings that are in good working order. From my experience over the years, the more vulnerable a person is, for example, on an irregular, low income or experiencing violence in their home, the less likely they are to contact their landlord regarding maintenance so regular inspections are required. There is a fear of the rent going up or that they will be evicted at the end of a lease because a tenant wants basic maintenance.

The ending of a lease is another area that was raised during consultation, in particular where a landlord has given notice to vacate without grounds which can also be very unfair on a tenant. When you are on a low to moderate income moving is expensive, not just in dollars but in the emotional cost as well. This legislation broadens the number of areas where a landlord can issue a notice to vacate, whether they are selling the property or it is to undergo a major upgrade. There are also protections on what a tenant should reasonably know—for example, where people have moved into a rental property only to find out that it goes on the market a month or two later and they have to move out with the expense of moving again.

Another area that was raised in consultation was where there is domestic violence and victims need to relocate quickly. Given this situation they should not be penalised if they do have to move on short notice. If people have been forced out of the rental market, particularly in domestic violence situations, they then go through domestic violence shelters and crisis accommodation, which makes it difficult not only for the person but also the children. The children are moved time and time again. They do not have any structure. They lose contact with friends. It is important that we make sure that we do not have people on a merry-go-round.

This is a good bill. There is a balance of tenants' rights and landlords' rights, in particular for those mum-and-dad landlord investors. I think the committee has done a good job on this bill. It would have been extremely challenging. Anything to do with housing is very difficult because there is so much variation in the needs and expectations of people. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr PURDIE** (Ninderry—LNP) (3.04 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Housing Legislation Amendment Bill 2021. Firstly I would like to thank the Community Support and Services Committee for its simultaneous consideration of this and the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation (Tenants' Rights) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2021. These two pieces of legislation are similar in the human rights matters they seek to address and sit in the context of the government's Queensland Housing Strategy 2017-2027.

It is important that the right balance is struck between protecting lessors and tenants. Protecting both sides of the pendulum matters to the economic and social health of Queensland and therefore it is crucial that we get the balance right. At this point I would like to declare, as the member for South Brisbane has made public and put on Facebook last night, that I do own a number of investment properties. I also want to echo what someone else said earlier when they said that they are certainly not rich.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr PURDIE: I am not taking any of those interjections, but I appreciate that.

I heard the member for Mount Ommaney talk earlier about the bank of mum and dad. Everyone in this House knows that I am a former police officer. My wife is a schoolteacher. We had no bank of mum and dad. I certainly had no bank of mum and dad available to me and we made a lot of sacrifices and worked hard to accumulate those properties. I also want to declare that my family and I are currently renting. I think I have a good understanding of both sides of the equation.

For the member for South Brisbane on Facebook last night to call for me to recuse myself from this debate I think is outrageous seeing that not only have I worked hard and shown some aspiration to potentially build wealth in the future for my family, but also due to a change in our circumstances we are currently renting. Our lease is due to expire in February. Only a few weeks ago I emailed the agent and asked if we could look at a periodic lease going forward as we are only in a position to commit to another six or 12 months. We are waiting for that negotiation to commence. I, as others might be, am acutely aware of the impacts this bill will have on renters and landlords.

The bill's explanatory notes state that the objective of the bill is to improve housing stability in the rental market, secure housing that facilitates social, economic and cultural participation and promote the provision of a range of housing options that meet the diverse needs of Queenslanders. More

broadly, Queensland housing is in a state of crisis. However, the emergency measures, the cash injection required and infrastructure needed from the government in order to seriously address the problem are simply not there.

In the lead-up to the last budget the Queensland Council of Social Services joined with 12 organisations to create the Town of Nowhere campaign, a desperate plea for the government to invest more in affordable housing. Unfortunately, the government's budgetary response fell well short, according to the CEO of the Queensland Council of Social Services, Aimee McVeigh. Aimee McVeigh went on to say the current level of investment from the state government will only address 21 per cent of the housing register and this did not take into account the likelihood of an exponential increase. There are nearly 50,000 people seeking social housing in Queensland, a massive 70 per cent increase in just the last three years and just a 10th of the homes that are needed are being built.

At the estimates hearing in August it was revealed that there had only been a three per cent increase in social housing since Labor was elected in 2015 and new housing lots have dropped by 22.4 per cent overall. In my home region of the Sunshine Coast lot registration decreased by 20 per cent while the population grew by 15 per cent. This shameful lack of investment in infrastructure has not been seen for a generation. Labor admitted at the hearing that eight per cent of more than 25,000 Queensland families were desperate for a home and fell into the department's high and very high needs category. On average Queenslanders are waiting in excess of 28 months for social housing.

Closer to home on the Sunshine Coast is a housing crisis. On the coast we have 3,000 social houses. The Real Estate Institute of Queensland reported in July that 0.6 per cent of Sunshine Coast private rentals were vacant, with close to 1,800 local families waiting for public housing. The Domain property website last week revealed the Sunshine Coast was one of the most expensive property markets, with a median house price of \$825,000. The government has committed to just 140 new dwellings and these will take a long time to be delivered. Just one day is a long day when you do not have a roof over your head.

COVID has placed an enormous strain on housing availability with internal migration to Queensland at record rates, pushing up local prices and squeezing locals out of their own communities. More and more people will be facing homelessness or moving hundreds of kilometres away to put a roof over their heads. St Vincent de Paul Society CEO, Kevin Mercer, said that the crisis accommodation that previously helped people for 12 or 13 weeks at a time is now being used for 12 months or more because there is simply nowhere else to go. During the past year my electorate office, like many others, has been inundated with genuine requests for housing assistance. The stories have been heartbreaking and I understand departmental staff are doing all they can to assist, despite the appalling lack of solutions that the government has made available to them.

Having reviewed the current state of the housing market, I will now speak to the bill's specifics and a number of concerns that I have. After hearing the views of hundreds of submitters, in their statement of reservation my colleagues on the committee expressed their concern that the bill tips the balance of power towards the rights and needs of tenants. Stakeholders such as the Real Estate Institute of Queensland, the Property Owners' Association of Queensland and the Urban Development Institute of Australia raised concerns about the bill's adverse impact on the rights of lessors and property managers, specifically, the removal of a lessor's right to issue a without-grounds notice to tenants during a periodic agreement. This is based on the concern that the removal of that right would encourage a greater use of fixed-term agreements, which would be a disadvantage to tenants and lessors alike, and it would remove flexibility for both parties and reduce rental options.


Committee member and my colleague the member for Burnett, Steve Bennett, said that this provision of the bill will undermine the very tenet of the proposed changes as well as continuity and security in Queensland's rental market. The Queensland Law Society predicts that lessors will prefer not to enter into periodic tenancies with a tenant when the fixed-term agreement expires, given that under the bill there will be limited capacity to bring the periodic tenancy to an end. That would reduce the flexibility available to a tenant and the lessor when a short period of extension might otherwise suit both parties.

In addition, at the hearing the QLS said that they were concerned that the legislation would discourage periodic tenancy, increasing the loss of housing stock for short-term rentals and requiring parties in conflict to remain in a landlord/tenant relationship. The REIQ also made the point that it is not always the landlord who wants to put a tenant on a periodic tenancy; we have to think about the tenants who choose to remain on periodic tenancies. For example, someone may want to purchase their own home but need an arrangement for a month or two longer in order to progress their future plans, which is similar to my situation at the moment. The abolition of the ability to terminate a periodic tenancy is not just a landlord's problem, notwithstanding the fact that there has been the ability to terminate. We

will start to see landlords being more careful about entering into periodic tenancies and, unfortunately, we will see the mass issuing of notices to leave in order to end those periodic tenancies. That is the last thing Queensland needs at a time when we are seeing unprecedented numbers of people sleeping rough and tenancy rates at record lows.

In closing, I end on a note of hope. On Monday, ABC Sunshine Coast published a story about the rise in tiny home projects across the region and how they are being touted as one of the ways out of this mess—for a handful of people, anyway. The story was about how charities are doing the heavy lifting to provide affordable housing. I will give a few examples. In Nambour the not-for-profit Shack Community Centre will offer tiny houses to accommodate homeless men. In Tewantin a similar story is playing out with charity Youturn Youth Support receiving \$150,000 from private donations and land donated by the Noosa Shire Council to build and locate two moveable tiny houses to accommodate younger people. Closer to my home, in Coolumb a great manufacturing success story, Aussie Tiny Homes, which I visited recently, is providing homes to the Noosa Shire Council. They are projecting that next year they will custom build over 200 tiny mobile homes that could be used as granny flats or emergency accommodation.

I commend the bill to the House as it is all the government has for us, but I do support the amendments to be moved by our shadow minister. The LNP will continue to fight on behalf of vulnerable Queenslanders and we will continue to call for more action in this space.

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (3.13 pm): I rise to speak in support of the bill before us today. I say at the start that I do not think we need to declare if we are renters or own properties, although it is interesting to answer the call about what we are. In answer to the call from the member for South Brisbane, I can say that I have been a renter, I have been a property owner and I have been a real estate agent, but do not hold that against me. To answer the call from the member for Scenic Rim, I am not a communist. I do not know if there are any other declarations to be made. I know I have disappointed some here—

Mr Healy interjected.

Mr WHITING: I would have been the first communist real estate agent in Queensland! I note that the member for Ninderry criticised us on these housing issues, but he did not say a word about the role of the federal government. There was not a word about their policy settings and specifically about them walking away from the National Rental Affordability Scheme agreements. NRAS keeps rents down for thousands of people within our communities yet the Morrison government is walking away from that scheme. If they want to do anything about housing affordability, they should come back to the table on NRAS.

I believe the bill will better protect tenants, as the minister has spoken about. At this time it is very important that we do everything we can because, as we know, many Queensland tenants are vulnerable due to a lack of housing stock. I talked to the owner of a local agency whom I know. She said that people on her rent roll are being approached by competing agents who are saying, 'We can get you an extra \$70 to \$100 a week in rent if you come over to us.' A lot of mum-and-dad investors will say, 'No, that's not the right thing to do. We need to make sure that we're being fair.' Those are the kinds of pressures that we are seeing. To add to that, a lot of investors are selling their houses and moving back into their rental properties. All of those things are leading to a situation where the vacancy rate in and around Brisbane is generally sitting between one and two per cent and in some areas it is below one per cent, which means there is virtually no available housing stock. We know potential tenants will offer incredible prices or months of rent in advance just to get a roof over their heads.

What I am outlining is the great vulnerability that emphasises the need for this bill. Let us be honest: there has been vulnerability in the market for a long time and a lot of us will remember what it was like. I rented when I was at uni. We were always very aware that we could be evicted at the drop of a hat. We all knew that you lost the house if you complained, even if the floor was coming up or the tiles in the bathroom were loose. At one place we had a fig tree invading our bathroom like a slow-moving triffid. It stayed there for years while we were there.

I support the bill's introduction of minimum standards for a lease. That is very important. We should not underestimate the importance of having minimum standards in a lease. The premise must reach a basic standard where it has to be weatherproof and structurally sound; have sound fittings and fixtures; does not present a health hazard; is free of vermin, damp and mould; and has adequate hot and cold water. For those who have endured seriously substandard accommodation, this is a real blessing. Perhaps when I was younger the quality of accommodation did not annoy me that much. However, if I was a single mother raising my kids in substandard conditions, in this market I may have

some concerns about speaking out. That is why the protections in the bill from retaliatory eviction are so very welcome. It is important that we have those extra protections if tenants are to speak up about their new rights.

Another welcome protection in the bill stops property owners from ending a lease without grounds. Owners will only be able to end a lease on specified grounds, including when the owner wants to occupy the property to sell or redevelop it or if it is at the end of a fixed-term tenancy.

Another important aspect of the bill is the protection it will give to the mum-and-dad investors about whom I spoke earlier. For many of them, this is their biggest investment apart from their own homes. It is a form of superannuation. People are using this investment to plan for their retirement. As we have heard, by investing in houses those people are playing a crucial role in our society. They contribute a massive amount of the housing stock that houses so many Queenslanders.

From what I have seen when liaising with many of these mum-and-dad investors, they are doing it because they want to give ordinary families a go. They want to make sure that they have something so that another family can have safe and secure housing. I applaud that and I think it is important that we note that the role of these investors is such an important part of our housing mix. With these reforms we can give them certainty around how tenancies can be ended. We can give them certainty over what level of investment they need to make in their property to make it safe.

I also want to point out that it is a great reform to have the option for a person experiencing domestic or family violence to leave the lease with seven days notice and their liability for those costs to be capped at the seven-day period as well.

I want to say that this bill is really important. It has been a long time coming. It really does deliver the balance that we need in this sector, and that is very welcomed. I want to point out it ties in so well with our \$2.9 billion investment in housing for Queenslanders. As we have heard, this is an investment which will be the biggest since World War II. I am especially proud of what we will be delivering in years to come in this sector. As we know, this area is a real challenge for so many Queenslanders, so many people in our electorates, but I want to point out that only Labor can deliver this reform and it is only Labor that can truly rise to meet this challenge in our society.



Mrs GERBER (Currumbin—LNP) (3.20 pm): According to data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics, 29.9 per cent of residents within the Currumbin electorate rent their home. That is approximately 5,406 local renters who will be affected by this Housing Legislation Amendment Bill which we are debating here today in parliament. Approximately 90 per cent of Queensland's rental housing is provided by private property owners so this bill, which seeks to better protect tenants, must also provide a fair balance between the rights of both tenants and lessors. Our housing market depends on it and, for the most part, the bill contains sensible amendments which are welcomed and supported by the LNP, but sadly the reform does not address our current housing crisis.

The most obvious way the government can address the housing crisis is to invest more in houses or to encourage the private market to supply more homes. However, there are two key issues in this bill which will have the effect of doing the opposite of just that. These relate to pets and periodic tenancy agreements. These provisions, in my view, do not strike the required balance. Professional bodies, including the Real Estate Institute of Queensland—REIQ—and the Queensland Law Society warn that they will have unintended consequences for renters and the rental market.

The LNP has proposed sensible amendments to rectify these issues. I will address this later on in my contribution, but first I wish to speak to the aspects of the bill that are sensible and supportive. In particular, we support reforms that ensure all Queensland rental properties are safe, that they are secure and that they meet minimum housing standards. I note that the changes proposed in this bill encourage compliance with minimum housing standards, repair and maintenance obligations and support enforcement, all of which aim to ensure rental properties meet safety and security standards as well as reasonable functionality standards. This is welcomed and has bipartisan support.

I believe the most positive change in this reform is the amendment strengthening protections for people experiencing domestic and family violence. I have been a strong advocate for measures to protect and support people experiencing domestic and family violence. We know that one of the most dangerous times for a person experiencing such violence is the time leading up to and immediately after they leave a violent relationship and that domestic and family violence is the leading cause of homelessness for women and children. I welcome the introduction of a new process for tenants experiencing such violence to allow them choice and flexibility to, for example, change the locks without getting the landlord's permission or to end their tenancy quickly with liability for end-of-tenancy costs

capped at seven days notice. Notwithstanding, it is likely that this reform will disadvantage property owners when it is needed to be used by a tenant. However, in my view, the seriousness of domestic and family violence warrants this special consideration.

I would urge the state government to consider the Queensland Law Society's submission to look at ways to compensate lessors who are adversely but necessarily affected by these changes, including to advocate to insurance providers to encourage the availability of lessor insurance cover for loss of rental and property damage in these difficult situations.

Similarly, the LNP is supportive of the amendments to the Retirement Villages Act which exempt freehold resident operated retirement villages from existing statutory buyback schemes. In fact, it amends the very issue that the LNP warned the government about back in 2019.

I turn now to the aspects of the bill which stakeholders and the LNP do not support and about which we hold very serious concerns. The first is that the bill seeks to introduce a narrow range of reasons why pets can be refused from a rental property which will remove a lessor's right to refuse a tenant's request to keep a pet without reason. Furthermore, landlords must respond to a tenant's request to have a pet within 14 days of the request, otherwise the request is deemed approved. The time period has been criticised by the peak body REIQ as not being reasonable and not allowing landlords enough time to make due diligence inquiries into a request of a tenant to have a pet.

The peak professional body also submits that damage caused by pets can lead to significant repair and renovation bills, and property values can be significantly impacted by pet damage. Notably, many insurance policies do not respond to pet related damage. Even where pet damage is included, technical wording within the insurance policies may leave owners without protection. Given this, owners should be able to retain the right to decline a pet request for reasons outside the narrow range of reasons in this bill.

I know how important pets are to individuals and families and the important role they play in a family unit, but the concern is that this part of the bill gets the balance wrong and risks unintended consequences, including that property owners may take their property off the housing market, which would be devastating in the current housing crisis climate.

The other significant issue in this bill is the proposed abolishment of current periodic tenancy termination rights. The bill omits any provision for a lessor to give notice to leave without-grounds for a periodic agreement. Many stakeholders, including the REIQ and the Queensland Law Society, do not support this approach. Periodic tenancies generally arise following the end of a fixed-term agreement and are for the convenience of both parties. The very nature of a periodic tenancy is that it has no end date and can be terminated at any time by either party giving the appropriate notice. Failing to make provision for a periodic tenancy to be brought to an end in this way is contrary to the general understanding of a periodic tenancy. Instead of improving security for tenants, it will have the opposite effect.

Lessors will stop entering into periodic tenancies when a lease expires because of the limited capacity to bring it to an end, resulting in the security and convenience of a periodic tenancy being taken away from renters. Instead, if a lessor is not in a position to grant a further fixed-term agreement, a lessor will likely require a tenant to leave at the end of the fixed-term agreement rather than agreeing to extend for a short period of time. The REIQ warns—

The erosion of a lessor's right to simply end a periodic tenancy with required notice (as is currently permitted) would result in the majority of Queensland periodic tenancy agreements being terminated. It would also result in lessors offering only fixed term tenancy agreements. The 'risk' of being locked into a potentially never-ending tenancy would see lessors opting for fixed term tenancy agreements that enable them to retain control over a material contractual term.

To ensure a periodic agreement can be reasonably ended by a lessor and that lessors are given balanced authority to refuse pets, the LNP has moved some sensible amendments to the bill. The LNP's amendments address the concerns I have spoken about by stakeholders, including REIQ, Property Owners' Association of Queensland, the Urban Development Institute of Australia and the Queensland Law Society. The amendments are critical, particularly in relation to periodic tenancies, because we are in a housing crisis. For the state government's reform in this space to result in reduced housing supply for renters, putting greater strain on the rental sector as a whole, is gravely concerning. The majority of housing issues raised by my constituents concern the lack of supply. Renters of all ages being unable to find affordable rentals is also leading to bidding wars from desperate applicants.


This is not a new problem. The warning signs about the lack of housing supply and tightening rental market were there before COVID, but it has become even more difficult recently. Earlier this year, I was contacted by a Currumbin family who had been rejected 15 times for a private rental property.

They are a dual-income family with young children and a successful small business, yet this family was unable to find an appropriate property and were forced to stay with friends while they continue to search. It is certainly not an ideal situation for a family with young children who are in school and trying to work at the same time.

Competition from interstate has also exacerbated this issue, but constituents have expressed a frustration at the lack of forward planning or urgent action from the Queensland state government to resolve property supply issues. The amendment in this bill which will likely result in periodic tenancy agreements being taken off the table for renters will only cause more grief and strain the rental market even further.

Only recently I was contacted by the family of a Currumbin Waters constituent desperately concerned about the dire state of Queensland's rental market after the constituent and her two young children received a notice to leave her current property, which had been sold by the landowners. Since July my constituent has visited countless home inspections and poured over online vacancies. She says that nothing is advertised for long and it is almost impossible to find somewhere affordable to rent.

Now, because of a lack of planning by the state Labor government, periodic tenancies will be taken away from renters also. The Palaszczuk Labor government is failing Currumbin constituents and failing Queenslanders with this careless aspect of the bill. I urge all members to support the LNP's amendments and I urge the Palaszczuk Labor government to do more to solve our housing crisis.

 **Mr McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (3.30 pm): I rise in support of the Housing Legislation Amendment Bill 2021, which delivers key objectives from our 10-year Housing Strategy framework. This bill is the latest action of the Palaszczuk Labor government to ensure Queenslanders have access to safe, secure and affordable housing. It is about protecting consumers while reforming and modernising Queensland's housing legislative framework. It means people living in and investing in the Queensland rental market will have better protections and certainty in their tenancy arrangements through legislative reforms. Consumers will be protected and empowered. The retirement village industry will be supported to supply quality services with confidence.

The bill delivers modern rental laws that better protect tenants and lessors and improves housing stability in the rental market. A key part of this is removing without-grounds evictions, providing renters with increased housing security. We are also ensuring vulnerable Queenslanders are supported to sustain tenancies in appropriate and secure housing that facilitates social, economic and cultural participation. We are supporting a fair and responsive housing system through reforms that enhance the safety and dignity of all Queenslanders and promote the provision of a range of housing options.

Important changes will also better support people experiencing the scourge of domestic and family violence. The domestic and family violence provisions will commence immediately on assent to continue temporary protections under the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Regulation 2020. The move means renters with evidence of experiencing domestic and family violence can exit a tenancy with seven days notice and can leave immediately after providing that notice. I believe there are additional amendments that have been circulated by the minister. To make it less onerous for renters and to ensure they can leave as quickly as possible, the supporting evidence required can be authorised by a range of professionals like social workers, refuge or crisis workers et cetera.

Renters will also be able to improve security at their rental property by changing locks without the owner's consent. These reforms will align our domestic and family violence protections in Queensland with those in Victoria and Western Australia and will contribute to the Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy 2016-2026 and to the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-2022.

Another important area of reform will support those renting with pets—the most discussed topic in the Open Doors to Renting Reform consultation and the stage 1 consultation regulatory impact statement. Feedback received during this process indicated Queensland's rental laws could do more to support tenants and lessors in reaching an agreement on renting with pets. Under our reforms, renters can request permission to have a pet. If the property owner does not respond within 14 days, the renter is deemed to have permission. The property owner can only refuse pets for prescribed reasons, and their approval can be subject to reasonable conditions other than additional bond or increased rent. Owners and renters will be encouraged to negotiate about proposed pets and should discuss this during the application process. Owners will be encouraged to include any restrictions about pets at the time of advertising. A blanket 'no pets' clause is not an acceptable reason for refusal. Queensland renters with pets told us they want more support, and that is exactly what we are delivering.

Over one-third of the 1.65 million households in Queensland rent, and the impacts of COVID and increased interstate migration are adding more pressure to our local rental market. With more Queenslanders renting, and renting longer, we need laws that support them, and we need a government to support them. I am very proud to be part of the Palaszczuk government that continues to deliver more safe, secure and affordable housing. This bill is supported by our record \$2.9 billion social housing investment across Queensland. This includes \$1.9 billion over four years to increase social housing stock and get more vulnerable Queenslanders into homes quicker.

In our local community of Bundamba that means the recent delivery of four new social housing complexes—three in Redbank and one in Bellbird Park—offering 56 homes at a total investment of \$19 million. This year's budget includes a further \$52 million for social housing in Ipswich. We are also establishing the new \$1 billion Housing Investment Fund, the returns from which will drive new supply to support current and future housing needs.

Under our action plan we will fast-track projects and initiatives that will increase the supply of social housing, seek proposals to develop under-utilised state land and deliver mixed-use developments. That means we are increasing the supply of social and affordable housing by almost 10,000 dwellings over the life of our Housing Strategy, including 7,400 new builds over the next four years under the Queensland Housing Investment Growth Initiative.

The Palaszczuk government is delivering a fairer and more contemporary housing sector for Queenslanders. This could not stand in greater contrast to the federal Morrison government, which is turning its back on those in our community who are vulnerable and need support by continuing to wind down the National Rental Affordability Scheme. Tens of thousands of Queenslanders rely on the NRAS, including a total of around 1,066 households in the federal electorates of Oxley and Blair that span our local community of Bundamba. The Morrison LNP's federal package provides no new funding for social housing and no support for rental affordability.

In the current housing market, we are seeing more Queenslanders in need of rental accommodation and an increase in demand. We are currently experiencing the worst housing affordability crisis in Australian history, and scrapping this essential scheme is simply shameful. NRAS has been supporting low-income Queenslanders since 2008. There are up to 384 people accessing NRAS in Bundamba. The Morrison government has turned its back on vulnerable people who cannot afford to buy a house and are struggling just to pay the rent.

Where is the Queensland LNP? Are they standing up for Queenslanders and asking the Prime Minister to continue providing this essential funding? No. They sit there mute and absurd, condemned by their silence. Rather than pick up the phone to their mates in Canberra, they are happy to sit there silent while vulnerable Queenslanders who need housing support are savaged by Morrison's cuts to social housing. On this bill, one after the other, LNP MPs have been standing up and going through the pantomime of pretending to raise grave concerns with particular elements, but, of course, at the end of the day, I am confident they will all vote for it. They will do that because it is good reform. They know it is good for Queensland. They know that the Palaszczuk Labor government has got it right.

I now turn to the Greens political party contributions on this bill. In her contribution, the liberal Greens member for South Brisbane accused members of this place who have investment properties of having a conflict of interest given the bill relates to rental laws, despite clear advice from the Clerk that this is not the case. This bill benefits renters. The liberal Greens member for South Brisbane is a renter. By her own logic, she should have recused herself. Yet, without a hint of irony or self-awareness, it would seem, the liberal Greens member for South Brisbane attempted to move a motion that would, by its own logic, conflict her in this debate. What total nonsense. What hypocrisy.

In fact, when you look at the federal register of interests of the Greens senator from New South Wales, Senator Mehreen Faruqi, who I believe is the Greens national spokesperson on housing—


A government member: On housing?

Mr McCALLUM: Yes, on housing—it reveals that the senator has not one but two investment properties. That is the Greens spokesperson on housing. It is unbelievable. It is utter hypocrisy. There is one rule for the liberal Greens and another for everyone else: do as I say, not as I do.

Indeed, there are further amendments than have been circulated by the liberal Greens member for South Brisbane that seem to be an attempt to circumvent or pre-empt the Speaker's same question ruling in relation to this bill by introducing what is effectively the Greens private member's bill as an amendment. The Greens' proposals offend both Queensland's Human Rights Act and basic contract

law—breaches of the Human Rights Act from a party that like to pretend they are committed to social justice and equality! As someone who has rented for the vast majority of my life, I commend this bill to the House.

(Time expired)

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (3.40 pm): This afternoon I rise to address the Housing Legislation Amendment Bill 2021. As other speakers have raised, housing legislation in the state of Queensland—indeed, across the nation of Australia—is really about a balancing act. On the one hand, here in Queensland, of our 1.65 million households some 550,000 are rental households. Most are families with children but we are seeing an increase in lone persons. Particularly in the electorate of Glass House we are seeing an alarming increase in the newly single older female demographic through domestic or family violence or through marriage or relationship breakdown. On the flip side, 90 per cent of those households—some half a million—are provided by the private rental market. Some 13 per cent of Queensland taxpayers have indicated that they have a share in a private rental property.

To get this right, you have to weigh up the requirements and the needs of the tenants with the requirements and needs of the property owners. If you get that wrong, you very quickly will create a far bigger issue than what we are seeing unfold here in the state of Queensland already. As other members have mentioned—and we are no different in the electorate of Glass House—the number of rental properties currently available has decreased significantly. We have had numerous cases come through my electorate office where long-term renters in places like Maleny and Woodford have suddenly been told that those properties will no longer be available for rent. The owners have made the most of southerners coming north and the great property prices and those properties are now owned, not available to rent.

In the electorate of Glass House we do not have social housing. We have very little social housing. That 90 per cent of private rental would probably be closer to 97 or 98 per cent in the electorate of Glass House, so there has not been an alternative for those many families in particular whose rental property no longer exists. We have worked very hard with a number of them and fortunately have been able to assist them into public housing outside of the electorate, but to lose families who have been an intrinsic part of some of our communities over many years has been quite saddening. Again, it is very important that when debating, discussing, amending housing legislation we get the balance right, because we do not need to make it any harder for tenants to find rental properties or for owners to rent their property.

It is fair to say that when the government first put forward a number of amendments in this space under their Open Doors to Renting Reform consultative process there were a number of extreme elements that concerned property owners, that concerned the Real Estate Institute of Queensland, the REIQ, and that concerned us here in the LNP opposition. Fortunately, most of those more extreme changes have been removed from this legislation that we are debating here this afternoon. You could say that the government has done a far better job of getting the balance right.

There are, however, two areas that do concern the LNP and where we do believe there is overreach in favour of the tenant and not the lessor, the property owner. We will be moving a number of amendments: one to do with the proposed changes around periodic agreements whereby they can no longer be reasonably ended by a lessor, as is the case under the current tenancy laws. The second will ensure that lessors are given the ultimate authority to refuse the right for a tenant to keep a pet without reason, as is the case under the current tenancy laws.

There are those two areas—periodic arrangements and pets. Whilst I understand the sentiment of the tenants, by again going too far in their favour we may find that properties that are currently available for rent may be taken off the market and sold and provided to a household looking to own and occupy rather than rent. I would be encouraging members on all sides of the chamber and the crossbench to support the shadow minister's amendments when they come before the House later on during the debate.

Let me finish where I commenced. It is very important that we get the balance right. As others have said, we are currently in the throes of one of the worst housing affordability situations I have ever witnessed in the state of Queensland. I have spoken previously about ways I believe the Palaszczuk Labor government can address that by looking at our planning laws, by looking at our land availability, by looking at opportunities that things like tiny homes present. In the absence of that, it is important that we get these laws right here this afternoon. Again, I urge all members to support the amendments being moved by the LNP.



Ms RICHARDS (Redlands—ALP) (3.46 pm): I rise to support the Housing Legislation Amendment Bill 2021. I follow on from the member for Bundamba's contribution. What absolute hypocrisy from the Greens in the member for South Brisbane's contribution! You cannot have your cake and eat it too. If you want to call out every landlord who is an MP in this place, equally you should call out the renters. There is absolute logic to that. The member for Bundamba mentioned that Senator Mehreen Faruqi has two investment properties. It is actually three, with two in New South Wales and the third one in Pakistan, of all places. I will table that for the benefit of the House and for the benefit of the member for South Brisbane.

Tabled paper: Bundle of documents relating to statements of registerable interests for Senator Mehreen Faruqi [1738].

Our government is committed to making renting fairer. The introduction of this bill does exactly that. The changes to the rental laws that are proposed in this bill include: ending without-grounds evictions and introducing an expanded suite of approved reasons for renters and property owners to end a tenancy, including on expiry of a fixed-term agreement; establishing a set of prescribed minimum standards to ensure all Queensland rental properties meet minimum safety, security and functionality standards; stronger protections for people experiencing domestic and family violence to end their interest in a residential lease quickly with limited liability for end-of-lease costs; making it easier to keep pets by requiring property owners to only refuse pet requests on prescribed reasonable grounds within required time frames and allowing approval to be subject to reasonable conditions that do not include an additional pet bond or rent increase; and establishing a power to require parties to disclose information about the lease and rental property to ensure both parties have access to the information they need to make informed decisions.

These changes were driven, in part, by our Queensland Housing Strategy 2017-2027. This 10-year framework is driving these key reforms. It looks at how we invest in the infrastructure that our communities need to ensure that we are meeting the housing needs of all Queenslanders. The strategy also aims to ensure that we have confidence in the housing market. That is why this strategy is so important at a state level. It is equally important that in our own local communities, particularly within our own local governments, they likewise have a strategy that is intrinsically linked to ours. Minister Miles requested Redland City Council review their housing strategy to make sure they look at land supply, housing diversity and rental supply and look at addressing housing affordability. This is really important work in our communities to make sure that we are planning to meet those needs. That good planning work is what will help us address the housing affordability crisis.

This is a really good piece of work; it is sensible. All of our local government areas should be looking at their individual strategies, which feed into ours. The council referred back to a housing strategy that was developed in 2011. The Redlands Housing Strategy 2011-2031 document is based on 2006 census data—data which is 15 years old. We know how important it is to have the right data when we look at how we plan for future communities. The consultation work that was undertaken then was a decade old. We know how much the state has changed in a decade and the pressure that growth is having on our communities. I table this document for the benefit of the House.

Tabled paper: Redland City Council document titled 'Redlands Housing Strategy 2011-2031' [1739].

The mapping of major centres and localities does not include any of the developments that have occurred on the ground out in the Redlands. It does not have Victoria Point as a principal locality. It does not mention the Weinam Creek Priority Development Area that is being delivered by Redland City Council. It does not look at shoreline. It does not look at Mount Cotton as an emerging community and it does not look at Toondah Harbour, which is slated. These are all big key projects that fall within that area. This document is meant to review and address this. On pages 57 and 58 the report outlines five outcomes. At the end it says that they will annually undertake and commit to reporting and detailing the achievements on the outcomes that they suggest in that report. They also committed to reviewing the strategy every five years. That would mean that there should have been a review undertaken in 2016, and that has not occurred.

I would really implore Redland City Council to do this good piece of work for our community to make sure that we can provide the growth that we need for our families and children to be able to stay in our community and buy a house. That would assist us in getting infrastructure needs right and to know where we need to be investing. I say to Redland City Council: please go away and do this good piece of work that informs this strategy that assists us as legislators in what we need to do. It is good work that needs to be done. In terms of what is contained within this bill, the Palaszczuk government is looking to make sure that we make rental fair for landlords and renters. It strikes the right balance and I commend this bill to the House.



Mr O'CONNOR (Bonney—LNP) (3.52 pm): At the outset of my contribution to the Housing Legislation Amendment Bill 2021, for full transparency I would like to declare that I receive rental income from a unit in Biggera Waters, which is of course declared as required on the Register of Members' Interests. The LNP will be supporting this legislation, but we will be moving amendments where we think the right balance between tenants and property owners has not been achieved.

One of the biggest issues on my part of the Gold Coast is the housing crisis. COVID has made it much worse, but over the past couple of years I have regularly heard from people who can no longer afford the rent they are paying or the rent increase imposed and they cannot secure another property in our area. Others have felt discriminated against when refused a property. Many more have to move to other parts of the Gold Coast or even, tragically, away from our city because it has become too unaffordable. That needs to be a consideration in this debate, but it is important to remember that there are many other factors that have led to this situation: lack of supply; local government planning settings; site availability; having the right areas of a city zoned correctly; the cost of construction; and a lack of public housing availability for vulnerable people. We should also not forget that many of these were issues long before COVID saw people from the southern states move to Queensland. That migration has just made the crisis worse.

As well as people struggling to rent, I have spoken to property owners and managers with concerns about renting out their properties because they have had massive damage inflicted by previous tenants. There is generally a very small minority of those who do the wrong thing and do not care about the consequences, but these owners feel changes could undermine their property rights. Prospective owners as well are concerned that they will not have genuine rights over their property, and that undermines their desire to invest in property in Queensland. I think there are improvements that can be made but—and I think this is the phrase of the debate—we need to get the balance right. We need to give renters more control over their homes without undermining property rights.

I think it is also important to remember that the owners of the properties we are talking about generally earn less than those of us in this chamber. They are not the top end of town. Of those choosing to invest what they have saved into a house or apartment, nearly two-thirds have a taxable income of less than \$80,000. Over 70 per cent of them have just one investment property. These are aspirational Queenslanders. They are just trying to get ahead by putting what money they have in a relatively modest investment. In this debate we need to ensure that we are not favouring one group over the other. I believe it is possible to make changes that will benefit both renters and property owners.

In terms of my electorate, I am proud of the fact that Bonney has more renters than most others; that is, over 46 per cent of the residents in my part of the Gold Coast are renting. As such, this bill is of great importance to many of my constituents. I thank the many people who have taken the time to share their views with me both for and against aspects of this legislation over the past few months.

Before I get into the bill before us I would also like to express my disappointment that the government is not including amendments to the Manufactured Homes (Residential Parks) Act. I represent several parks covered by this piece of legislation, including Seachange in Arundel and Pine Ridge Caravan Park and Settlers Village in Coombabah. I have had many issues with the current settings raised with me. At one park in particular the residents struggled with a difficult manager who caused them a lot of stress. We had excellent support from Tenants Queensland, and I would like to thank them for what they did for the residents of these parks, but they deserve to have this legislation improved.

One of the big changes before us is the additional proposed grounds for ending an agreement. These new grounds include: if a fixed-term tenancy agreement is due to expire; to vacate premises for demolition or development; to allow significant repair or renovation works to be undertaken; if it is subject to a change of use; if the owner or their immediate family needs to move in; if it has been sold and vacant possession is required; and to vacate the premises in preparation for a sale. The lessor must provide the specified information to the tenant when ending a tenancy agreement, and they are liable if they provide false information. For example, if they say they are going to sell and then re-list the premises for rent within six months, it would likely attract an offence.

This was generally agreed to by most stakeholders, but questions were raised as to whether they should remove the ending of a fixed-term lease as grounds to end a tenancy. The belief was that this continues to undermine housing stability for vulnerable people in particular. Many of these changes make sense and in most cases will allow for the landlord to end a lease on reasonable grounds; however, where there are tenants who cause disruption and difficulties for owners I do not believe QCAT provides a simple pathway to resolve the situation. To exacerbate this by removing the clause to end a tenancy at the end of a fixed-term tenancy would unfairly shift the balance to the tenants, with owners feeling they have very little control over their own properties.

Tenants would continue to be able to end a tenancy without-grounds: if the required two-week notice period is given; if at the start of the tenancy the rental property is not fit for the renter to live in; if it is not in good repair or does not meet the prescribed minimum housing standards; if the lessor has not complied with a repair order of QCAT within 14 days; or if a co-tenant or co-resident passes away. The bill also proposes to make permanent the provisions under the COVID-19 regulation to allow more flexible arrangements for renters experiencing family and domestic violence.


This is something that my electorate is sadly far too familiar with. Every year the Southport Magistrates Court sees around 2,500 to 3,000 domestic violence order applications. These amendments are incredibly important for the safety of those in these vulnerable situations, and I very much welcome the flexibility they will offer. When faced with the dangers of a violent relationship, going to QCAT to end a tenancy agreement or prevent a violent partner from causing more damage or injuries is completely unrealistic. People going through this have a right to feel they can leave quickly without bearing the extra financial burden of excess rent, losing their bond or any extra stress. That should be minimised.

While many of the additional minimum standards are fine, the change to increase costs that can be authorised by the renter for emergency repairs from the equivalent of two weeks rent to four weeks rent is a large increase, and I would like further clarity on how that was arrived at. In the end, it is the owner who will have to pay for these repairs, so they should be more in control of what is spent.

The amendments around the keeping of pets move the onus to the landlord to provide a substantive reason as to why the tenant cannot have a pet. They go beyond providing a framework for the tenant and owner to come to an agreement by creating the assumption that the tenant should be allowed to keep a pet. I understand that for many people pets are part of their family or they may have been unable to have a pet because of their rental situation. Ultimately, having a pet is an individual choice, just as how someone wants to use their property is an individual choice as well. I would support changes that allow for a wider scope of reasons for a landlord to refuse, so I believe what we have before us does not resolve this in the best way.

The amendments to the Retirement Villages Act will exempt freehold resident operated retirement villages from existing statutory buyback requirements. This is an important change needed for these retirement villages to provide certainty going forward. While the Deloitte modelling provided on the impact of these reforms concludes that they will lead to a minimal increase in the costs for owners, I do not believe that this adequately factors in the change in perception this could have for those considering investing in property in Queensland.

Now more than ever we need to increase our housing supply and ensure we are not doing anything to disincentivise investing in the Queensland property sector. These new laws have many commendable aspects, but I support the amendments to tweak some of the areas in which I do not think they get it right. I want everyone to feel secure in their home. We need to work to get the balance right, giving more confidence to tenants but still leaving fundamental rights in the hands of property owners.

 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (4.00 pm): I rise today to support the Housing Legislation Amendment Bill 2021. I support it because it is another example of the Palaszczuk government delivering on our election commitments. This was an election commitment that we made to provide rental reforms to improve Queenslanders' access to safe, secure and affordable housing. They are part of the 10-year Queensland Housing Strategy 2017-2027 that commits to modernising our housing legislation. It is also supported by our action plan on housing and homelessness which was introduced in June this year, along with our \$2.9 billion investment to boost housing supply across the state. I am pleased to say that my community of Ipswich is benefiting from this investment.

Having a safe, secure roof over your head is the basic foundation of participating in society. A growing number of Queenslanders are relying on the rental market for housing. They are renting for longer due to being priced out of the housing market. Many people are finding themselves to be lifelong renters and consider their rental properties as long-term homes rather than a short-term stopgap before home ownership.

The demographics of renters are also changing. We are seeing more older people renting, particularly older, single women. Around 39 per cent of private dwellings in Ipswich are rented, which is above the state and national average. It is one of the reasons people in our community were so deeply affected when the former Newman LNP government cruelly cut the funding to our local tenancy advocacy service almost immediately following their election in 2012.

Increasingly, many Ipswich people are telling me that they are finding the local private rental market more unaffordable and difficult to get into, especially low-income earners who have previously found Ipswich to be quite an affordable place to live until recently. Local people feel like they are being squeezed out of the rental market by the large numbers of people moving here from our southern states. On top of this, COVID-19 and the winding down of the federal National Rental Affordability Scheme is putting the squeeze on local renters like never before.

Before the pandemic, Ipswich's rental vacancy rate was 2.9 per cent and now it is just 0.9 per cent. This lack of housing supply is making it harder for vulnerable and low-income tenants to compete in the housing market and negotiate with property owners on equal terms. This bill is a much needed intervention to help level out the playing field. It acknowledges the challenges that tenants face, while recognising the importance of protecting the investments of landlords who supply housing to the private rental market.

This bill comes after extensive consultation with Queenslanders that started in 2018 with our Open Doors to Renting Reform consultation. Around 137,000 Queenslanders responded to this consultation, providing feedback on their experiences of living in, owning or managing a rental property. This was followed up in 2019 by *A better renting future reform roadmap* consultation, which saw over 15,000 responses. This demonstrates that renting is an important issue for many in our community.

The consultation showed that Queenslanders want our rental laws to be modernised and to strike the right balance between tenants' and lessors' rights and responsibilities. It is not surprising that one of the top issues that came out of the consultation was the right for renters to keep pets. We have heard many MPs talk about that in the House because we all know that most people consider pets to be part of the family. They provide companionship, safety, and physical and mental health benefits. It is probably the right time for me to give a shout-out to my own four-legged best friend, Juno.


With increasing numbers of younger people and older retirees renting, many of whom are single, a pet provides company and is proven to have many mental health benefits. However, only an estimated 15 per cent of rental properties are pet friendly in Queensland. That is why I am so pleased to see that this bill will make it easier for renters to keep a pet by requiring that lessors can only refuse pet requests on prescribed reasonable grounds and within required time frames.

Everyone deserves to live in a safe and functional home. Some renters, however, particularly disadvantaged and vulnerable renters, are reluctant to request repairs and maintenance out of fear that their rent will increase or their tenancy will be terminated. No renter should have to fear retaliatory action for simply requesting a repair. Introducing a minimum housing standard for all rental properties is a welcome reform that will ensure all Queensland rental properties meet minimum safety, security and functionality standards.

Another reform we are introducing will end without-grounds evictions and expand the suite of approved reasons for renters and property owners to end a tenancy. Tenants should not fear that their lease could end abruptly at any minute without any given reason. Knowing on what grounds a lessor can end your tenancy right from the start will provide peace of mind for many renters.

I am also very pleased to see this bill put in place protections for people experiencing domestic and family violence. People who need to flee abusive homes need to be able to do so quickly and safely. They do not need the added stress of worrying about how to deal with end-of-lease issues. This bill will allow them to end their lease with seven-days notice, with their liability for end-of-tenancy costs capped to the seven-day notice period.

The reforms in this bill strike a fair and balanced approach to renting in Queensland. Importantly, they are unlikely to have any significant impact on rent supply or affordability. With more and more people renting in Queensland, it is important our laws are modernised to better reflect the state's changing housing needs. I want to thank our housing minister, Leeanne Enoch, for overseeing these important and fair reforms. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (4.07 pm): I rise to give my contribution to the debate on the Housing Legislation Amendment Bill 2021. While I am pleased that the bill includes some positive changes for renters—in particular, those experiencing domestic and family violence—the changes concerning termination of leases were poorly conceived, not balanced and lacked research on the impact they would have on the rental market if this bill was passed in its original form. While the bill may have some good intentions in its preparation, in reality all that it has done is further damage the already fragile rental market in Queensland.

Everyone would agree that renters deserve fairness and the right to a safe, clean rental property. However, we also have to acknowledge that rental property owners are largely mum-and-dad investors who some speakers have tried to demonise here today. Many of these mum-and-dad investors are working-class people who have spent all their life paying off their home and when they have finished paying off their home they use the money left over to put into housing. Many of them do not put that money into shares; many of them buy another home because that is what they know. Many of them rent out that house so they can send their kids to university. These are the mum-and-dad investors who a few members were criticising here today.

When this bill was first tabled, it was so one-sided that it scared the daylights out of mum-and-dad investors, as I mentioned. I believe this drove many to either sell or place their properties on the Airbnb market, particularly in regional centres. This made the rental situation even worse for renters. Numerous people contacted my office, and I have lost count of the number of times I have been stopped in the streets by concerned residents who have invested in a second home on the rental market or are retirees who live on rental income from their properties.

There was a lot of anger and uncertainty for rental investors about the bill, particularly concerning the changes and limits to the ability for property owners to end lease agreements without-grounds. My point is that the introduction of this bill created a massive uproar in the rental market which has hurt both investors and renters.


Thorough research should have been done on the impacts the bill would have on the rental market before it was tabled. However, I am pleased that the government performed a 180-degree backflip to change this provision back to close to identical to what was already in place prior to the bill's introduction. I know that the Greens are not happy with this and, no doubt, will table amendments slanted heavily in favour of renters by portraying mum-and-dad rental investors as big bad corporations, which is completely untrue and false.

Let us take a moment to look at the reality of what would happen if there were an imbalance between investors and renters. We know that the majority of rental property owners are mum-and-dad investors, retirees and small to medium sized investment groups. They take on the risk of the investment yet were initially told that they could not cease a lease agreement at the completion of a term without a valid reason. It is akin to buying shares and being told that you cannot sell them without a specific reason.

If we pass the original bill with even more amendments that weigh heavily in favour of renters, we would have a more severe lack of affordable rental properties in the state than we experience right now. Instead of poorly thought-out changes to legislation, the government should immediately invest in more affordable accommodation throughout the state to address the shortage and bring down rental property prices.

I give an example which highlights what the government should be doing instead of changing legislation. I have a not-for-profit organisation in my electorate which is very active in the community in raising funds to provide affordable housing to the elderly and at-risk renters. With zero funding from the state and federal governments, the not-for-profit organisation owns 15 units and is constructing additional one- and two-bedroom units. I was approached about securing a small parcel of state land at the current site which would allow the organisation to build an additional three units. Again, it is all affordable housing for elderly and at-risk renters.

Here we have an organisation doing the government's job of building units to offer affordable housing to the community of Malanda with zero state and federal government assistance. When given the chance to waive the cost of the land and contribute to this worthwhile venture, what did the government do? It forced the not-for-profit organisation to try to find \$35,000 to build the housing the government should be building in the first place. If we genuinely want to fix the rental market, we need to support the local charity and housing organisations and build more affordable accommodation.

 **Mr SULLIVAN** (Stafford—ALP) (4.12 pm): I rise to support the Housing Legislation Amendment Bill and I thank the minister for progressing this important reform. It is an issue that I am really passionate about, so it is great to be able to contribute to this debate this afternoon. As I said as early as my first speech, housing is a crucial issue for my Stafford community. One of the characteristics that I love about our local community is that our demographics are not split suburb by suburb; in fact, we are not divided street by street. In parts of our electorate we have a combination of social housing, first home owners, renters, young families, retirees and some on the top of the hills with very modern homes with wonderful city views. That is all in the same street. We have pockets of old tin and timber Queenslanders and other areas of high-residential density, especially along our road, bus and rail corridors. We are a real commuter community.

Access to housing—and housing affordability more broadly—is a live issue right across our community. This legislation strikes a balance based on fairness and equity. It improves the rights of tenants when it comes to minimum standards for rental properties. This is to ensure minimum standards for safety, security and functionality. It ends without-grounds evictions and at the same time provides an expanded suite of approved reasons for renters or property owners to end a tenancy.

This bill delivers better protection and support for domestic violence victims including, of course, children. We know that housing is a huge issue in these circumstances both in terms of the urgency of leaving violent relationships, the need to do so quickly as well as the longer term support for victims and children to ensure their safety. As the member for Mount Ommaney said, for many of us and our electorate officers this is not a hypothetical equation; it is an issue that sadly we deal with directly all too often.

This bill also promotes tenants' rights when it comes to pets and pet ownership. As an aside, I guess by the understanding of the parliamentary procedures of the member for South Brisbane, I am surprised that the earlier motion did not include a suggestion that all pet owners should not be allowed to vote in this debate! To put it beyond doubt, I should declare that we are a one-dog, two-cat household.

As the member for Nicklin pointed out, this legislation recognises something at the core of our community and our awareness—the social and cultural benefits that we as a community inherently see in pet ownership, whether it is for companionship, sociability or especially for kids with pets learning the responsibility of caring for a pet. Although it might be said, hypothetically in my experience, that this responsibility can perhaps come and go depending on what treat a certain four-legged pet can surprise us with!

Jokes aside, many families in my community are long-term renters, families with children who see their rented property as more than just four walls. Rightly, that should include the desire to have appropriate pets for their kids—that is, pets appropriate to that rental property.

I thank those involved locally in housing provision and advocacy. I thank our community providers including domestic and family violence refuges in my community, whose details we obviously keep protected but who I want to publicly thank. I thank the local Department of Housing staff, particularly those who work out of the Chermide hub—the Chermide regional centre. They are hardworking servants of the public committed to treating people with humanity. We all know that they have to deal sometimes with very complex, dynamic scenarios for local residents.

I also take this opportunity to thank my electorate office team who are also the ones who regularly take the calls of a wide range of people on a wide range of issues in relation to housing and who do a great job in pursuing good outcomes for local residents. They are part of the broader Labor team that believes in the importance of that local service. I thank local housing sector advocates, including Rachel Watson, who has been a really great sounding-board for me. I appreciate her advice and insight.

Thanks again to the minister for this reform. She knows that I am a huge supporter of social housing across Queensland including, of course, in my local community. I proudly stand up for social housing tenants. I work with neighbours. I work with those currently facing challenges with NRAS as well as with other families who rent in a variety of short-term and long-term means.

I update the minister: the new social housing properties currently under construction will serve locals very well and are coming along beautifully. It is particularly important to recognise that, as I said, in an electorate with the characteristics of mine where there are a lot of commuters, busways, rail lines and road access, the minister and the department do a great job in recognising really appropriate spaces that include accessibility for those older residents and those living with a disability, linking in with local medical services including, of course, the great Prince Charles Hospital as well as local services and shops. They do a really great job. The latest round is coming along very well.

I recognise this legislative reform in its proper context as well—that is, it is occurring in the context of the Queensland Housing Strategy 2017-2027, a 10-year framework driving real reform and targeted investment to provide access to affordable housing. I again congratulate the minister for driving that reform. In particular, I note the significant investment of \$2.9 billion as a very practical tool in our Housing Strategy. I thank the chair and the committee for bringing forward the bill today and I commend the bill to the House.



Dr ROWAN (Moggill—LNP) (4.18 pm): I rise to address the Housing Legislation Amendment Bill 2021 and to support those amendments foreshadowed by the shadow minister for housing and public works. By way of background, the genesis for this legislation came about following a 2018 consultation process by the state government to identify priority issues for housing and rental reform. In 2019, the

Palaszczuk state Labor government released its so-called *A better renting future reform roadmap* in response to the previous year's consultation process. As a part of this road map, the Palaszczuk state Labor government chose a two-stage process to enact changes to renting and housing legislation.

Accordingly, the legislation currently before the House will be making amendments to the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008, the Retirement Villages Act 1999, the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Regulation 2009 and the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Regulation 2020.

There are undoubtedly major and substantial reforms that are proposed in this legislation which will have significant impacts upon both renters and lessors. Indeed, the passing of this legislation will deliver a fundamental shift and reframing of the relationship and interaction between renters and lessors. While there is plenty of goodwill and positive intention that these changes will lead to constructive and encouraging reforms, as I have said previously, you simply cannot legislate for goodwill alone.

As addressed by my colleagues and the shadow minister for housing and public works, this legislation proposes considerable and consequential reforms including how a tenancy can be ended, including specific grounds by which a tenancy can end. Also, there are aspects which will introduce a new process to enable tenants experiencing domestic and family violence the ability to terminate their tenancy promptly. This is a welcome step and one that is certainly overdue.

As an elected representative I have met with and assisted constituents and community groups who have shared with me difficulties with rental accommodation following domestic and/or family violence situations. The ability, therefore, to leave quickly, with end-of-tenancy liability for only seven days, is a positive step forward. I heard the contribution of the member for Stafford in relation to electorate staff. I would say that all members of the House are dealing with those complex and difficult circumstances. We certainly acknowledge their contributions when they have to talk to people who are fleeing very complex and difficult family and domestic violence situations. I think it is important that we acknowledge them. I join with the member for Stafford in his acknowledgement of all electorate office staff.

I would also like to acknowledge our community service providers, particularly those providing services with respect to homelessness and those that assist with domestic and family violence. When I was the shadow minister for communities, disabilities and seniors in the last parliament, I met with many of those service providers and saw the amazing work they do there. I know that the member for Surfers Paradise, given that he currently holds that shadow minister role, is also meeting with them and hearing about their work right across Queensland.

I would also like to take the opportunity during my contribution to note that there will be minimum housing standards prescribed with respect to safety, security and reasonable functionality. As a part of the legislation it is envisaged that greater compliance will be encouraged, with further clarity given around repair and maintenance obligations and legislative enforcement.

With respect to home safety, I would also like to mention that I recently met with local Moggill electorate constituent Mr Clem Capdevila of Clems Electrical. Mr Capdevila has been an advocate for greater electrical safety, especially in existing built premises, and the need for greater electrical safety protection and education for all tenants, as well as home owners, landlords, apprentices and electricians, to mitigate and eliminate the risks of electric shocks and other adverse events in housing environments. As a result of advocacy and public campaigning, the Queensland government produced a landlords webinar. This demonstrates that positive outcomes can follow when the Palaszczuk state Labor government listens to those on the front line and acts in the interests of all Queenslanders.

Turning to other reforms in this legislation, perhaps the most well known aspect of the bill before us relates to those amendments with respect to the keeping of pets. These amendments will require that a lessor can only refuse a pet request from a tenant on prescribed reasonable grounds and which cannot be rectified by reasonable conditions. We all know that pets are important. They can certainly help with people's mental health and wellbeing in terms of companionship. There also need to be reasonable circumstances in terms of how they are kept within particular forms of housing.


In reality, these reforms will remove a lessor's right to refuse a tenant to keep a pet on the lessor's property without reason. This will have significant ramifications for what it means to individual property rights and the rights of lessors. It is for this reason that the Liberal National Party will be moving the foreshadowed amendment to ensure that lessors are given the ultimate authority to refuse the right for a tenant to keep a pet without reason, as is the case under current tenancy laws.

There is no doubt that reforms aimed at the rental sector and the interactions between renters and lessors are an incredibly complex exercise. Given the current state of the renting and housing market, there is perhaps no better time for these changes to be debated here in the Queensland parliament. Unfortunately, Queenslanders know all too well that a lack of housing investment has been compounded by poor planning and foresight by the Palaszczuk state Labor government and, in fact, that a less than optimal approach by the state government has contributed to a demand and affordability crisis here in Queensland.

Indeed, when it comes to the approval of new dwellings in Queensland, residential building approvals have decreased across the state by close to 40 per cent since 2014-15. It is therefore critical that efforts aimed at renters and lessors must also be matched by a renewed effort from the Palaszczuk state Labor government to increase housing stock for freehold, affordable and social housing. With that in mind, given that there is such a tight rental market and growing cohort of both renters and lessors in Queensland, what must ultimately be recognised in this debate is the importance of understanding both rights and responsibilities and the need for the Palaszczuk state Labor government to achieve an appropriate balance in the interests of renters and lessors alike.

Tenants should have rights and opportunities that are aligned with a modern society; however, this must be matched, in respect, with an equal obligation of responsibilities to the lessor and ultimately the property owner. Equally, this applies to lessors and property owners, who have a duty, obligation and responsibility to their renters which must be matched by reasonable rights. On this point, whilst improvements have been made throughout this legislation, there is still more than can be done, which is why the Liberal National Party is proposing key amendments in order to ensure a greater balance can be achieved. I would certainly encourage all members to give their due consideration to these amendments.

Finally, all renters and tenants should be able to live in safe housing. Many reforms in this legislation will achieve this outcome; however, all members in the Queensland parliament must accept that the interests of landlords and small investors must also be considered. A balance must always be achieved when it comes to legislation here in Queensland.

 **Mr RUSSO** (Toohey—ALP) (4.27 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Housing Legislation Amendment Bill 2021. The objectives of the bill are to amend the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008, the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Regulation 2020, the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Regulation 2009 and the Retirement Villages Act 1999 for particular purposes. I do not intend to speak to each of the pieces of legislation but will pick out a few of the more important ones.

The Palaszczuk government is delivering on its commitment to the people of Queensland by putting in place rental reforms. The 10-year Queensland Housing Strategy 2017-2027 is the framework for key reforms and targeted investment across the housing sector. We want to ensure Queenslanders have access to safe, secure and affordable housing. In Queensland in 2017-18, around 63 per cent of households owned their own home, with or without a mortgage, with 36 per cent renting. Most renters rent via a private landlord. This is in line with national household ownership rates, which are down from 70 per cent in 1997-98. The long-held Australian dream of home ownership appears to be waning, although perhaps not by choice.

This bill is the result of an extensive consultation with Queenslanders in 2018 and 2019. We want to help tenants to plan for their future housing needs by improving protections for tenants while safeguarding a lessor's interests and improving housing stability in the rental market. The consultations highlighted that many vulnerable renters are reluctant to enforce their tenancy rights because they fear their rent will increase, or they will be asked to leave, or they will not be offered a renewal when their current lease ends. This fear of retaliation towards tenants was common and an indicator that the current laws were not operating as intended.


The security of having a home enables people to achieve positive life outcomes such as good health, quality education and secure employment. With more Queenslanders renting, and renting for longer, it is important that our rental laws support individuals and families. This bill will achieve these objectives by ending tenancies fairly. Lessors will be prevented from terminating a tenancy without-grounds and will need to rely on an expanded suite of specific stated grounds to end a tenancy. Tenants will continue to be able to end a tenancy without-grounds, as long as the required notice is provided. Tenants will also have access to a wider range of specific grounds to end a tenancy, including grounds such as the rental property does not comply with minimum housing standards; the lessor has not complied with a QCAT repair order within the specified time; or the death of a co-tenant.

Minimum housing standards will be prescribed by amending the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Regulation 2009. The requirements will ensure a property is weatherproof and structurally sound; have fixtures and fittings that are safe and work and are in good repair and do not present a health hazard with normal use; be free from vermin, damp and mould; have adequate plumbing and drainage and be connected to a supply of hot and cold water for drinking; and ensure the toilet is connected to a sewer, septic or other waste disposal system. These are not unreasonable requirements. These minimum housing standards will provide safe and secure homes for tenants. No tenant should have to live in a property that does not meet the minimum housing standards. Similar grounds to end a tenancy will apply to moveable dwelling agreements and rooming accommodation agreements.

We know that people are often at their most vulnerable when they attempt to leave a domestic violence situation. Existing tenancy protections do not support people in these situations to leave quickly or to a safer environment. The bill's amendments will streamline the process for tenants experiencing domestic violence. Lessors, too, will be protected from inappropriate use of this provision by the requirement for supporting evidence to be made available at the time of ending the agreement.

The bill provides for rental law reforms that encourage more pet-friendly rental properties in Queensland by introducing a framework to support renters who want to keep their pet. We know that pets are an important part of life for many Queenslanders and are often viewed as part of the family. They provide a range of benefits that became very evident during COVID-19. People relied on their pets for companionship and safety. Having a pet provided physical and mental health benefits as well. These reforms will allow tenants, subject to reasonable conditions and with the lessor's written consent, to keep a pet.

I was pleased to see that there is strong community support for these protections. The Palaszczuk government has taken the time to ensure that these reforms met the needs and expectations of the community. These reforms find the balance between the rights and needs of renters and lessors, as well as providing certainty and stability in the rental market. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Mr MILLAR** (Gregory—LNP) (4.34 pm): While the LNP is not opposing this bill, as the member for Gregory I must say for Western Queenslanders entertaining this bill at this time is like rearranging the deck chairs on the *Titanic*, because Western Queensland is facing a housing crisis. Other members have spoken of the tight rental markets in Queensland generally. In Western Queensland the rental markets are so tight they are teetering on the edge of non-existence. Removing landlords' rights might just see them snuff out altogether. If members do not believe me, consider this: the Labor government, via the Queensland Department of Health, recently gazumped a young couple in Longreach in order to secure their rental house for a government employee. The young couple had their private rental lease terminated and had to vacate the home. They were paying around \$400 per week. The Queensland government offered \$680 per week. Score for the Queensland government; homelessness for the young couple!

To be listening to the noble nonsense about housing rights being sprouted by Labor and Greens MPs is just an insult to Western Queenslanders. More nonsense from the Labor government is that it never sells public assets. In Western Queensland it has sold so many houses. The private rental markets are so small in Western Queensland that it has become imperative that both the state and federal governments act with the utmost care and responsibility in terms of how their policies and actions will impact the private market.

The state government's employee housing requirements, combined with its social housing requirements, easily match or even outstrip the number of houses available through the private rental market. Neglect of this housing responsibility is not only leading to a great inequality of housing standards for government employees in the west; but also creating housing shortages for private employers and employees who are needed in transport, tourism and agricultural production, just to name a few.

As for social housing, it desperately needs both upgrading and expansion. For example, most social housing in the west has the old evaporative air conditioner. There are two drawbacks to this: firstly, they are located on the roof and it is so dangerous to access for cleaning and servicing and, secondly, they require a constant supply of clean water in order to function. Many, if not most, western communities are reliant on artesian water with a high mineral content, so the air conditioners constantly break down. The residents are then left waiting until QBuild outreach visits are scheduled. Too bad if it is right through the hot months where the days are in the high 40s. I recently made representations for constituents in Boulia that it would be far more sensible to install the more electric, refrigerative air

conditioners for their comfort and health. They would be more reliable, easier to keep clean and they would not require the scarce water to run. The response was that the repair of the broken and old evaporative systems had been added to QBuild's Mount Isa to-do list when it gets around to Boulia.

The Western Queensland Alliance of Councils recently released the region's first region-wide housing market study covering 22 council areas in Western Queensland. It revealed that an area spanning 60 per cent of Queensland's land mass is short nearly 1,500 houses. As the InQueensland news website reported, this housing shortage is an underlying cause of community corrosion and economic stagnation. The housing shortage is a major reason employers cannot recruit new staff. In good news for outback Queensland, COVID restrictions have seen more tourism out there in 2020 and 2021, but where can we house these employees to work in our hotels, our motels, our new glamping and ecoresorts? Where can we put the staff required to operate our expanded museums, galleries and other attractions?

I am not sure if the Treasurer is shrugging his shoulders at the moment and saying that he is giving stimulus to new home buildings as part of Unite and Recover from COVID, but the truth is harsher than that. At a time of a huge shortage of both materials and labour in the building industry, Western Queensland is at the end of the line on both categories and needs focused and active help. The per capita level of investment into housing in Western Queensland is less than one-fifth of what occurs in Greater Brisbane. I just want to underscore that this is not a total figure with differences in population creating an exaggerated deficit; this is the per capita figure. Again, this is the per capita figure. Per Queenslander, if you like, Western Queensland receives less than a fifth of the money directed into housing down here in Greater Brisbane. In dollar terms, over the three years to June 2020, the average value of approved residential building work, be that a new house or housing renovation, was \$2,675 in Greater Brisbane and in the 22 western LGAs it averaged a measly \$320.

We have a chronic shortage of housing due to a shortfall that can only be described as drastic. Our existing housing desperately needs investment to bring it up to standard. I urge the Labor government to look at small home renovation packages for Western Queensland to lift the standards of our existing housing stock before it deteriorates further. There are many seniors in Western Queensland shires living in older housing stock who desperately need a hand to fix the roof or repaint the walls. Without that help eventually the disrepair of the home may mean that they can no longer continue to live independently. But where do they go then? The options are few.

I implore the Labor government to set funds aside to rebuild government employee housing stocks as new builds. This would not only help us recruit and retain our doctors, nurses, police, ambulance, teachers and our departmental employees across roads, agriculture, land and resources, but also free up rental housing to remove the current choke on private workforces. Similarly, I beg the government to increase and improve its social housing stock. These are the homes of many of our disadvantaged. The hot, substandard housing they endure is not good for the health of residents, but it is their only option. These residents simply cannot afford to play in the tiny private rental market, especially not when the state government is competing for that limited housing stock.


Given Western Queensland's dire infrastructure shortfall, we also need Western Queenslanders to be incentivised to consider investing in a rental house in their home town, be it a rescued and renovated house or a new build. Every Western Queenslander should feel insulted by this bill which will actually create disincentives for western residents to take up the provision of private rentals in their own communities.

I have my eye on the clock and I do want to move on to the retirement villages reforms, but first I want to highlight that in prescribing the tenants' rights in the way it does the bill removes the capacity for landlords and tenants to negotiate. Looking at the provision relating to tenants' rights to have pets, I predict many landlords will remove all the fencing at their rental houses rather than be coerced in this way. This is very sad. The bill not only removes lessors' property rights, it shuts the door on the possible human negotiation and interaction. Like the REIQ, I also have a big issue with the concept of deemed consent. The bill sets a two-week deadline between the tenant's request and the landlord's refusal.

Our housing situation in Western Queensland will only be worsened by this bill, as it has been made worse by the government's housing policies across employee housing, social housing, seniors housing and disability housing. I note the bill makes a number of positive changes, in particular in relation to domestic violence issues. I genuinely welcome this as the housing crisis in Western Queensland disproportionately affects the vulnerable, which includes victims of domestic violence. I also welcome the amendments to the Retirement Villages Act 1999 and I hope this may help in creating solutions to the lack of retirement options in outback Queensland. I take the opportunity of urging the

minister to review and amend the Manufactured Homes (Residential Parks) Act 2003. I have previously made representations to the government on this issue. Thousands of Queenslanders recently signed a petition about the problems with this act.

The shortage of housing is a real issue for Western Queensland. When government employees and those with government subsidies compete in the private rental market, it is hard to get people to come and live in Western Queensland. I ask that the state government invest in Western Queensland by building new houses for departmental employees—for police officers, teachers and ambulance officers. It will not only help the rental market in places like Longreach and Winton but also stimulate the economy in Western Queensland. It will allow some of those rental houses to be freed up, which we so desperately need. I ask the government to put some real effort into fixing the housing situation in Western Queensland. My colleague from Warrego has similar situations in her electorate. It is the same in many regional areas.

 **Ms BUSH** (Cooper—ALP) (4.43 pm): I rise in support of the Housing Legislation Amendment Bill, which delivers on the Palaszczuk government's commitment to renting reform for Queenslanders. As others have said, this is about balancing the rights and interests of both landlords and tenants. I believe that the bill achieves that. It is important to remember that this bill is located within a much broader 10-year Queensland Housing Strategy which will modernise Queensland's housing legislation with a strong focus on preventing homelessness. As the minister stated at the outset of the debate, the action plan is also backed by our historic \$2.9 billion investment. It is the largest concentrated investment in social housing in Queensland's history.

I think it is important to remember that this bill is not the panacea to fix all of the housing issues that have been outlined here today. There is a lot of responsibility that sits at a federal level and at a local level—across every domain. It is not simply a housing response that is required. It is certainly not this bill that will achieve all of that, but it will make some significant modifications to the existing housing and rental framework.

The decisions that we make here as a government in this chamber are critical. Everyone is moving to Queensland—and who can blame them. This growth does create pressure on the housing market. Every one of us in all of our electorates would be feeling that. I am sure we are all meeting with people who are experiencing different pressures around housing. My electorate of Cooper is probably not dissimilar to other inner-city electorates.

At one end of the electorate in The Gap most people own their homes. They have been around for a long time. They have often grown up in The Gap and they probably want to die in The Gap, which is fantastic. It is a beautiful place to be born and grow up and end your life. People in The Gap have an interest in this bill because many of them are landlords—mum-and-dad investors—who commonly bought a home early in their lives. Their career has progressed. They have met someone, fallen in love, had children and they have been able to buy their second home and consequently enter the market as owners of an investment property.

These mum-and-dad investors take pride in their properties. They are responsive to reasonable requests by tenants. Mostly they have positive relationships with those renting their homes. These are not rental moguls. Nationwide 71 per cent of investors own just one property, 90 per cent of investors own one or two properties. The majority of people only have one or two properties. I include myself in that. When I was 30 I purchased my first home on my own as a single woman.

Ms Pugh: Hear, hear!

Ms BUSH: It was a huge achievement. At the time I was working about four jobs to do that. I set my sight on home ownership because I knew that, particularly as a woman, it was a pathway to financial freedom. It was an aspiration for me to work towards and to achieve. I then met my partner and we have been able to buy our home. I have been a landlord ever since—for almost the past 10 years. I have a fantastic relationship with those who rent my home.

I was just reflecting earlier to the member for Stafford that I do not think I have actually increased the rent once in 10 years. They are an elderly couple. They are very undemanding and because of that I go over and above to check in on them and what their needs are. When COVID struck I was the first one to ring and ask if they needed assistance. I actually think that is not uncommon. As I move around the electorate I think the majority of us who have rented, who have moved through that market and who have then owned a home, appreciate what it is like to be a renter.

As we move closer to the city in our electorate we see the number of renters increase. In fact, Milton, as at the last published census data, has over 61 per cent of residents who are renting. That is a really high proportion of renters in the inner city. These renters should expect a standard of housing

that affords them not just safety but dignity and that they can live in their home as a home and not just someone's asset. I think that sentiment is broadly felt in the majority of people who I speak with. Striking the balance between these interests is the key to legislative reform that is workable, achievable and sustainable.

The key changes to rental laws proposed in the bill include ending without-grounds evictions and introducing an expanded suite of approved reasons for renters and property owners to end a tenancy, including on expiry of a fixed-term agreement. This will provide both lessors and tenants with greater certainty over the circumstances in which their lease will end.

The bill establishes a set of prescribed minimum standards to ensure all Queensland rental properties meet the minimum safety, security and functionality standards. Property condition was highly mentioned in the consultation for *Open doors to renting reform*. Many renters noted the lack of attention or responsiveness to repair and maintenance requests. We have to remember that those are people's homes. They should not need to repeatedly request that necessary work be carried out.

Importantly, there will be stronger protections for people experiencing domestic and family violence and today we have heard from a lot of other members about that. People will be able to end their interest in a residential lease quickly and with limited liability for end-of-lease costs. We know that rental commitments are one of the many barriers to leaving a violent relationship. Currently, if people experiencing domestic violence do leave a rental suddenly, they can run the risk of being blacklisted for future properties. The fear of homelessness should never be a reason to remain in a violent relationship. These reforms will allow renters with evidence that they are experiencing domestic and family violence to exit a tenancy with seven days notice. The renters can leave immediately after providing the notice and their liability for end-of-tenancy costs will be capped to the seven-day notice period. Renters experiencing domestic and family violence can also access their portion of the rental bond funds held for tenancies through the RTA. As we have spoken about, they can also make some immediate upgrades, such as changing locks, before gaining the owner's consent. This is about putting safety at the forefront for people experiencing violence. It is about what they need to feel safe.

The bill makes it easier to keep a pet. Pets are an important part of many of our lives and they give us so much joy, but pet ownership comes with great responsibility. There is a responsibility to care for pets appropriately, including by providing them with safe homes. What I really like about this bill is that it emphasises a framework for parties to negotiate and to come to arrangements that are mutually agreeable. I know that that is something that responsible pet owners will be willing and able to do.

I have to comment here, and I will not unpack it too much, about some of the comments made by the member for South Brisbane. I find the amendments and the general comments that have been put forward by the member quite concerning as they seek to develop an acrimonious relationship between tenants and landlords. That is the last thing we want to be doing. We want people to go into consultation, but we also want there to be a level playing field. This bill achieves that balance.

Under the proposed reforms, renters can request permission to have a pet and if the property owner does not respond within 14 days the renter is deemed to have permission. The property owner can only refuse pets for prescribed reasons and their approval can be subject to reasonable conditions other than additional bond or increased rent. A blanket 'no pets' is not a reasonable condition.

Consultation surrounding the bill has been extensive with community members, tenants, lessors and the sector to make sure that issues are understood and that the government response balances the rights and needs of renters and lessors, that it is proportionate and that it provides certainty and stability in the rental market, which is important. I commend the minister for her work on this bill. I commend the work of the committee. I commend the bill to the House.



Mr PERRETT (Gympie—LNP) (4.53 pm): I rise to speak on the Housing Legislation Amendment Bill. In accordance with my register of interests I advise the House that I own a rental property.

The bill aims to amend a number of acts in favour of tenants as part of the government's Housing Strategy 2017-27. It also aims to amend the Retirement Villages Act to provide certainty, security and peace of mind to residents of freehold resident operated retirement villages, implement the intent of the recommendations made during an independent review of the time frames for the payment of existing entitlements in Queensland retirement villages and create a framework to exempt freehold resident operated retirement villages from the 18-month mandatory buyback requirements.

This government seems incapable of designing well-considered legislation. It rushes in only to find that numerous pieces of legislation must be walked back and amended soon after. Despite warnings of problems, it pushes through with its blindly ignorant agenda. The government frequently

creates more problems because it does not understand how people react to imposed regulations and mandatory rules. It does not understand regional and rural areas. This bill is the result of the mess that the government has made of housing strategies and strategies regarding retirement villages. It is walking back some of its overreach and radical proposals.

In 2019, the government released the two-stage reform under the *A better renting future reform roadmap*. That follows on from their 2018 *Open doors to renting reform* consultation, only a year earlier. Under the 2018 consultation, radical aspects of rental reform were canvassed such as a tenant's right to make renovations to a property and the right to keep pets, as well as long-term fixed leases. Following a campaign run by the LNP opposition and the Real Estate Institute of Queensland, a majority of extreme reform proposals have been removed.

Nevertheless, there are a number of concerns about the provisions left in the bill. It unfairly tips the balance of rights and needs to tenants. There is not one single proposal in the bill that would benefit lessors. Renting is a mutual arrangement between the person who owns the property and the tenant. The needs of lessors should be considered. Hundreds of submissions from individual property owners, lessors, property managers, and industry and professional associations have all raised concerns about the adverse impacts this bill will have on the rights of lessors and property managers.

Ninety per cent of Queensland's rental housing market is provided by private owners. There are an estimated 1.65 million households in Queensland and more than one-third of them rent. Families with children are the largest renting group, followed by people living on their own and couples without children. Only three years ago, in 2018-19, 13 per cent of Queensland taxpayers reported having an investment or an interest in a rental property. That was an 18 per cent increase since 2008-09. Across Queensland, rural rental vacancy rates have tightened across almost every council or region in Queensland. A tight rental market is when the vacancy rates are below 2.5 per cent. In most Queensland regions, vacancy rates are below 1.5 per cent. That is tight.

In Gympie, local real estate agents are reporting a tight property market, properties sold sight unseen and rentals snapped up as soon as they hit the market, and there is next to nothing for anyone who needs crisis accommodation. Whether you call it social housing, crisis housing or welfare housing, homelessness is soaring across the Gympie region. The pressure on the private rental market is putting pressure on the social or welfare housing list. My office is receiving calls from distressed residents trying to find crisis accommodation. Distressed private renters are contacting me saying that it is harder and harder to find somewhere to live. The Real Estate Institute of Queensland's latest quarterly rent report shows Gympie vacancies dropped from 0.4 per cent to 0.3 per cent between March and June this year.

As I said earlier, the government frequently creates a mess because it does not understand the impact of its proposals. The statement of reservation outlines the problems the LNP identified with the elimination of periodic agreements. It will remove flexibility for both parties and, most significantly, reduce rental options. The Queensland Law Society has warned, 'We are concerned that the legislation will have adverse unintended consequences; for example ... increasing the loss of housing stock for short-term rental'.

This bill also makes a number of amendments to the Retirement Villages Act 1999 to exempt freehold resident operated retirement villages from the existing statutory buyback requirements. The government was warned about the adverse impact of the mandatory buyback provisions in both 2017 and 2019. It ignored those warnings. It sent small-time operators into liquidation and threatened the viability of retirement villages. Under the law, if retirement home unit owners could not sell their property within 18 months, the village operator was required to purchase it at market value. That had a detrimental impact on small-scale retirement villages that are a feature of regional areas.

In my own electorate, the Cooloola Waters Retirement Village in Tin Can Bay went into liquidation as a direct result of the state legislation. It was a small community of units. Rodney Lohse and his mother, Gay, ran the village. The family had been in business in Gympie for 70 years. They were not quitters. The Cooloola Waters Retirement Village faced a bill of more than \$2 million to buy 14 units. Compounding matters is that most banks are unwilling to lend money to operators against the village assets. This is particularly so when the village residents could be listed as the first creditors if things went sideways. The Lohses advised the minister that turnover of units was low and that they would be lucky to sell one unit a year. They had to buy back 14 units. They wrote to the minister. I wrote to the minister. Despite raising the problem, the minister's response ignored the warnings and said they could take their concerns to QCAT.

As the committee report notes, many submitters suggested that applying to QCAT would be stressful and intimidating. The government was wiping its hands of the mess it had created. The Cooloola Waters Retirement Village had been a fixture in Tin Can Bay for 30 years and was running in the black. However, it could not fund the mandatory buyback. What tipped them over were the changes to state legislation.

Debate, on motion of Mr Perrett, adjourned.

MOTION

Coronavirus, Palaszczuk Labor Government Modelling



Ms BATES (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (5.00 pm): I move—

In accordance with standing order 27 this House orders the Premier to table by 27 October 2021 all modelling and analysis concerning the Queensland government's response to COVID-19 and, in particular, information relating to the Queensland government's plans for the reopening of the Queensland economy as rates of vaccination increase.

The motion speaks to plans for the reopening of the Queensland economy as rates of vaccinations increase. I want to address that matter first. Vaccination is critical. It is our pathway out of the pandemic.

When it comes to integrity, I have more integrity in my big toe than the member for Woodridge. If you want to talk about credibility, I have more credibility as a registered nurse than the former attorney-general for Tuvalu has or the embattled Minister for Health. The member for Woodridge and some of his colleagues on the benches opposite tried to claim today that I was somehow opposed to the vaccine. Those statements were defamatory and they were wrong. The last time the member for Woodridge tried to impugn my reputation as a nurse, he was forced to apologise to the House by the Speaker.

I want every Queenslanders to get the vaccine, and let me tell this chamber why. I want it so Queenslanders do not get ill when COVID comes to Queensland so that they are not needing to be admitted to our ICUs and our EDs. Let me repeat that: I want Queenslanders to get the COVID vaccine so that when it comes to Queensland, they are not needing to be admitted to our ICUs and EDs. I want it so Queenslanders who have been separated from family by international and state borders, like me, can be reunited at long last. I want it so that small and family businesses right up and down this great state can know that they will be able to trade, to have the confidence to plan ahead. I want it so that we are able to live with hope over fear.

I say it to my family, I say it to my friends, I say it privately and I say it publicly. I say it at every press conference and I say it in this chamber. I had my vaccination before the Premier. I had my vaccination before the health minister. My entire family is vaccinated. My message and my position is clear.

If you want to talk about vaccination scare campaigns, the mother of all of them was borne by the Premier's action or rather inaction. The flu shot, the dog bite, the trip to Tokyo—we would be so much closer to 80 per cent and a roadmap out of this pandemic if it were not for those pathetic excuses. Vaccination is the key driver behind being able to establish a roadmap out of this pandemic. That is the roadmap that we do not have. It is the roadmap that this government has not and will not provide.


The Premier has refused point blank to provide a pathway out of the pandemic. We have heard the excuses: we need to vaccinate children; the hospitals will not cope; vaccine supply issues; the spread of the vaccination is not even. The Premier said—

I encourage the Prime Minister to release the revised Doherty modelling before Friday's meeting and then publicly.

The hypocrisy when it comes to releasing information is rank. The Premier on one hand says releasing modelling is important—she is happy to say that about Canberra—yet on the other hand when it is not politically convenient for her or her government, the Premier decides releasing the information to the public is not needed.

Questions need to be asked. Does this government have a plan or has it changed? I agree with the Premier when she says modelling should be released publicly; it makes sense. Bring Queenslanders into your confidence, share with them the rationale and share with them the criteria. It is these things that can allow people to plan—to plan their next visit to come home to Queensland, to plan the next move for their business.

The Premier has form when it comes to this. The opposition recently called for the Premier to release pandemic research. It cost more than half a million dollars, but the Premier refused. This government are experts when it comes to governing in the dark. It is not a record to be proud of. Let the record show that this is yet another example of that. The information is good enough for the government, but it is not good enough for honest Queenslanders and that hurts. Real people, real Queenslanders need answers and they are not getting it. The time has come to let us know.

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (5.05 pm): I do agree on one thing: it is time. It is time for the member for Mudgeeraba to say if she condemns the anti-vaccination sentiment of NPAQ, an organisation that she freely associates with. The member is all about choice. She freely associates with it as an organisation and says in this House, 'I want people to get vaccinated,' but she does not condemn that organisation—I assume she financially pays her membership; I assume the membership is not free. You are financially contributing to an organisation—

Ms Bates interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Member for Mudgeeraba, you are on a warning.

Mrs D'ATH: This is an organisation that the member opposite freely associates with which not only invited its members to go to a freedom rally, saying the protest was part of its campaign to defend members making their own choice on vaccines, but there were recordings and photographs of the event showing a number of anti-vaccination speakers alongside attendees holding placards such as a comparison of the Queensland Chief Health Officer, Jeannette Young, to Adolf Hitler. The member laughs. I note for *Hansard* that the member for Mudgeeraba thinks that is funny. Well done! The member should condemn—

Ms BATES: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The comments from the health minister are offensive and I ask that they be withdrawn. I take offence.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Resume your seat, member. The House will come to order. I will take some advice. The member has taken personal offence. I ask you to withdraw.

Mrs D'ATH: I withdraw. The speakers at that event also promoted the false conspiracy theory that four children had died at a Sydney stadium after being vaccinated. We all should condemn that sort of behaviour if we are genuine about getting people vaccinated.

Those opposite say that we have to make sure that our hospitals are not overrun, that people can visit family and that people can go on holidays. They do not say, 'We want to make sure people are not dying from COVID.' They do not say, 'We want to make sure that we do not have over 100,000 cases.' Over 100,000 cases across the country so far are linked with that one case in New South Wales. They never talk about trying to avoid positive cases or trying to avoid deaths. It is always just about, 'We want to go on holidays. People want to travel over borders. We want to make sure that our health system is not overrun.' Well, condemn the comments from NPAQ. If they are genuine, if they are serious, which we are very confident they are not, the member for Mudgeeraba should not be a financially paying membership to an organisation that thinks this is acceptable.

They talk about modelling. I cannot believe that 19 months on those opposite are still saying, 'Show us the modelling and the analysis that supports your response to COVID-19.' Seriously! The response is that we have had 2,067 positive cases in Queensland since the start of this. We have had seven deaths. There is the evidence. There is enough modelling out there.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Pause the clock. Member for Maryborough, member for Lockyer and member for Burleigh, cease your quarrelling across the chamber.

Mrs D'ATH: They talk about modelling. We know that the initial Doherty institute modelling was released. We know that there was a national plan released based on the modelling. The national plan talks about the plan being based on the scientific modelling. It also says that the plan is based on the current situation and is subject to change if required. We know that national cabinet has updated modelling based on large outbreaks like those that we are seeing in New South Wales, the ACT and Victoria, but the modelling has not been released. We do not hear those opposite saying to Scott Morrison, 'Release that modelling as people deserve to see it.'

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister, table the document or read from it.

Mrs D'ATH: I am happy to table the document.

Tabled paper: Australian government document, undated, titled 'National Plan to transition Australia's National COVID-19 Response' [\[1740\]](#).

It is Scott Morrison who is not releasing the updated modelling on how to apply the rules when there are major outbreaks. It is easy to apply the rules when there is no outbreak, but what happens when there are major outbreaks?


The member for Mudgeeraba should also say whether she supports any legal action being taken to stop health workers having to be vaccinated. Is it okay that they are not? In New South Wales people have gone into the hospital system, contracted COVID and died. Some 115,000 health workers around the globe have died from COVID. We have a responsibility to keep our health workers safe. We have a responsibility to keep every patient who goes into our hospitals safe and reduce that risk. The member for Mudgeeraba, who likes to talk about her health credentials, does not talk about vaccinations for health workers, does not talk about NPAQ, does not talk the—

Ms Bates interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Pause the clock. Member for Mudgeeraba, you are on a warning. You can leave the chamber for one hour.

Whereupon the honourable member for Mudgeeraba withdrew from the chamber at 5.11 pm.

Mrs D'ATH: Those opposite are absolute hypocrites. This motion is just a stunt of theirs. They should be condemned for their behaviour.

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Scenic Rim—LNP) (5.11 pm): I support the motion moved by the member for Mudgeeraba. I want the truth. I want the truth about the health advice which the government claims means we need to keep Queenslanders locked out of Queensland. I want the truth about the economic advice because all of the restrictions imposed by this government are having a huge impact on Queensland's economy. That impacts the health of Queenslanders, too. I want the truth about what reopening the economy means and also what not reopening Queensland's economy to the rest of Australia means because again that impacts all of us, especially those of us who represent border communities.

Premier, tear down that wall. Tear down the wall that is keeping Queenslanders from knowing the information that you have been relying on to make decisions here in Queensland. Tear down that wall!

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Maryborough, you are on a warning.

Mr KRAUSE: Queenslanders want to know word for word the advice that those opposite have been taking. They need to trust Queenslanders to handle the truth of the matter. Queenslanders deserve no less.

Like many members, I have been hearing from dozens of Queenslanders who are impacted by the snap border closure—where two hours notice was given of the border closure. In the past few days the government announced a home quarantine trial—something the LNP had called for for weeks. The government finally adopted it after the LNP and the media highlighted the terrible stories and the awful circumstances of people stranded across the border. It is not for the Scenic Rim. We are not included in the home quarantine trial. We get locked down even when there is no COVID-19 anywhere near us and yet there is no home quarantine trial for the Scenic Rim. I have asked the Premier to bring the Scenic Rim into the trial, just like the Noosa shire, all of Ipswich and all of the Sunshine Coast—parts that are far more removed from Brisbane Airport—but still no action.

To make matters worse, in the last couple of days I have been contacted by several people offered a place in the trial. They were ecstatic at the news, especially those who have been locked out of Queensland by the capricious actions of this government. It is a disgrace that I have to inform the House that after being offered the trial a number of these people have now had that offer withdrawn—all because they live in the Scenic Rim Regional Council area; all because the government has set up another bureaucratic nightmare that has raised the hopes of families and then torn that hope away. It is the dead hand of bureaucracy that is ripping hope from these people. The least the government could do is reinstate the offer for home quarantine made to those people in the Scenic Rim. It was an offer made by the government itself. What a debacle.

Shame on you. Shame on all of the members over there. Shame on them for allowing people to be peddled false hope. Those Queenslanders who remain stranded in New South Wales because they were locked out with two hours notice and now do not fit the home quarantine trial deserve to know the basis for the decisions of those opposite. For the sake of Queenslanders, I hope that those decisions were made not just on politics but on evidence and advice, although I think that might not have been the case. It is all about politics.

Right now people are crying out for hope. They are crying out for confidence in the future. The government is a vital part of promoting that confidence. We need the government to adopt a plan and stick to it. We need the government to stop the politics, stop the fiddling and remove the focus group research and other polling from the whole process because they are literally playing with people's lives and livelihoods when they base their decisions on politics.

I know the health risk posed by COVID-19, but I also understand the risks posed by contradictory and inconsistent messages from the government—messages like letting sporting teams and WAGs into Queensland but not people like Robert who is one of the Queenslanders in the Murwillumbah tent city. He sleeps in his car. He has missed vital medical appointments and he has been vaccinated twice and yet he cannot return to Queensland.

I have spoken to a small business owner in the Scenic Rim electorate whose predecessor in that business took their own life in the aftermath of a lockdown. It was not the only factor but it was a factor. When the bills keep mounting up and the government pulls another lockdown but then lets Suncorp Stadium be full and a whole lot of other inconsistent things happen, the messages about keeping Queenslanders safe do not really cut it. People need to know the basis for these decisions, why lockdowns are being called and why restrictions are being put in place. They need to give assistance to people like that business owner who has been denied assistance because their business is in a different name to what it was before the lockdown. It is an absolute disgrace. I support the motion. Those opposite should release all the advice and all the modelling and let Queenslanders know the truth.

(Time expired)



Mr WHITING (Bancroft—ALP) (5.17 pm): I rise to speak against this motion because it is patently absurd. It is absurd to call for the release of confidential national cabinet modelling. It is not even ours to release. It is the Prime Minister's to release. If the LNP want to see it, why do they not give him a call. He does not hold a hose but he holds the modelling.

The question is: why do they want to see the modelling? It is not for transparency. It is that they do not believe it. They are thinking the Prime Minister and the premiers made it up. They want it released so they can undermine it for their own political purposes. The heart of this is that many of those in the LNP do not believe the science. Too many of those opposite think that COVID-19 is an overhyped flu, it is just an excuse to take away our civil rights and that the vaccines are a mass experiment.

What evidence is there for this? They have said actions countering COVID-19 are akin to hiding under a doona. They have called for the opening of the border not 64 times but 65 times now. We have just had the latest call over there—tear down this wall. That is very Reaganesque or Trumpesque, and that suits them. It shows that they just do not get it. The member for Scenic Rim has called Queenslanders in Queensland Health protecting other Queenslanders the dead hand or cold hand of bureaucracy. What an insult to all those Queenslanders who are protecting other Queenslanders.

It is very clear that many members of the LNP do not accept the science of climate change. It is very clear that many of them do not accept the science behind COVID-19 and the vaccinations. Let us again look at the evidence. I contest that they are not pushing for vaccinations. They are silent on it. Vaccinations are one of the most crucial actions Queenslanders can take to get us out of the pandemic and they are not saying anything about it. If you have a look at the Facebook pages of many of their Gold Coast or Sunshine Coast MPs for the last month, you will see that they are saying nothing about vaccinations.

Look at the member for Surfers Paradise—nothing; the member for Burleigh—nothing; the member for Currumbin—one on a clinic location; the member for Mermaid Beach—one of him getting a vaccine; the member for Southport—nothing; the member for Kawana—nothing; the member for Maroochydore—one on a clinic location; the member for Glass House—one on a clinic location. The member for Glass House said last March that the worst is over and the border needed to be opened! Most telling, the member for Mudgeeraba, the opposition spokesperson for health—nothing. If she is in favour of vaccination, she needs to show it, not just get up here and say it. She needs to show it.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Through the chair, please.

Mr WHITING: There was not one post urging or pushing their residents to get vaccinated.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!


Mr WHITING: Mr Deputy Speaker, not one—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have not called you yet, member. I know the member is being provocative, but the level of interjection is far too high. I will start warning members.

Mr WHITING: There was not one post I could find where they are urging or pushing their residents to get vaccinated. We are facing the biggest public health challenge of our lifetime, and they are effectively ignoring it. They have more posts about dogs than they have about vaccinations. It is not enough to say, 'I've been vaccinated.' President Trump said the same thing.

They are not only climate change deniers but also vaccine sceptics. They see no value in pushing Queenslanders to get vaccinated, and that is incredibly hypocritical because each of their questions yesterday called on the government to reveal the pathway out of the pandemic. We know that vaccinations are the pathway out of border restrictions and lockdowns. Why are they calling on people to reveal pathways, modelling and plans when they are not calling for more people to be vaccinated?

(Time expired)

 **Mr MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (5.22 pm): Across Queensland small and family businesses are at breaking point. The burden of months of uncertainty and the feeling that they have been abandoned increasingly weighs on them and their employees. Thousands of small and family business owners simply do not know whether they can carry on.

For small and family businesses the last 18 months have been a marathon—a marathon of sleepless nights agonising about how to keep their employees in a job, a marathon of worrying about where the cash is going to come from to pay the next bill, a marathon run on the shifting sands of conflicting information and ambiguous messaging from the Premier and her minions, a marathon run without a clearly defined finish line.

Just when small and family businesses felt like they could see the finish line, the Premier has shifted it again. The Premier has shifted the finish line time and time again, and Queensland's small and family businesses are left running a race with no end in sight. Every time the Premier shifts the finish line another small and family business gives up the fight.

What Queensland's small and family businesses need more than anything is certainty. It is something that the LNP have been calling for for the duration of the pandemic—certainty so that small and family businesses can plan and budget, certainty so that small and family businesses have hope and better days to look forward to. It is Queensland small and family businesses and their employees who have been left to carry the financial burden of public health decisions which are beyond their control.

Yesterday the Treasurer came into the parliament and we heard him wax lyrical about how well the Queensland economy is performing. We heard about job vacancies and dwelling approvals. The Treasurer spoke about business confidence. While it is true that some Queensland businesses are experiencing good conditions, it is also true that many are struggling and many are failing. In fact, Queensland has the highest rate of business insolvency per capita in the nation. Every time the Treasurer comes in here and pretends that everything is great for Queensland's small and family businesses, it is a slap in the face for Australian cafe owners in Currumbin, for music venues in Mooloolaba, for tour operators in Townsville and for publicans in Port Douglas. To pretend that Queensland is completely open for business is a nonsense.

Aside from the state border, a host of different businesses are subject to onerous restrictions, the result of which is frequently an inability to even cover their costs. In the recent CCIQ Pulse Survey, 41 per cent of business owners indicated that in the last 12 months they had contributed personal funds into the business due to COVID disruptions—41 per cent of business owners took an average of \$111,000 from their own family's pocket to help keep their employees in a job and to keep the doors open. Do not get me wrong: businesses are grateful that they are not in lockdown, but to suggest that Queensland businesses are thriving is a joke.

What Queensland small and family businesses crave more than anything is certainty—certainty so they can make decisions to invest, trade and grow, certainty that the state government has gone out of their way to avoid providing them. The state government have done their own modelling on opening up at different vaccinations rates, but they will not release it. The state government have health advice that is the justification for the onerous restrictions on small and family businesses, but they will not release it. The state government will not release information that would better inform Queenslanders and ease their burden. It is not good enough, and Queensland small and family businesses deserve better.


It is not just the LNP calling on the government to provide more certainty for small and family businesses. The voice of Queensland business the CCIQ have said, 'Every day of ongoing uncertainty and a lack of commitment to a nationally consistent plan to allow Queensland businesses to recover from economic impacts of COVID means businesses are less confident in the market, suffering greater losses and will take longer to recover.' CCIQ have said that the longer Queensland's small and family businesses wait for the state government to provide certainty and a pathway out of the pandemic, the less likely it is that they will recover and more will fail.

Amanda Rohan from the CCIQ recently said, 'As part of the plan for reopening, businesses need to know what each stage looks like in relation to restrictions, vaccination targets, requirements for businesses on compliance, testing, isolation and contact tracing.' We are watching on as businesses in other states are given clearly communicated plans including what is required of them, their staff and their customers as conditions develop. Queensland businesses and the CCIQ have had no consultation from the state government about a comparable plan for Queensland businesses.

It is time for the Premier to provide Queenslanders with hope and certainty. The Premier needs to stop treating Queenslanders with contempt and release all modelling in relation to Queensland's COVID-19 response. Queensland's small and family businesses deserve a clearly articulated pathway out of the pandemic. I call on those opposite to support the motion before the House.

(Time expired)

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Before I call the member for Bundaberg, member for Kurwongbah, member for Burleigh and member for Lockyer, would you cease your quarrelling across the chamber?

 **Mr SMITH** (Bundaberg—ALP) (5.27 pm): There is no doubt that the greatest threat to the health of Queenslanders in this state is COVID-19. We also know that the second greatest threat to the health of Queenslanders in this state is the Liberal National Party of Queensland. There is absolutely no doubt. Their COVID policies are reckless. They are dangerous. Remember last year during the height of the pandemic when they demanded that the borders be opened? They demanded something that would allow COVID-19 to run rampant through regional Queensland. Not only would they have cost businesses but also they would have cost the lives of Queenslanders. That is what the Liberal National Party represent. They are in absolute shambles and the leadership is in shambles.

Right now the shadow health minister is refusing to condemn the organisation that she is now the face of. She cannot deny that she is now the face of NPAQ.

A government member interjected.

Mr SMITH: Absolutely.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Order! Pause the clock. Comments will come through the chair, member for Bundaberg.

Mr SMITH: This is an organisation that is posing as a union and encouraging members to attend freedom rallies. On this side we know what a freedom rally is. It is an anti-vax rally. That is what it is.

Mr Mickelberg interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Buderim, you have made your contribution. Now I am going to place you on a warning.

Mr SMITH: We know what freedom rallies are: anti-vax rallies! The shadow health minister must condemn NPAQ and Red Union for encouraging members to attend anti-vax rallies. She must condemn them. If the member does not want to condemn them and resign from NPAQ then she needs to resign to the backbench of the LNP. That is where she needs to go. This motion is a desperate act to distract from her failure to provide confidence to Queenslanders.

This motion calls on the Palaszczuk government to release confidential national cabinet modelling that is commissioned by the Prime Minister. Well, call the Prime Minister then. Let's analyse Queensland and the Palaszczuk government's performance during COVID. Let's have a look at the stats. Since 16 June New South Wales has had 64,125 cases and, sadly, 448 deaths. Since 13 July Victoria has had 36,861 cases and, sadly, 114 deaths. Since the pandemic began, under the Palaszczuk Labor government's strong health response Queensland has had 2,067 cases and only seven deaths. If you want to talk about a plan, I know what state's plan I would rather have. I would rather have the strong health response that the Palaszczuk Labor government has taken.

This is a government that has grown our economy during COVID-19; that saw more than 30,000 people move into Queensland last year; that saw businesses in regional Queensland did not have to suffer a 14-week lockdown. This is a government whose schools are open so that our students can learn. We are a government that is leading the nation in the green industrial revolution, such as with the fantastic announcement we saw in Gladstone.

What we do not see is the member for Broadwater stand up and make a comment on the borders. All we see is that he dodges the question when it comes to opening the borders. The question is very simple. When you have a state down south where delta virus is running rampant and killing people, you keep the border closed to keep your people safe. That is what you do. When you refuse to answer the question 'Should the borders be open?' you refuse to answer the question on whether or not you value the lives of Queenslanders. How about you stop ducking? How about you stop diving? How about you stop—

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. You consistently warned the member about comments through the chair and he is deliberately disobeying your previous ruling.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): I was taking advice from the Clerk. I did not hear that. Member, I do remind you to put your comments through the chair. I will warn you if that continues.

Mr SMITH: The member for Broadwater needs to stand up and answer the question. Does he support Queenslanders being safe in their own state? Does he support keeping the borders closed when the delta virus is running rampant, causing 64,000 cases and killing over 400 people down south of us? Does he stand up and protect Queenslanders or does he want to run away? It is very, very simple. If he wants to show how strong his stance is on COVID, he should ask the shadow health minister to resign. In fact, he should demand it. If those opposite do not call for it then you know they are weak when it comes to COVID 19. If the shadow health minister does not resign then they are weak—

(Time expired)



Mr PURDIE (Ninderry—LNP) (5.33 pm): For months Queenslanders have been told that, unless you are a footballer or their Instagram-famous wife or girlfriend, you will just have to accept that lockdowns and lockouts are a way of life. You will have to accept that your family will be torn apart by the Palaszczuk government's edict because it is for our own good. You will have to accept that the Palaszczuk government is willing to let your business wither on the vine because it is for our own good. Even if you can accept that torn-apart families and torn-up livelihoods was the necessary plan A to ensure our health system could cope while Queenslanders were not vaccinated, why is there no plan B for when we are? Is it because this government can no longer paper over a failing health system with its rampings, botched surgeries and never-ending list of crises?

With the Premier's gold-plated spin team rolling out a comprehensive fear campaign, it is no wonder our vaccination rate remains the second lowest in the country, although low vaccination rates do provide a convenient excuse for this government to avoid developing a COVID recovery plan. They were elected to lead, and abrogating their responsibility to public servants is not leadership. Making life simple for themselves by indefinitely keeping the borders shut is not leadership. Queenslanders now want to choose hope over fear. They want answers. They want clarity. They want accountability, common sense and compassion. They have become more sick of politics than they have from COVID. They want to know when they can see their families, when they can return home and when they can start planning for their future. That is why I too am standing up today on behalf of my constituents and the thousands of small and family businesses in my electorate and asking the Premier to release the modelling that is being used to determine our path back to normality.


This is about a deal between the government and the people of Queensland. When they agreed to the national plan they told Queenslanders, 'If you get vaccinated we'll bring you out of the COVID darkness.' Despite all the mixed messaging, Queenslanders are doing the right thing and getting vaccinated, with 52.7 per cent of all Queenslanders now fully vaccinated and 70.2 per cent having received their first dose. They recognise the importance of being vaccinated as a health measure and as a path to regain the freedoms this government has taken from them. Queenslanders are now growing increasingly frustrated that the Premier and her government are trying to renege on their side of that deal.

Queenslanders want certainty around the date. Suggestions of a vague date in five to six weeks give no hope to Queenslanders. Queenslanders want certainty about what the various stages of restrictions will look like. Many small businesses in my electorate will not make it to Christmas, let alone next year, if the government does not provide some clarity now. The crippling effect of mixed messaging

and ad hoc lockdowns on small and family businesses, particularly in the tourism industry, cannot be underestimated. Statistics from Tourism Research Australia have highlighted the crippling toll of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has cost the Queensland tourism industry almost \$20 billion. The same stats also reveal that around 10,000 Queensland tourism businesses will not survive the pandemic. The Queensland Tourism Industry Council CEO commented that it would be a long road to recovery. He said, 'We are in a very deep hole and it will take a long time to recover.' It is no surprise to learn that business owners are also struggling emotionally and mentally as well as financially.

Recently the Sunshine Coast Council surveyed 120 businesses in the region and found that 30 per cent have little interest or pleasure in doing things, and nearly 50 per cent felt their business was financially vulnerable as a result of the pandemic. I commend the Caloundra Chamber of Commerce for its initiative in undertaking this research in response to the concerns raised by many of its members. Similarly, in my own local chamber Coolumb Business and Tourism is not just sitting on its hands waiting while its membership base suffers. They have taken matters into their own hands and are looking for opportunities through innovative local campaigns. Their motivation and leadership is in stark contrast to what we have seen from the Palaszczuk Labor government, which continues to hold the health advice they claim is driving their decision-making process—the same health advice that prioritises celebrities and footballers over Queenslanders.

I said it before: Queenslanders want answers. They want clarity. They want accountability, common sense and compassion. They also want leadership, a plan and hope for their future. I support the motion.

 **Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development) (5.38 pm): I rise to speak against this motion. In fact, there are so many weird things about this motion that I almost do not know where to start. I guess the fundamental point of this is that they are effectively calling for this government to release the confidential national cabinet modelling that has been commissioned by the Prime Minister. Clearly the Palaszczuk government is not going to leak something from national cabinet. It is national cabinet in confidence.

We know that the LNP does not really get confidentiality. We know they do not mind a bit of leaking when it suits them. We had the leaking about Deb during the election when the LNP leaked all that research to show how she was trailing the Premier. We know that the member for Kawana does not know anything about confidentiality. We had that conversation where he—

Ms SIMPSON: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member opposite is not using the correct titles of members. She was using the first name of another member of this parliament in direct contravention of the orders of the chair.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): I will take some advice from the Clerk. I did not hear it but members are reminded to use correct parliamentary titles.

Ms FARMER: We had the leaking about the member for Nanango. We know about the member for Kawana's regard for confidentiality because he leaked the conversation with Justice Margaret McMurdo. Walter Sofronoff said that if a public servant had done the same thing they would have committed a crime. Because they are not big on confidentiality, they think we are going to leak national cabinet information.

The thing they could do is pick up the phone to Scott Morrison. They could pick up the phone because he is their guy. They could pick up the phone, instead of posturing and attacking. If they were really barracking for Queensland, they could pick up the phone to ScoMo and say, 'How about giving us that modelling?' They did not pick up the phone when Scott Morrison was ending JobKeeper. When we were calling to still have JobKeeper for targeted specific sectors, like tourism, that were absolutely crying out for help and that are crying out for help right now, there was not a word. They did not pick up the phone.

They did not pick up the phone when ScoMo was sending vaccinations off to Sydney when Queenslanders were crying out to get vaccinated. They did not pick up the phone when we were trying to get a regional quarantine facility up—which, if it were here now, would actually help all of those Queenslanders who want to get back home right now. We have had to do that on our own, and there will be 500 beds at Wellcamp by the end of the year. In the meantime, they have not even started work on the Pinkenba facility.

Let us look at some of the other wording in this motion. It talks about 'reopening of the Queensland economy'. The reason we are not talking about a plan to reopen the Queensland economy is because the Queensland economy is already open. We are already open and trading and we have

been for some time. The member for Buderim asks, 'Why aren't we doing what New South Wales does and telling businesses when we are going to open?' It is because we already are open. In fact, we have a strong economy in this state—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock.

Mr Mickelberg interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Buderim, you can leave the chamber for one hour.

Whereupon the honourable member for Buderim withdrew from the chamber at 5.42 pm.

Ms FARMER: The reason that we are open and trading in Queensland is because we have had a strong health recovery in this state. We have been able to operate on a small number of short, sharp lockdowns because we have shown leadership in this state. Every single Queensland, including our mighty Queensland businesses, has put their shoulder to the grindstone. We know that there are many businesses struggling because we are in a pandemic. On top of the financial support and the other significant support that we have shown businesses, the most important thing we can do for them is to be open and trading. Our unemployment is at a 12-year low. We have created 95,000 more jobs than before COVID. There are a whole raft of other metrics that show our economy is forging ahead.


The real piece is them talking about 'rates of vaccination increase'. We have so many regional members over there, and we know that vaccination rates are low in the regions. I am yet to hear anything out of them. The take-up rate in the regions is low. We have the CHO and the Minister for Health travelling around Queensland begging people to get vaccinated, and there is not a word out of any of them. Then we have the member for Mudgeeraba who is a paid-up member of NPAQ and we have never heard her call them out publicly. We have never heard her say that. If we do not get 80 per cent vaccination rates in Queensland, it will be because people like the member for Mudgeeraba are supporting organisations which are anti-vaccination. They are rampantly, aggressively anti-vaxxers and they are encouraging Queenslanders.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr Minnikin interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member for Chatsworth, you are warned under the standing orders.

Ms FARMER: Unless we can improve our vaccination rates in Queensland, we are going to find it very hard to avoid lockdown. That is when we are going to have trouble for our economy. That is when our businesses are going to suffer. It is up to every single member of this House, every single member who particularly represents a low vaccination rate community, to go out there and show leadership.

 **Mrs GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (5.44 pm): Anxiety, fear, dread and hopelessness—every day, my constituents are confronted with these emotions because this state Labor government refuses to release a pathway out of the pandemic. Local businesses have fared no better. Had the Premier actually done her job and cared about my community enough to genuinely speak with the border businesses when she snuck down to Coolangatta for a little photo-op, she would know that we cannot go on without hope.

My community have shouldered the burden of border closures for the rest of Queensland for almost two years. They have done this despite the government providing no plan and no hope for a way out, and there has been no real relief for my community. While we struggle on the border, the Premier stages a photo-op to give the illusion that she cares. Meanwhile, this government have sacrificed us with their border policies. They have failed us by letting our cries for support and for a plan fall on deaf ears. My constituents deserve a government that actually cares for all Queenslanders. Instead, what we have is a government willing to sacrifice the Queensland border community. All my community wants is for the state government to do their job and commit to a pathway out of the pandemic.

Today in parliament we heard the Premier say that the pathway out is to not have a pathway in. Everyone here in this chamber knows that we need to have a plan to live with COVID. We cannot keep delta out forever, so what is the state government's plan for reopening the Queensland economy as vaccination rates improve? All of these mixed messages are causing chaos and confusion. We have no target to work towards, no certainty. My border community is living minute by minute, pay cheque by pay cheque, press conference by press conference, and it is not good enough. Queenslanders

deserve to know what the Premier's plan is for the reopening of the Queensland economy. We already know that our ticket to freedom is vaccinations, but this state Labor government has failed to commit to a roadmap or a national plan.

To help the government boost their vaccination numbers, I spent months advocating for Currumbin constituents and calling for local mass vaccination hubs on the southern Gold Coast, calling for pop-up vaccination clinics. After the Broadbeach vaccination hub was announced on 16 July, my office was inundated with calls from local residents who were unable to get vaccinated or get an appointment. It took more than three months for this government to take me up on my offer and help local Currumbin constituents do their part. If the border is our front line, why did it take so long for this state Labor government to establish pop-up vaccination clinics?

We are all doing our part getting vaccinated, but this government has released no plan for the reopening of the Queensland economy. New South Wales has a plan. Victoria has a plan. What is Queensland's plan? What will the Premier do when we hit the 80 per cent vaccination rate? What will the Premier do when we hit the 90 per cent vaccination rate? The modelling has been done but the Premier will not release it. Why won't the Premier let us know? Why won't the Premier let Queenslanders know?

I hear from my constituents every day about the very real effects this chaos and confusion is having and it is heart-breaking. Just today I had an email from Naomi about her home in the Currumbin Valley. She, her husband and their two young kids aged only three and four are currently homeless. She wrote—

We are homeless, living from our caravan, with two young boys and my husband unable to look for work until we're in Queensland. We're paying a mortgage—

on their Queensland home. She continued—


We feel like we're being treated as second class citizens and like untrustworthy children. We pose no threat and are fully vaccinated and are willing to do whatever is required of us to drive across the border and home quarantine.

...

Please help us, we are really struggling having no home, no second income and no certainty around our immediate future. We are desperate and feel like prisoners in our own country.

Another constituent is just trying to get home to their Coolangatta unit. This is a constituent who has been told they must fly into the Gold Coast airport to get to their unit, which is a mere five minutes away from where they are in Tweed Heads.

We cannot go on like this. My community must have a plan. The Premier must show some compassion. Now is the time to act. Provide local border businesses, families and residents with hope. Premier, do your job and commit to a pathway out of the pandemic to alleviate the anxiety, the fear and the dread that my constituents face on a daily basis. Release the modelling and release the plan.

 **Mrs MULLEN** (Jordan—ALP) (5.49 pm): 'And the Oscar goes to...' Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to oppose the member for Mudgeeraba's motion. There is a fantastic proverb: 'He who asks a question is a fool for five minutes; he who does not ask a question remains a fool forever.' Our Premier has quite correctly asked some very important questions about the initial government modelling and the subsequent New South Wales and Victorian—

Opposition members interjected.

Ms Grace: Where's your anger about people dying in New South Wales? Sorry.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): I appreciate your penitence, member for McConnel, and I hope you keep that up for the remainder of the debate. Members, the level of interjections has climbed far too high. I will start warning people.

Mrs MULLEN: Questions about the subsequent New South Wales and Victorian outbreaks with more than 100,000 cases from one cluster, questions about our increased hospital demand and lack of federal funding or, frankly, any interest in health care, aged care or disability care, and questions about vaccinating children are what a responsible government asks. It questions, interrogates and does more than throw out inane slogans like, 'Open up', 'Stick to the national plan', 'Can't keep Australia under the doona.' If those opposite cared so much about the plans for reopening our Queensland economy, they would support our government's calls and actions to see as many people vaccinated as soon as possible. Seriously, say something.

Mr Millar interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Gregory, I am placing you on a warning. Your interjections have been loud and repeated and are interrupting the debate.

Mrs MULLEN: If those opposite cared so much about the plans for reopening our Queensland economy they would not be joining anti-vaxxer organisations, especially when they hope to be the health minister one day. If those opposite cared so much about the plans for reopening our Queensland economy they would perhaps take a moment to actually know what is happening with the Queensland economy.

No-one denies that lockdowns and border closures, both domestic and internationally, do not have an impact on businesses and economies, but here are some facts—and, member for Buderim, this is for you—Queensland's economic growth in the June quarter was faster than the rest of Australia. In fact, Queensland's economy grew by two per cent faster than Australia's domestic demand of 1.7 per cent and far outstripped Australia's GDP growth of 0.7 per cent. Household consumption in Queensland was 3.2 per cent higher than in March last year, further above its pre-COVID level than any other state or territory. Private investment in Queensland grew by 5.7 per cent in the June quarter, faster than any other state and almost three times faster than the national average growth in investment. State and local government investment in Queensland grew by 5.1 per cent over the past 12 months. Queensland has added more jobs than any other state or territory since March. Some 67,000 more Queenslanders are in jobs today than pre COVID. Our unemployment rate in Queensland has dropped to 5.3 per cent from its COVID peak of 8.8 per cent in July 2020. And there is more.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. The member for Bundaberg and member for Burleigh are both on warnings.

Mrs MULLEN: In the past 12 months, household lending grew 52 per cent faster than the national average. Dwelling approvals are up 32 per cent faster than the national average. Residential housing starts are 52 per cent higher than they were before COVID, higher than the national increase. Retail sales in Queensland are up 10.5 per cent on pre-COVID numbers, the strongest growth of any east coast state and almost twice the national average. We know that Queensland is attracting more interstate migrants than any other jurisdiction, with more than 31,000 people moving to Queensland in 2020. Wait, one more—the value of Queensland's exports is \$62.5 billion, 26 per cent higher than gold standard New South Wales.


If our economy continues to grow as a result of our strong health response, what is this motion really about? Let us be very clear—the LNP in Queensland want to destroy everything we have fought hard to protect. Let us be very clear—the LNP in Queensland wants the delta variant to rip through our state so they can blame our government when, sadly, inevitable deaths will occur. Let us be very clear—the LNP in Queensland is doing all of this for its mates in Canberra. We know that a federal election is imminent. There will be no visits to Glasgow this year. There is no way the Prime Minister wants Queenslanders to feel safe and protected under a Labor government. They certainly do not want a repeat of the Queensland state election results—a six per cent primary swing against them in Everton; a 6.1 per cent primary swing against them in Buderim; a 7.4 per cent primary swing against them in Morayfield; an 11 per cent primary swing against them in Hervey Bay—because that would not be good for federal seats like Dickson, Fairfax, Longman or Wide Bay. No, that would not be good at all.

Mr Millar interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Jordan, resume your seat. The member for Gregory is on a warning. I ask you to leave the chamber. It is not an invitation to comment, members.

Whereupon the honourable member for Gregory withdrew from the chamber at 5.54 pm.

Mrs MULLEN: Really, as has been stated, if the Queensland LNP wants the confidential national cabinet modelling commissioned by the Prime Minister, why not call him and ask for it? Understanding the lack of morals and ethics by the Morrison government, I would not be surprised if they just leaked it to them anyway! That would depend on what the modelling says. Fingers crossed, it is all good like our early vaccine supply and the federal quarantine system. Oh, wait, hang on—let us not fool ourselves that the context of this motion, and in fact the Queensland opposition's entire attack on our government in relation to COVID, is not their political masters in Canberra just telling them what to do. They are absolute puppets. Let us be honest, we know whose hand is up there!

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (5.55 pm): If I am to be lectured about vaccinations, I will take advice from 'nurse' Mudgeeraba over 'industrial advocate' Redcliffe any day of the week. That is what I will do.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Pause the clock. The member for Kawana is experienced enough to know to use correct titles in this chamber. Next time I will issue a warning.

Mr BLEIJIE: Particularly after the earlier point of order!

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, particularly after your point of order!

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, members!

Mr BLEIJIE: I will take advice from the member for Mudgeeraba, who is a nurse, any day of the week on vaccinations. The member for Mudgeeraba had her vaccination before the Premier. The member for Mudgeeraba had her vaccination before the health minister. Who set the example about vaccinations in Queensland? It was not the government. The Premier said, 'The dog bit me. I couldn't get it.' She said, 'I've got to get the flu shot,' despite the Queensland Health website saying that one should have the COVID jab before the flu shot. Then she said, 'I might have to go to Tokyo and I might have to get the Pfizer, not the AstraZeneca.' That is what she said. Then of course she ended up getting the Pfizer, not the AstraZeneca. Members on this side of the parliament received our vaccinations before members of the Labor Party.

If we want to talk about vaccine hesitancy, we should look at the Labor Party. The Premier and the health minister ought look in the mirror. When you tell young Queenslanders that they have more chance of dying from a COVID jab than COVID itself, why do you think vaccine hesitancy went through the roof? It was those comments, endorsed by the Premier as well, that led to vaccine hesitancy and to the fact that Queensland has the lowest rate of vaccinations in the country.

Here is another truth. I find it interesting that this week the Labor Party strategically and politically have been going after the NPAQ and the TPAQ. I have been wondering why. I have just been told. These associations across Australia now have over 12,000 members. Nurses in the nurses union and teachers in the teachers union are leaving in droves because they want to see competition and because they want competition. They want choice. I never thought I would see the industrial relations minister deny Queensland public servants the right to join whatever association they choose, but she is playing favourites.

Those opposite want to talk about those other unions. Have I heard Labor members condemn CFMEU members who alleged they were going to rape the children of families at construction sites? No. Have we heard condemnation of Dave Hanna? No. 'Mr CFMEU', the member for Bancroft, spoke on this motion. He is a member of the CFMEU, but has he condemned the CFMEU? What about these sieges we saw in Melbourne last week with the CFMEU and what about the bullying and intimidation we see on construction sites in Queensland? They have the hide to come in here and say that nurses should not have the right to join the association of their choice. The Minister for Industrial Relations is shaking her head. She wants the nurses and the teachers to join an association. It has to be the ones associating with the Labor Party. That is what it is about.

I see that those associations have over 12,000 members. Why was there this concerted effort and attack from the Labor Party on these unions? We know the less—

Ms Grace: You don't know that.

Mr BLEIJIE: I do! I also know this: fewer members in the teachers union and the nurses union in Queensland means less money for the Labor Party. That is the issue for them.

Mr BAILEY: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I do believe the microphone system is working.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I remind members that when I am taking a point of order it is not an opportunity for people to engage in that sort of behaviour. Member for Miller, that was a frivolous point of order. I am placing you on a warning.

Mrs D'ATH: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

An honourable member: Turn your microphone on.

Mrs D'ATH: I cannot turn the microphone on because the member for Kawana is being very cute by turning all the microphones on.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Can I have your point of order?

Mrs D'ATH: And he is not. That is just a point of order.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Mr BLEIJIE: This deliberate interruption! I should be given another 10 minutes on the clock! The fact is that businesses in Queensland see no plan from the Labor government. We have Queenslanders still stuck over the border. Look at six-year-old Lenny. Today suddenly he will get an exemption, despite the fact we have been trying since July to get him home to Queensland. It is time to bring Queenslanders home. It is time for care and compassion and consistency. It is time to give the people of Queensland the modelling. It is time to show businesses that we are open for business. It is time to get on with the job.

(Time expired)



Hon. MC BAILEY (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (6.01 pm): There is no substitute for volume over content, judging by the member for Kawana's contribution! He has that amateur thespian title absolutely wrapped up in gold. I read this motion and I had to ask myself a question: why would they move this motion?

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Pause the clock. The member is not being provocative and the member is not adopting a provocative tone of voice, so I would ask that the member be heard with respect.

Mr BAILEY: The only reason I could think of for moving such a motion is that the LNP, after 20 months of a global pandemic, still have not worked out how we have been so successful in Queensland. They just do not believe it. Let's look at the numbers around the world. There have been 718,000 deaths in the US.

Mr Watts interjected.

Mr BAILEY: The person interjecting could not even adhere to health orders. That is the record of those opposite. There have been 451,000 deaths in India. There have been more than 4½ million deaths around the world and there have been seven deaths in Queensland. What does that tell you? It tells you that the leadership of this state is one of the best in the world. That deserves some respect, but it does not get any respect from those perennial members on the opposition benches. While we have performed in a world-leading manner in this pandemic, those opposite have the mortgage on losing elections and being in opposition. They have won one election since 1986, and it shows in a debate like this.

We went to an election last year in the middle of a global pandemic, and the people endorsed our management of this pandemic. What did we get from those opposite? They called 64 times for us to open the borders. The Leader of the Opposition said that, effectively, our COVID response was like putting a doona over your head and sucking your thumb. That is the level of sophistication the member for Broadwater is bringing to public debate in this state. It is pretty pathetic. Not content with deserting his home town of Townsville and going for a safe seat with his mates in LNP headquarters down on the Gold Coast, that is the kind of contribution we get from him. Likewise, it has been only six days since the resignation, after a couple of months, of the LNP state director. Tony Eyres lasted months. Those opposite are a dysfunctional, shambolic rabble. Can you imagine what would have happened if they had been in power during the pandemic? I dread to think what would have happened. It sickens me to think what would have happened.

Mr Nicholls: See what happened in Victoria.

Mr BAILEY: I take that interjection from the member for Clayfield. The outbreak in Victoria has been identified as coming from the outbreak in Sydney, because Gladys went too late. She did not go short and sharp; she mismanaged it and she botched it, just like Scott Morrison botched the vaccine rollout and botched fit-for-purpose quarantine. Here we have members on the other side of the House running cover for the worst Prime Minister since William McMahon. That is what he is. He has been worked out. While we in Queensland are open, with an open economy and doing things relatively normally, there are 25,600 people with COVID infections across the border. How many do we have? We have very few. We have a total of just over 2,000 since the beginning of the pandemic.

If those opposite want to keep bashing their heads against the wall and enjoying the bleeding, I say knock yourselves out. It has worked for you for the last 30 years. Keep going. We love that. Why do you not start applying yourselves when people's lives are at stake? That is the question I ask. People's lives are still at stake. Those opposite are not running decent policy and not thinking about things for themselves. They do not think about anything for themselves; they are just running federal government intervention.

This modelling is subject to national cabinet. You cannot hide from science. Seven deaths is the reality. We have led the world on this. We get these nonsense motions when there is a press conference every day with the CHO, the Premier, the health minister and the Deputy Premier fully explaining the issues of the day. What a joke the opposition is.

(Time expired)

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

AYES, 34:

LNP, 29—Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Boyce, Camm, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Gerber, Hart, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister, Mander, McDonald, Minnikin, Nicholls, O'Connor, Perrett, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Stevens, Watts, Weir.

KAP, 3—Dametto, Katter, Knuth.

PHON, 1—Andrew.

Ind, 1—Bolton.

NOES, 50:

ALP, 50—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, Kelly, A. King, S. King, Linard, Lui, Madden, Martin, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.

Pair: Lauga, Crandon.

Resolved in the negative.

PRIVILEGE

Alleged Deliberate Misleading of the House



Mr POWELL (Glass House—LNP) (6.12 pm): I rise on a matter of privilege suddenly arising. I believe the contribution made by the member for Bancroft during debate on the motion in which he referenced social media posts of certain members in this House was deliberately misleading and I will be writing to you on that matter, Mr Speaker.

HOUSING LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from p. 3036, on motion of Ms Enoch—

That the bill be now read a second time.



Mr PERRETT (Gympie—LNP) (6.12 pm), continuing: The government was wiping its hands of the mess it had created. The Cooloola Waters retirement village had been a fixture in Tin Can Bay for 30 years and was running in the black. However, it could not fund the mandatory buyback. What tipped them over were the changes to state legislation which the Lohses said left them like lab rats in a maze with no exit. They told the *Gympie Times*—

We're not in the red, there was no loss, there's no debt owing. We're one of the most solvent villages in the state.

They were forced into liquidation to avoid any risk of insolvent trading as they could not pour \$2 million of their own money in and borrow against their units. There are approximately 329 retirement village schemes in Queensland. They comprise 31,236 units. They accommodate an estimated 43,730 residents. This bill will now amend the RV Act to allow the minister to exempt specific retirement villages from the mandatory buyback obligation. It should not have taken this long for the government to sort out an issue which impacts some of the more vulnerable members of the community.



Hon. G GRACE (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (6.14 pm): I rise to support the Housing Legislation Amendment Bill. A large percentage of households are in rental properties in this state and the bulk of those—about 27,000—are in my electorate of McConnel. I think my electorate is the only electorate in this House where there is a whole suburb—the suburb of Newstead—that is basically all apartments. It is important to make renting fair and responsive while also getting that balance right, and I commend the minister in getting what I believe is a balanced outcome.

These new laws will ensure all Queensland rental properties meet minimum quality standards, and that is a good balance. It gives the ability for renters to make emergency repairs valued at up to four times the weekly rent of that premises if it is urgent and is required to be done, because minimum standards are very important.

The bill provides clarity about the end of a tenancy. There are provisions in the legislation regarding how end of tenancies can be terminated and the reasons for that. In this regard the bill gives clear direction. We hear from those opposite, 'Give us a clear direction. Give us clarity for business.' This legislation gives clarity in relation to the ending of a tenancy.

The bill will also make it easier for renters to have a pet. During the election campaign last year when the electorate overwhelmingly voted for a Palaszczuk Labor government, walking around my electorate I can honestly say that I do not know too many in my electorate who do not own a pet. It is remarkable. I think every breed of dog is in my electorate, many of which live in apartments. Their owners would definitely welcome the ability to make it easier for renters to have a pet in my electorate. They are beautiful animals in our dog parks, but it is extraordinary. It got to the point where we were taking photos with these pets and I was having to write their names down so I could remember them so that when I would see them out and about on the hustings I could say, 'There's Rosie, the greyhound. There's Watson, the bulldog' et cetera. These are great amendments for my electorate.

The bill also delivers key Housing Strategy objectives, and they include modernising the rental laws. We often do that, and as a Labor government I think we do that very well. We ensure that vulnerable community members are supported to sustain tenancy, and that is very important. We do have tenancy shortages issues at the moment because everybody wants to come to Queensland, and why wouldn't you? People want to come here because of our extraordinary effort during COVID and the manner in which we have kept Queenslanders safe. You cannot go anywhere throughout Queensland without people thanking us for the role that we have played, and that is the reality.

No matter how much those opposite yell and no matter how much they whinge about how we have handled COVID, they cannot escape the fact that we get many thank-yous. I have been with the Premier when she has been absolutely swarmed. In Hervey Bay there was not one person in the restaurant who did not come up to her when we were having dinner to thank her and the government for the role that we have played in keeping Queenslanders safe. The member for Hervey Bay agrees with me in that it was extraordinary, even to the point that when we were sitting with the Premier a family who was a bit embarrassed to come up to her wrote a thank-you message on a beer coaster—an extraordinary event and beautifully handwritten from this family thanking the Premier and this government for what they have done to keep Queenslanders safe.

All we hear from those opposite is whinging and whining and playing politics, and that is exactly what is happening with this debate as well. There is a little bit of politics. The member for Everton got up and claimed a conspiracy theory with regard to preferences between Labor and the Greens, forgetting the fact that the LNP preferred the Greens at the last election in every single seat. He then rattled off the number of seats that were won because of Greens preferences. He said that he stopped at C because he ran out of time. I know why he stopped at C: because if he got to E with Everton, he would have realised that he actually won his seat with Greens preferences! He did not get the 52.2 per cent margin that he has. Rather, he did not secure the seat until the Greens preferences were distributed.

The member for Everton comes in here and talks about how we all won our seats with Greens preferences yet he won with Greens preferences as well. Honestly, you could not write this stuff. It falls into your lap. I sit here dreaming about those opposite saying something that I can use in this House and the member for Everton just keeps delivering. It is absolutely amazing. There is a caveat on this, but my understanding of the figures from the QEC is that the member for Everton did not reach the 50 per cent mark until the Greens preferences were distributed. If I am wrong I am happy to take it back, but I am pretty sure I am right. No wonder he stopped at C.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I ask that you rule on relevance.

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

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I remind members that when I am taking advice it is not an opportunity to continue the debate across the chamber. There is no point of order. The member is responding to matters that were raised. She is rebutting comments that were made. I would ask members to come back to the long title of the bill.


Ms GRACE: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. My comments are just as relevant as the comments from the member for Everton. The housing bill supports a fair and responsive housing system that enhances the safety and dignity of all Queenslanders. We have carried out extensive consultation in relation to this bill. I commend the former minister, the member for Springwood, and the current minister for getting the balance right. It is not easy balancing the interests of home owners and renters. It is a difficult task because both have different interests, but I believe that the bill before the House gets that balance right. It looks after those who are vulnerable, those in domestic and family violence situations, enabling them to end a tenancy with limited liability for end-of-lease costs and that is a fantastic step in the right direction.

Unlike the consultation that we on this side of the House undertook in relation to this bill, the Greens members want to make amendments without any consultation whatsoever. They come into this House and say because you have declared something on your register of interests you cannot speak on the bill. I point to my declaration. Apparently it was on Facebook. It is there for everybody to see and I draw everyone's attention to that. It would be like saying that the Greens national spokesperson on housing is also an investment property owner and so that person cannot not speak on housing. It is really quite amazing to hear that.

I am elected by the constituents of McConnell to represent them. I speak to my constituents very often. I represent a large number of renters and a large number of people who are home investors in the private market. I take umbrage at the assertion that I cannot speak in this House because of what is in my register of interests. I am glad that we all locked in together in this House and voted that down. Wanting to stop people speaking because of a perceived conflict of interest shows a lack of experience. I am glad that this House rejected it outright. I stand here proudly representing the renters and property owners in my electorate.

I think that this bill strikes a perfect balance. This bill provides minimum standards. It has provision for renters taking control when they see an emergency. It looks at grounds for evictions. I love the domestic violence proposals, as I mentioned. I think that is a step in the right direction. Once we have moved this bill, I look forward to informing my constituency about its contents.

In relation to not speaking on this because of a declaration of interest, I note that both the Greens members in this House have not declared any real estate or any mortgages. I do not know whether that means that they are renters. Even if they were renters I would never deny them speaking on a bill to do with renting. It does not add up. Having said that, I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (6.24 pm): I rise to contribute to the Housing Legislation Amendment Bill. I wish to declare that my partner owns rental properties. Before I talk about the bill I want to read an email from a constituent who is struggling from the failure of this Labor government to address her housing needs—

My name is Anna Marie Ebsworth, I am a 44 year old Indigenous/Aboriginal mother of 8 children. I have my 5 youngest living here with me at Charleville.

My family and I have faced a number of challenging times since returning to Charleville and it has become necessary for my family and I to relocate to Brassall (Ipswich area) to access a number of services including medical, social, emotional, cultural, educational and overall wellbeing support.

I have had a housing transfer with the Department of Housing Toowoomba Office since 13 September 2019 assessed at Very High needs level.

I am not sure why it has taken this long for the transfer and I have been struggling.

...

I am writing this email in the hope that you can help me get clarity—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Pause the clock. Member, this bill does not relate to the Department of Housing. I am listening to your contribution carefully, but I am failing to see how this relates to the long title of the bill. I would ask you to come back to the long title.

Ms LEAHY: When we have an underinvestment in housing these are the situations that occur. People do wait for three years, like this lady, on the waitlist. In November 2019 the Queensland government released *A better renting future reform roadmap*. The government set out a two-stage reform pathway. The road map followed on in 2018 with the Open Doors to Renting Reform consultation. In the Open Doors to Renting Reform consultation radical aspects of rental reform were canvassed, including the right for tenants to make minor renovations to a property and the right for tenants to keep pets and push for long-term fixed leases. After a campaign run by the Real Estate Institute of Queensland the majority of the extreme reform proposals have been removed as part of the government's proposed reforms.

The LNP will support the bill as we believe there are positive reforms for retirement villages and those suffering from family and domestic violence. However, the LNP holds concerns on some aspects of the reform that are proposing amendments to two key issues—that is, periodic agreements and pets. Our amendments will ensure that periodic agreements can be reasonably ended by a lessor as is the case under the current tenancy laws, keeping flexibility and ensuring landlords and tenants have the benefit of this flexibility.

The amendments ensure that lessors are given the ultimate authority to refuse the right for a tenant to keep a pet without reason, as is the case under the current tenancy laws. I know the government will say that people with pets are important, and they are, however, many of the older buildings are not fit for purpose for animals: they do not have the appropriate facilities for animals and animals have to share common areas such as lifts which can result in unintended consequences. Unfortunately, it is members of the body corporate who have to then deal with the complaints which result from those situations that occur from those unintended consequences.

I urge all members to support the LNP amendments. There needs to be a balance for both landlords and tenants, and the LNP amendments seek to find that balance. I fear without these amendments being supported many private landlords will withdraw their properties from the market and that will cause a further shrinkage of the private rental market. Regional communities cannot afford to have any further shrinkage. Some, like the Richmond Shire Council, have no rental properties available.

Regional communities need more housing available for rent and any disincentive will hamper the ability to increase the housing stock. The state government cannot afford any private rental shrinkage. They are already struggling to provide housing for public servants in regional areas. For instance, in the Barcoo shire, an instance arose in the town of Jundah when the town's director of nursing went on maternity leave and there was no accommodation for her replacement. In the Blackall-Tambo council area, the current accommodation for key workers in the local hospital and nursing homes is at capacity. There is a need for more housing for those workers. There is nowhere for those workers to rent. In the Balonne shire, state government employers and other employers struggle to find quality housing for staff. The demand for housing means that leases are filled within an hour. In the Paroo shire there is a shortage of government housing for government staff in Cunnamulla, forcing departments into the private rental market, which also is very tight.

In the Etheridge shire, government housing is falling into disrepair. I look forward to seeing how this bill will help and how the government will make sure that the minimum standards apply to government housing in the Etheridge shire. People in the Etheridge shire are greatly concerned about why that housing is falling into such disrepair. That needs to be addressed. In Mount Isa, the state government is selling off the housing stock and moving its staff into the private market. Similarly, public housing stock is being moved into the private market. State government employees struggle to find appropriate housing in Mount Isa.

I am fearful of the unintended consequences from this legislation, especially for many of the rural and regional communities. The housing situation is already tight. If the balance is tipped any further, in regional communities the outcome will be catastrophic. Unfortunately, good people in rural and regional communities are homeless now.

I commend the Western Queensland Alliance of Councils for their *Housing solutions study* report. I would like to know if the housing minister has read a copy of that document. If not, I am happy to provide her with a copy. Those 22 local governments from Karumba to Cunnamulla have invested in and worked jointly with the Regional Australia Institute to produce the *Housing solutions study*. It is a sobering read on the housing problems for rental and private accommodation. However, it also seeks to find solutions to the chronic and severe housing underinvestment across 60 per cent of that area of Queensland. Many people would like to have somewhere to rent but they cannot because of that underinvestment, which is not confined just to the private sector.


The report uncovers that there is a problem that the state government has with its own housing stock for employees in Western Queensland. The report identified that, across the 22 member councils, the shortfall in housing is 1,480 dwellings. On top of that, council supplied housing needs to increase by some 296 dwellings just to house council staff. A further 248 council owned dwellings are in need of major refurbishment. Over 1,500 homes are needed. Through the QuickStarts program, the state government is only planning to deliver 98 homes into this region. That is a long way short of the 1,500-plus dwellings that are needed.

The report canvasses three solutions in detail: the western Queensland Alliance of Councils to establish an unlisted residential property fund, the state government to renew its government employee housing and the federal government to introduce a regional new home guarantee. I look forward to

working with the councils to bring about more housing because people have been offered jobs that they cannot take up because they cannot get rental accommodation in the communities. The jobs are there but there is no housing to rent. I look forward to working with the councils so that we can increase private ownership in this region. I call on the state Labor government to work with the councils. I call on the government to do the same and deliver homes to the regions.

The regions want renters. They want people. They have jobs. They will make sure that those people can stay in the community. They want families to come. However, they do not have access to housing so they do not get the renters, and we do not need any disincentive to investment in those areas. I call on the state Labor government to deliver homes to the regions. I have heard of people in Bundaberg who are homeless. They are good people and great renters. They never thought that they would be homeless, but now they find that they are because of the shortage and the underinvestment in housing in this state.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Lui): Before I call the next speaker, I remind members who have been given warnings: the member for Mudgeeraba, the member for Maryborough, the member for Buderim, the member for Chatsworth, the member for Gregory, the member for Bundaberg, the member for Burleigh and the member for Miller.

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (6.34 pm): I promise to behave myself, Madam Deputy Speaker. I rise to speak in favour of the Housing Legislation Amendment Bill. I am proud to speak in favour of this bill because it makes renting fairer in Queensland. In 2017 the Palaszczuk government released our Queensland Housing Strategy and accompanying action plan to ensure confidence in the housing and rental markets and to set out a plan to reform and modernise the existing legislative frameworks. We have consulted extensively with renters, the real estate industry and property owners to ensure that the reforms strike the right balance.

Stage 1 of our renting reforms include: ending without-grounds evictions; making it easier for renters to have a pet; ensuring renters have confidence that their rental property is safe, secure and functional; and ensuring renters experiencing domestic and family violence have options to end a tenancy. These changes are an important step in making renting fairer in our state and only a Labor government would do this. I empathise very strongly because, as someone who has rented most of my life—not now—it is something that I am very familiar with.

We know that the housing sector is under pressure and with Queensland's population growing thanks to interstate migration that pressure will increase. We also know that renting is important with approximately one-third of Queenslanders currently renting. The reforms in this bill will work alongside the Palaszczuk government's almost \$3 billion investment in the sector to boost supply and provide safer and more accessible housing. Unfortunately, the federal Morrison-Joyce LNP government continues to underfund housing at a national level, leaving states like Queensland to pick up the slack.

This legislation delivers key housing strategy objectives, including to ensure vulnerable community members are supported to sustain tenancies to facilitate their social, economic and cultural participation and to support a fair and responsive housing system that enhances the safety and dignity of all Queenslanders. In a tight rental and housing market it is important that we ensure any changes are balanced and do not have unintended consequences that would potentially reduce supply. The rights and obligations of renters and landlords are being carefully considered in the bill to ensure the best outcomes.

This legislation will remove without-grounds evictions, giving renters more certainty and security that they will not lose their home. We are also protecting renters against retaliatory evictions and actions, giving them the confidence they need to be able to enforce their rights without fear of retribution. These are important protections for renters who all too often feel they need to choose between not raising concerns with property owners and having to move out of their home.

We know that many renters want to keep a pet so that their house feels more like a home because obviously pets provide companionship, safety and physical and mental health benefits. For many people, of course, they are part of the family. This legislation makes it easier to keep a pet in a rental property by removing blanket pet bans and requiring that property owners can only refuse a request because of a prescribed reason. The bill also bans rent increases and pet bonds, meaning that renters can have confidence that they will not be financially penalised for keeping a pet.

By introducing minimum housing standards we are ensuring that renters have safe, secure and functional housing when they move in. We are introducing additional grants for renters to end an agreement in some circumstances if the property does not comply with the minimum housing standards. These changes will support renters and ensure that properties are fit for purpose.

The legislation makes it easier for people fleeing family and domestic violence to end their rental agreement, which is the last problem they need when they are dealing with something so significant. These changes will commence immediately on assent. Renters who have to leave their homes because of family and domestic violence will be able to leave immediately and access their portion of the rental bond funds held for the tenancy through the Residential Tenancies Authority. This legislation provides a number of other protections for people experiencing family and domestic violence, including the ability to change locks without prior lessor consent. The legislation strikes a balance between the rights and obligations of renters and landlords and it provides a framework that addresses the historical power imbalance between the groups.

I would like to respond to a couple of things that have been said in this debate which I think need to be noted and responded to, and they were in the contribution from the member for South Brisbane. The member for South Brisbane moved a motion to ensure that people who are landlords should not be able to vote on this legislation. This is in clear contradiction to the advice given by the Deputy Clerk, who advised MPs—

Investors and renters are a broad class and thus there is no compulsion on members to declare in their speeches or when voting in line with previous Speaker's rulings. However, if members wish to declare in their speeches, they can, but there is no requirement to do so.

I do not hold any investment properties, but other people do and they are entitled to do that. To say that MPs should not exercise their democratic right in this chamber to vote on legislation which they are mandated to do by their constituents is Stalinist; it is disgraceful. For the Greens MP to come in here and tell other people to not represent their constituents on legislation is anti-democratic, and it has to be called out. How dare they! I know it is a social media stunt, but it is also anti-democratic and it is a disgrace. I would feel that I am not doing my job if I did not point that out.

The other thing about the Greens party MPs' contributions here about allegedly caring for renters is that I would feel a little bit more comfortable if their record actually backed it up, but they have a long record of opposing new housing. I have a pile of printouts right here—I will not table them all—but there are so many applications they have opposed in their own electorates. These are often housing proposals that are close to busway stations, close to a train station, close to the CBD and workplaces—in the high density zone. One of them is covered in plants. It looks like a very green proposal. They always find an excuse. The Greens spin excuse to oppose development. They characterise it in ways that are politically spun but basically are blocking housing being built during a housing crisis. It is the greatest hypocrisy and it has to be called out. It is lacking integrity, it is lacking in ethics, it is the worst bit of political spin and it needs to be identified.

The kind of excuse the Greens party MPs pull out against new housing is, 'Oh, it is luxury.' Apparently if it is high density, it must be luxury. 'Oh, no, it should be a park'—other people should buy it and turn it into a park. It is privatisation. Roma Street Parklands was doubled in size by the Beattie government 20 years ago. It was always envisaged that high-density towers would screen the parkland from the rail line. The member for South Brisbane came out opposing more housing only months ago during a housing crisis saying this was privatisation. Are you kidding me? Are we going to stop housing on privately owned land being developed by the private sector? It is absurd.

If the Greens really believed in the housing crisis, they would support building new houses. However, they have a long record. They call it gentrification; they call it privatisation—'It should be a park.' There is always an excuse.


If you want integrity in this place, then maybe you should be consistent; that is what I say. This government is consistent because this legislation strikes that kind of balance. Probably one of the greatest mysteries was a contribution from the Greens candidate for Griffith, Max Chandler-Mather, who basically—

Ms Boyd: Oh, man!

Mr BAILEY: Yes, I will take that interjection. In opposing one of these housing developments, he tried to depict Labor and the LNP as being similar, a common Greens' spin tactic. In this case, he basically alleged that property developers are somehow in the pockets of the Labor Party and the LNP, totally failing to acknowledge and mention that it was this Labor government that stopped political donations from property developers. We stopped it! Here we have the Greens' spin out there trying to undermine that progressive reform by drawing us and the conservatives together. They say they are different, but the spin from the Greens party on issues like this is that they pretend to be on the side of the battler but they block new housing being built in their own electorates because it wins them votes.

Let's be clear: they rally people, they get them inflamed, they rev them up—'It's outrageous', blah, blah, blah—and it is all about their own political future. It is not about integrity, not about ethics and not about progressive values, because they are not progressive.

I congratulate the minister and the committee. This is important legislation. I have rented for the majority of my life. I know what it is like to be in good and bad housing in terms of landlords. This will give renters a lot more rights and a lot more certainty going forward. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (6.44 pm): I rise to give my contribution on the Housing Legislation Amendment Bill. This bill is a cop-out, it is a capitulation to the property lobby and a slap in the face for the 1.8 million renters in Queensland. It is a reminder that if you have the backing of wealthy property investors and money for a full-page ad in the *Courier-Mail* then you will have the ear of the minister. But if you cannot afford your own home, then you are ignored and treated like a second-class citizen.

Years ago when Labor finally gave in and said they would reform our broken rental laws, it felt like a step forward. I had renters emailing me and asking when the reforms would come into effect, when would they be able to put down roots in their home, keep a pet, live without fear of massive rent hikes or request repairs without fear of being kicked out when their lease ends. But perhaps we should have known that those changes would never come. They could never come from a government packed with landlords and with more interest in hosting intimate luncheons with the REIQ than helping renters.

On introduction, it was immediately clear that this bill was a disappointment, and the bitter disappointment expressed by tenants and tenants' rights advocates alike speaks volumes about just how far short it falls. Perhaps the most egregious flaw is the government backing down on their commitment to end no-grounds evictions after a well-funded fear campaign by the property lobby.

The minister falsely claims again that this bill ends no-grounds evictions. Pretty much anyone who has worked with tenants disagrees. Tenants Queensland, Queenslanders with Disability Network, Q Shelter, Queensland Youth Housing Coalition, Law Right and the Queensland Human Rights Commission all agree that this is just plain wrong and that this bill does not end no-grounds evictions.

The Greens have always said that there are some perfectly reasonable grounds on which an owner should be able to evict a tenant. To be clear, if a tenant is not paying their rent, they can be evicted. If a tenant has trashed the place, they can be evicted. If they are otherwise breaching the lease, they can be evicted. But the end of a lease is not a good reason to kick someone out of their home, especially when most leases are for just six or 12 months.

I am perplexed to see the minister is still claiming they cannot end no-grounds evictions because it would somehow breach landlords' human rights, especially after the Human Rights Commissioner thoroughly debunked this nonsense in the commission's submission on the bill and in a statement on 8 July 2021. I will table a copy of that statement for the benefit of the house.

Tabled paper: Media release, dated 8 July 2021, from the Queensland Human Rights Commission, titled 'Human Rights Commissioner says rights must be appropriately balanced in tenancy reform debate' [\[1741\]](#).

The commissioner said—

Since there is a clear justification for a limitation of rights, given significant housing instability and homelessness in Queensland, it is unlikely that requiring a lessor to provide reasons to end a tenancy at the end of a fixed term would amount to an arbitrary action.

Human rights expert and QCROSS CEO Aimee McVeigh also called the government's property rights arguments a 'furfury'. She also rightly asked—

How can a government say that this law will breach or limit human rights in a way that is unacceptable when they are willing to pass a law that puts GPS trackers on children and call that compatible with human rights?

Labor says that their bill is about modernising our rental laws but it is still based on the archaic assumption that renting is a short-term fix, a stop-gap for young and single people before they buy a home for their family. People increasingly have no choice but to rent for life.

My family and I rent our home. It is where my baby daughter took her first steps, where we put a trampoline out in the backyard for the kids and where we planted a verge garden during the first COVID lockdown. My kids can walk to school from where we live. I am really lucky to have good landlords and to have been able to put down roots here because, according to this bill, as a renter I have no right to do so.

A renter in Indooroopilly emailed me recently saying he and his wife, a critically essential worker in short supply, may be forced to leave Queensland because of a lack of secure housing. He said—

"Because of Covid ... my income has been slashed by 70%. Because of age and other factors, this means that my wife and I will probably have to remain renters for the rest of our lives. We have no security outside of year to year leases that the landlord is under no obligation to renew. Since he can make a lot more money by getting in a fresh tenant, then charging anything the market will bear ... he has already refused to extend the normal one year lease."

On this bill, that resident put it pretty bluntly when he said, 'It may appear that there is little difference between a Labor Government and a Coalition Government.' Indeed.

The minister says that they have removed no-grounds evictions with this bill, but they have simply given them a new name. In fact, landlords have an expanded suite of reasons to evict tenants. It has been almost charming to hear some other members stand up and reminisce about their days renting during uni or as a stopgap between properties and telling us what wonderful landlords they are. We are not regulating for good landlords here. It is also abundantly clear that most do not know what it is like to be a renter right now. They do not understand how hard it can be to find a house to rent in one's existing community or the constant fear described in so many submissions on the bill, like this one—

I have had to move 3 times in the last 4 years. The stress and anxiety is numbing. Moving, cleaning, packing while knowing that in 12 months time I may need to move again is very very worrying. The uncertainty makes me want to leave all of my belongings in the boxes—what is the point of unpacking.

There is the person who said—

With the state of renting in QLD as it currently is, I am left often homeless, my health disintegrating constantly, in poverty, share housing in often bad situations, and unable to start a family as I dream of. I beg, all I want is stability and not to be kicked out of a home I've made without notice, or having constantly increasing rent costs.

This is the other massive hole in this bill: it does nothing to address skyrocketing rents—one of the biggest concerns identified in the government's own *Open doors to renting reform* consultation report. That report said—

Tenants expressed that they live in a constant state of fear about rent increases, and many expressed the crippling effects of repeated and unsustainable rent increases.

Again, without ending no-grounds evictions and capping rent increases, renters will continue to be treated like second-class citizens in Queensland. The fundamental power imbalance remains in place, and tenants will put off requests for repairs, live in unsafe housing and in constant fear of losing their home, all at the whim of their landlord. This bill takes all its cues from the REIQ, and does nothing to address the fundamental power imbalance between tenants and landlords, ultimately leaving tenants no better off.

It has been no surprise to hear many members parroting the real estate lobby's talking points during this debate—one of their favourites being that legislating renters' rights would reduce the supply of rental properties and make housing affordability worse. Despite the REIQ and various other lobbyists repeatedly arguing this, the only evidence they have offered to support it so far is a survey of their own members in 2019. They are not even self-selecting; it is of their own membership.

By contrast, during the committee inquiry, Tenants Queensland cited research that shows landlords make decisions based on fiscal and financial policy, with tenancy law having little, if any, impact. What is more, they pointed out that the real estate lobby has argued against any advance in renters' rights since at least the 1980s on the basis that it would shrink the rental housing market. Guess what? It has never happened. What is more, there is a simple, intuitive answer to this gripe from the REIQ. If strengthening tenants' rights does end up with some property investors selling their properties, these properties do not just disappear. The options are, essentially, that these properties will be bought by another investor who will rent them out or someone looking to live there—someone who will leave their previous property vacant for another renter.

I did like the member for Burleigh's contribution, where he neatly summarised the Greens' push for greater public housing investment and a reduced reliance on the private rental sector. Queensland has long relied heavily on the private market to provide housing, and this status quo has left us with 47,000 people on the social housing waiting list and critical levels of household debt. Leaving rental affordability to the whim of the private market has proven to be a catastrophic failure. The myth that private housing supply will fix the affordability crisis is just that—a myth. There has been an estimated 164,000 excess dwellings in Australia from 2001 to 2017. Over this same period, the median rent in Queensland rose from \$200 to \$330 per week.

So, yes, I would love to see a Queensland where no one has to rely on this broken system anymore, where everyone has access to a well-designed, affordable social home and where we treat housing as a right, not a commodity, not a source of individual wealth. This is why the Greens will continue calling out this Labor government's public housing sell-offs and their failure to build enough homes for even a fraction of those who need them.

Queenslanders are struggling to find safe, affordable housing, and it has never been more urgent that the government step in and help them. To do that, as well as building more social housing we need to genuinely correct the power imbalance between renters and landlords. The Greens introduced a bill


to do just that. Our bill would end no-grounds evictions, cap rent increases, create the right to a pet and allow minor modifications. It would ban rent bidding and invasive application questions. Since Labor will not even debate that bill, we are moving the changes as amendments. I will table those in case we do not get to do that in consideration in detail.

Tabled paper: Housing Legislation Amendment Bill 2021, amendments to be moved by Dr Amy MacMahon MP [\[1742\]](#).

Tabled paper: Housing Legislation Amendment Bill 2021, explanatory notes to amendments to be moved by Dr Amy MacMahon MP [\[1743\]](#).

Tabled paper: Housing Legislation Amendment Bill 2021, statement of compatibility with human rights contained in amendments to be moved by Dr Amy MacMahon MP [\[1744\]](#).

While the Greens will not oppose the government's bill, we will not stop fighting for better than the status quo. We will not stop fighting for a Queensland where everyone, regardless of whether they rent or own, has access to a safe, secure and affordable home.

 **Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement) (6.54 pm): I rise today to support the Housing Legislation Amendment Bill 2021 and the crucial reforms that it delivers to Queenslanders. I begin by congratulating the Minister for Communities and Housing, Minister for Digital Economy and Minister for the Arts for this important piece of reform. I take this opportunity to congratulate the departmental officers and the staff of the Residential Tenancies Authority for their efforts over recent years to deliver these reforms. As the former minister for housing, I know how incredibly hard these dedicated servants of Queenslanders work to undertake incredibly extensive consultation.

In reflecting on that consultation I want to reflect on the contribution of the member for Maiwar. The consultation on these reforms was considered historic in its scale. Queenslanders have been acutely aware of these reforms. For the member for Maiwar to come in here and suggest that the electorate got it wrong when it voted for the Palaszczuk Labor government is an insult to millions and millions of Queensland electors. I can assure the Greens political party that there are thousands upon thousands of home owners, property investors, who rent as well. They, unlike the Greens, have probably the most informed perspective because they can see it from both sides. As housing minister I met with them and I can tell the Greens that they supported our balanced approach.

The Greens political party invest their energy time after time trying to tear down progressive Labor reform because in reality, deep down, they would rather not have any effective reform if they do not get the headline. Their entire approach is always a grab for headlines, like everything else they do. It is a disgrace.

The consultation was a massive undertaking that covered a wide range and variety of topics and resulted in it being one of the largest consultations ever undertaken in Queensland. Granted, there are a lot of strong views on these matters. I acknowledge Tenants Queensland, QCOS and the REIQ for working closely with the government to contribute to these reforms. As with all important issues such as these, we are never going to please everyone. What this bill does is strike an appropriate balance. It is responsive to that extensive consultation that we undertook. It is consistent with the commitments we took to Queenslanders at the election. It is finely calibrated and delivers much needed reforms to renting in this state. It is good Labor reform.

Many of the people living in rental properties are working class Queenslanders—those who go to work each day on the front line. They go to work to clean our schools and our hospitals, to teach our kids, to guard our prisons and to look after our elderly. Queenslanders who rent are mums and dads working hard to make a decent life for themselves and their kids. They are young people looking for independence, paving their own way in life. They are our grandparents who have downsized so that they can give others a family sized home. They are the workers who have flocked to our state to be a part of our golden era.

Many of them have been locked out of owning a home because the federal LNP have put the brakes on wages growth for a decade. Others are those who choose a lifestyle that means that they have flexibility. Some own a home that they rent to someone else too. All of those Queenslanders have something in common. They are entitled to respect regardless of their story or of their circumstances. They are entitled to feel like the house that they live in is their home. Our reforms deliver that and do the right thing by property owners as well. That is important.

These are the Queenslanders who elected us to deliver to them. These Queenslanders deserve a rental system to deliver them a safe, secure place to call home. I am proud to be a member of a Labor government that is once again delivering for all of them.


There are three key aspects to this legislation that I want to cover in my contribution to this debate. Firstly, what I consider to be the most important aspect is the protections for people experiencing domestic and family violence. During the height of the COVID pandemic in 2020, we announced a raft of temporary protections for Queenslanders who are impacted. These included nation-leading protections for those experiencing domestic violence in their home.

We anticipated unfortunately that due to lockdowns there would be a spike in violence in the home. We wanted to ensure that those people, the majority of whom are women, had the protections they needed. Importantly, this bill makes those protections permanent, and I thank the minister for doing so. The ability for a tenant experiencing domestic and family violence to exit a tenancy with seven days notice and not be liable for the remaining tenancy will save lives.

Debate, on motion of Mr de Brenni, adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

Rainbow Beach Fire and Emergency Services Station

 **Mr PERRETT** (Gympie—LNP) (7.00 pm): Last week the Minister for Police and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services officially opened the new Rainbow Beach Fire and Emergency Services station. The Cooloola Coast community is pleased it is open because it has been a long time coming. It has been featured, dropped and then re-emerged in the shiny glossy brochures produced for every budget since 2016.


In 2016, \$300,000 was allocated towards the estimated \$1.3 million to replace the former station. A year later in 2017 that \$300,000 was redirected to Bundaberg for a \$7.2 million station. It was used to prop up a disgraced state Labor member and former minister. It was blatant pork-barrelling at the expense of the Rainbow Beach community. It disappeared from the 2018 budget, reappeared in 2019 and then removed in last year's budget. In six budgets it has been in, out, in, out, and this year it was back. Delays cost taxpayers precious dollars. Those delays and redirection of funds pushed out the estimated price from \$1.3 million in 2016 to a final cost of \$2.5 million. That is a 92 per cent increase in five years. I welcomed its return and I welcome its completion.

I hope the same will not happen to the Gympie Fire Station, which has outgrown its current site. It is a magnificent historical building, but it is no longer fit for purpose. Land was purchased seven years ago in 2014 for a new station at Monkland. Construction was promised to start in 2022 with completion by 2023. When I asked in March about the construction and completion time frames, the minister advised it has been delayed by two years, to commence in 2024. If there are issues with the proposed site, we need to be told now. Planning needs to start now.

When the minister was in Rainbow Beach, I suggested to him to try to find the Rainbow Beach police station. I am interested to know if it was found. The police station operates from under a house. It is not good enough. Rainbow Beach needs a properly designated police station. The current police beat does not provide the same level of service as a police station. The Cooloola Coast's population is 6,500. It swells by thousands during the peak tourist season and on weekends, which generates policing issues in popular spots like Teewah Beach.

In the last 12 months the police have been more active than previously. However, policing is under-resourced. We need more police officers. The same goes for the Mary Valley. The Imbil Police Station needs upgrading and additional police personnel. Two police officers are stationed there. However, for long periods only one is operating there. At the recent Imbil Rural Watch meeting it was clear that there is enough work for four permanent officers in the Mary Valley.

Kurwongbah Electorate, Schools

 **Mr KING** (Kurwongbah—ALP) (7.03 pm): I rise tonight to talk about what is going on in the schools across my electorate of Kurwongbah. I will just flag that, like my updates on local infrastructure projects, I might need a part 2 because there are so many good things going on. I will start in the north with a shout-out to St Eugene College, which brought the year 6 classes into parliament for a visit this month. I came in to have a chat with them and I was blown away by the calibre of the questions the students asked and the thought that obviously went into them. I am hoping to catch up with students from Genesis Christian College during their visit to parliament in the next sitting week.

Moving on to Burpengary State School, last month they opened their much anticipated years 2 and 3 play areas—the member for Bancroft will be very happy with that—complete with the all-essential handball courts and basketball courts, along with new pathways that greatly improve school access for

people with prams and mobility issues. As part of this over \$150,000 project, new bench seats have been installed where parents and carers can wait at school pick-up time. I am really looking forward to getting along to Burpengary State School soon to have a look in person and to hear what is next on their wish list.

Moving down to Narangba, there is so much to report on. Narangba Valley State High School was recently awarded almost \$30,000 in a Gambling Community Benefit Fund grant to purchase new kitchen equipment. I cannot wait to see what they come up with and I wish them all the best for their showcase awards this week.

Congratulations to Narangba Valley State School for being awarded a Woolworths Junior Landcare grant earlier this year. A special thanks to Chappy Rosalie, who spearheaded the Resilience Retreat project, with a composting corner and bees. Restrictions have delayed arrangements, but I hope to pop over before the end of the year to see the progress on this long-term vision that I am proud to have supported.

At Narangba State School, work will soon be underway on our election commitment for a \$50,000 new pathway to provide disability access to the administration building. Our commitment to fund two new crossing supervisor positions has improved school road safety this year with a new school crossing on Mumford Road.

At Kurwongbah State School recently we hosted the Treasurer. That was a lot of fun. We watched some robots racing and crashing into each other. I am going there next week to look at their new NAIDOC garden.

I will leave my update on Jinibara and other schools in the south for another speech. I have some other things to say.

The Petrie State School Twilight Markets are on this Friday, 15 October from 3 pm. There will be markets, food vans and inflatable fun. I hope everyone comes along. I will be there cooking sausages.

Something else I need to talk about today is the Redcliffe Dolphins' successful bid. I wore my Dolphins tie today. I am not saying that is what put them over the line. Seriously, there has been a lot of hard work involved. To Tony Murphy, Bob Jones, Terry and the whole team: congratulations. I think the NRL made the best choice. I and all of my Moreton Bay colleagues are quite happy about that. It is sad for the Firehawks and Jets, but I hope they will all become Dolphin supporters and get on board with the best new team in the NRL.

Firefighters Remembrance Day; Police Remembrance Day; Coolum Touch



Mr PURDIE (Ninderry—LNP) (7.06 pm): I take the opportunity tonight to update the House on some important events I attended in my community since we last met. No doubt other members attended similar events in their communities. The first one was on Sunday just gone when the member for Kawana, the member Maroochydore and I—and the member for Nicklin mentioned this last night as well—attended the Firefighters Remembrance Day ceremony, which I was proud to host in my electorate at Coolum on Sunday morning. It was an important day for them, as it is every year, but more important this year being the 20-year anniversary of the September 11 attacks and it has also been two years since we encountered some devastating fires in my electorate that moved into the Noosa electorate, known as the Peregrine Beach fires, when we saw over 100 firefighters and 40 appliances work through the night to save not only properties but lives.


There was a local firefighter there who was actually on exchange in Canada on September 11 when the attacks occurred. He and others were raced down to New York. He provided a firsthand account of what he encountered, not on the day but shortly after. It really was harrowing. I think we all collectively—I am sure all members would agree with me—need to pay tribute to those firefighters such as the 400 who passed away on September 11 running towards danger as thousands of others were running away from it, as they still do all the time.

A week prior to that on the 29th, I and a lot of members on all sides of the House would have attended Police Remembrance Day ceremonies. I want to acknowledge Craig Hawkins and our new Assistant Commissioner Brian Connors for hosting us and the community at the Police Remembrance Day ceremony which was held at the Kawana Surf Club. It was another fitting tribute and a timely one with the passing of Dave Masters, who, as we all know, passed away in the line of duty during the year since the last Police Remembrance Day service, and also to share it with the family of Russell Sheehan, whom I worked with and who passed away prior to Christmas only a few years ago.

Again, like the firefighters, I think it is important that we often pause and acknowledge our first responders, whether they be police or firefighters, who every night and every day go out into the community. They put their lives on the line in service of the community and more often than not save or protect people they do not even know.

I want to put on record that the Sunday before last I attended the 40th anniversary celebration of the Coolum Touch Football Association, which is actually held in Peregrine Springs. The current president is a former police officer I worked with who has recently retired. He has been the president now for seven years. Also present was Russel Doyle, who was the original president of the club 40 years ago, which really started from nothing and now has thousands of members. It is a really positive sport to have in the electorate.

Redlands Electorate


 **Ms RICHARDS** (Redlands—ALP) (7.10 pm): Our Palaszczuk government is laser focused on delivering the best possible health care for all Redlanders. After much advocacy to the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services, we had a review done on our southern Morton Bay Islands. They are a very unique part of South-East Queensland. As a result of that review we are getting 11 new paramedics to service those islands, so that is really fantastic news. That is building on the satellite hospital that we are delivering. The land deal has been locked in with a swap with the Redland City Council. I believe they got a nice little benefit in the uptake on the land swap. The land is locked in and we are consulting with the community at the moment on the services that it can potentially provide. I know that the satellite hospital will not only service our island community but also the growing end of southern Redlands. It will take pressure off the Redlands Hospital.

Work is well underway on the \$50 million hospital car park. The big crane was installed this week. The Metro South Hospital and Health Service is running a competition for all school students to 'name that crane', so I encourage everybody to get on board. Works are also well underway on the stage 1 expansion of the Redlands Hospital. It will include a new intensive care unit and additional beds. That is a really important development.

When we look at why we have pressure on our emergency departments and hospitals, I have to say that it is our side of the House that is doing the heavy lifting in terms of delivering on health care. The federal government is falling behind on aged care, and I will tell you that right now. You only need to go and visit the Macleay ward at the Redlands Hospital, which should have been for general medicine where a person who is in emergency could get a ward bed if they need it. It has been converted into a dementia care ward. That is the federal government not doing its job in aged care. When we look at why we have pressure on our hospitals, the other thing is that access to GPs is forcing Redlanders to head to the emergency department. On average, the stats report about \$41 in out-of-pocket expenses, and access to bulk-billing is not easy. Those things are putting pressure on our hospitals, and the federal government should be looking at how they can address that and do better in the aged care space.

I want to congratulate all Redlanders: we are on the leader board in Queensland. We are No. 4 for COVID vaccination rates of the first dose, so congratulations. Going forward this will be the pandemic of the unvaccinated, so I cannot stress enough how important it is. To anybody who is hesitating, I say please go and get vaccinated. There are so many options out there, including community pharmacies and GPs. I am excited this weekend that the Victoria Point Bunnings is offering the vax, so I encourage all Redlanders to go for gold. Let's go for the first spot on the leader board and get out there and get vaccinated.

Brookfield State School, 150th Anniversary

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (7.13 pm): As the shadow minister for education and the state member for Moggill, it gives me great pleasure to rise and formally acknowledge the 150th anniversary of Brookfield State School ahead of the official celebrations to be held this Saturday. Brookfield State School had its beginnings 150 years ago, opening on 27 March 1871 as the Brookfield Provisional School. Two acres of land had been donated by Mr JW Barnett. As was typical of early schools established in Queensland, the then Brookfield Provisional School was founded by the local community through the then Brookfield Bible Christian Movement, the forebears of what is now the Brookfield Uniting Church. The establishment of this school in Brookfield would ultimately lay the foundation for Brookfield State School's extensive history of close community engagement and active support for students, families and other local groups.

Such community engagement was evident last Sunday at the non-denominational thanksgiving service organised and supported by all local churches in the Kenmore-Brookfield area. Brookfield State School boasts a proud history of 35 principals over the last 150 years, with the school today being led by Mrs Cate Whiting, who is assisted by two deputy principals, Mrs Katie Lewis and Mrs Leah Cathcart. These experienced and well-respected educators have a whole-of-child approach to schooling, focusing on the individual needs of each and every student. The celebrations of Brookfield State School's 150th anniversary have been ongoing throughout the year, and the festivities have been overseen by Mrs Shona Fisher and Mrs Katie Lewis, who were tasked to create a year to remember and a year that would be fitting of such a significant milestone. The festivities commenced with a commemorative assembly in March of this year and featured the oldest past and youngest present students cutting a cake made especially for the occasion.

I wish to acknowledge and thank the many teachers, parents, volunteers and committee members who have helped organise the celebrations this year. Such committees have included: Mrs Alison Hoole, Dr Neil Mudford, Ms Kirrily Hoole, Ms Sandy Golda and Mrs Shona Fisher, who were tasked with compiling a book to celebrate the 150-year journey of the school. As the local state member for Moggill, I was honoured to be invited to contribute and write the official foreword to this book. With over 144 pages, this book took many hours of research, meetings, writing and photography. It will be launched at the Back to Brookfield event to be held at the school this Saturday, 16 October 2021. An official ceremony at the school will be attended by His Excellency the Hon. Paul de Jersey AC CVO, the 26th Governor of Queensland. His Excellency will unveil a plaque and plant a tree to commemorate this occasion.

I offer my congratulations to the entire Brookfield State School community, including staff, students and parents on this wonderful and auspicious anniversary, and I invite all local residents and members of the Queensland parliament to visit Brookfield State School this Saturday to join in these important festivities.

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Environmental Protection



Ms McMILLAN (Mansfield—ALP) (7.15 pm): Since the October 2020 election the Palaszczuk Labor government has delivered numerous policy commitments to take action on climate change, protect our diverse landscapes and create jobs for Queenslanders. Yesterday our government voted overwhelmingly in favour of committing to net zero emissions by 2050. Unlike the federal government, our government has joined other states, territories, countries and private companies to implement policies, develop infrastructure and create jobs in Queensland that work towards this target.

Our government has: banned single-use plastic bags; rolled out almost 1.5 million solar rooftop panels at 664 schools, including Rochedale and Mansfield state high schools in the Mansfield electorate; and handed back more than 3.3 million hectares of land to traditional owners on Cape York. The Palaszczuk Labor government is delivering cheaper, cleaner energy and jobs in new industries with the \$2 billion Renewable Energy and Hydrogen Jobs Fund and delivering regional jobs and reducing carbon emissions through the \$500 million Land Restoration Fund. Our government is protecting the Great Barrier Reef and regenerating land with \$330 million to preserve our reef and boost tourism. We are also delivering Queensland's strongest ever koala protections, including \$3.7 million over four years for koala conservation initiatives.

Queensland is also about to become home to the world's largest hydrogen equipment manufacturing facility. The Palaszczuk government is partnering with leading renewable energy and hydrogen company Fortescue Future Industries to establish a green energy manufacturing centre near Gladstone. This four-hectare site will create jobs in regional Queensland. It will be up and running by early 2023, with construction starting as early as next year.

As Queensland is propelled onto the international stage to produce renewable energy, I would like to acknowledge the tireless work that our local environment groups and leaders undertake. Mackenzie Bushcare Group is led by Greg Wellard. It holds regular working bees to weed, plant new flora weed, and monitor existing and new fauna. Gertrude Petty Place Bushcare, led by Sheamus O'Connor, has been running for over 20 years to protect and rehabilitate the eastern side of Mount Gravatt Reserve. I acknowledge the great work of the Bulimba Creek catchment across the Mansfield, Bulimba and Greenslopes electorates with my esteemed colleagues the Hon. Di Farmer and Joe Kelly respectively. Finally, Michael Fox is an environmental stalwart in our community. He has worked on the restoration of Mount Gravatt Conservation Reserve for 15 years and founded the Pollinator Link initiative. The Palaszczuk government greatly appreciates the work of these groups and thanks them for their ongoing commitment to protect and preserve our environment.

Townsville, Youth Crime; Port Hinchinbrook



Mr DAMETTO (Hinchinbrook—KAP) (7.18 pm): I rise tonight to bring the voice of the Townsville residents into this House—the voice of those who are sick of the crime crisis that grips the city. People back home in Townsville are sick of the break and enters, the violent crime and the carjackings. That is the voice I bring into this House because I believe it is a voice that needs to be talked about. Those people back home feel like they do not have representation right now. I stand in this place to make sure their issue is being heard.

We have been told that there is no silver bullet to this, but there are still stones that are left unturned. There are still opportunities to address this in different ways. The KAP will continue to push for our relocation sentencing policy—the idea of getting these children out of the metropolitan area and away from where they are committing these crimes and are allowed to roam the streets at night.

I rise in this House to bring in the voice of an Indigenous lady who contacted me this week. This lady said, 'Nick, I've lived through domestic violence. I finally could afford to buy a vehicle to get away from my abusive partner and I had that stolen this week. I had that taken away from me after I had worked my guts out to make sure I could get out of that situation.'

There are things we can do in this House to change legislation to make it tougher for these recidivist offenders. There are projects out there like Booyah and Transition 2 Success that are working for some of those fringe offenders, and I acknowledge that, but they do nothing to stop those recidivist, hardcore offenders—those 30 or 40 kids who are turning Townsville upside down every night, stealing cars and robbing people with baseball bats and knives. That has got to stop.

While I am on my feet, I want to congratulate the department of state development and the Deputy Premier for the good work they are doing right now with the Cassowary Coast Regional Council to accelerate the STP and the normalisation of Port Hinchinbrook. These residents have been living without the ability to know what is happening with their sewerage for some time. There have been environmental breaches in the development. This is a development that has been ailing for 10 years. It is great to see the state government finally working with the Cassowary Coast Regional Council and funding has been delivered. There is over \$6 million from the state, with matched funding from the federal government, but it cannot stop now. We need to continue the aggressive normalisation of this development to make sure these residents and Cardwell can grow into the future.

Everyone in Cardwell keeps asking me, 'What's going on with the dredging at Port Hinchinbrook?' I will tell the House what is going on with the dredging. We had \$1.5 million extracted out of the federal government. Senator McDonald went there and announced the funding, but guess what? All these months later, over \$100,000 has been spent and conditions come with this. The Cassowary Coast Regional Council will be lumped with dredging for the next five years if they spend one cent of that \$1.5 million on this. That was never the intention of this funding. It was supposed to be emergency funding. The federal government needs to step up to this.

Springwood Electorate, Infrastructure



Hon. MC de BRENNI (Springwood—ALP) (Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement) (7.21 pm): Right now Springwood is a hive of activity. The 'Daisy Hills' are alive with the sound of infrastructure, frontline services and jobs. Landing in the letterboxes of homes across our community is the latest edition of my regular newsletter, and it is jam-packed with how the Palaszczuk government is building infrastructure and creating jobs.

It starts off with news that land has been secured for the new Mount Cotton Road fire station. A block of land on the corner of Mount Cotton Road and Coorang Road has been secured by the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services to build the new full-time fire station to protect our community. I have been working with our community to boost our bushfire fighting capability. I am pleased to say that construction planning is now underway. The Mount Cotton Road fire station will be a full-time fire station with both bushfire and aerial firefighting capability. I want to thank the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services for working so closely with our community to deliver this important project and to help keep residents safe.

Next off the rank in our Springwood infrastructure bonanza is the opening of 20 kilometres of heart-racing, blood-pumping action in the Mount Cotton Eastern Escarpment mountain bike trails. This job-creating project will boost local tourism—


A government member: You'd be loving that.

Mr de BRENNI: I will take that interjection; I am loving that. It is supporting our COVID-19 economic recovery. Funded by our COVID Works for Queensland grants, we have worked closely with the Redland City Council to open up topnotch trails and facilities for mountain bikers of all skills and abilities.

Finally, I acknowledge the Minister for Transport and Main Roads, as we have the biggest infrastructure project happening in Queensland right now just after Cross River Rail. Whilst COVID-19 has slowed some things down, it has not slowed the progress of the largest infrastructure project the community I represent has ever seen—the M1 upgrade and busway extension through Springwood. We have hit some exciting milestones with the opening of five lanes, slashing travel times and making commutes much safer. There has been \$750 million invested in our community so far in congestion-busting infrastructure. Even better, there have been 721 local jobs, with more than 21,000 hours of training being completed for trainees and apprentices.

Under our Buy Queensland policy we have been supporting local businesses and local workers first. I want to give a shout-out to local businesses like CDA Eastland Trade Supplies, Coates Hire, Tyrepower, Wombat Sweepers and Karreman Quarries for helping to deliver this transformational project. The best part is that that workforce is 95 per cent local. That is more money back in the pockets of local families, local businesses, our local sports clubs and our P&Cs. We are well on the way to delivering the new lanes, the busway to Springwood and the extended Veloway, but we will not stop there. Construction works will continue for the rest of the Eight Mile Plains to Daisy Hill upgrade, including planning for the busway to Loganholme.

Brodie, Mrs A


 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (7.24 pm): Last week we farewelled an amazing woman, Mrs Annette Brodie. Annette was a Hathaway of Caboolture. She met her husband, Bill, on the local tennis circuit. They began their married life on the Brodie family farm in Mount Mee then took up a property in Morayfield before finally settling on their pineapple farm on the Kilcoy Beerwah Road just outside of Beerwah. They had four kids and a swag of grandkids. Annette was all about her family. Madam Deputy Speaker Lui, you should have seen them at the funeral. Story after story about how she and Bill intentionally and specifically invested in the lives of each of their grandchildren.

I was privileged to know Annette for the past 13 years. I was honoured to call her a friend. Annette was astute. I first met her when seeking preselection for the LNP for the seat of Glass House. Just like my wife, I reckon she saw right through me the minute she met me. Here I was, some city bloke, trying to convince her, a stalwart of the National Party, that I could represent a largely agricultural seat. Whilst she may have had her doubts about me, when I was successful, she was one of my staunchest supporters. I would not be here without her. Annette was wise. I suspect had we listened to her more the LNP would still be in government. She always had questions, and when I would answer her I would get her considered 'Right' or 'Oh, yes' but you could just tell she did not believe a word that I was saying—and probably for good reason.

Annette was tireless on behalf of conservative politics. She joined the National Party back in June 1975. She held executive roles in the local and regional women's and senior branches, as well as being an integral part of all five of my campaign teams. She was first to put her hand up to work pre poll and on election day. I have got to admit that her and Bill's property is one of the best sign sites in the electorate.

Annette was a quiet leader. Whether it was baking and selling cakes and slices at the Beerwah Charity Sports Day, raising funds for the Cancer Council or bringing together a group of local women to enjoy open and wide ranging discussions, it was Annette softly prompting and prodding others to contribute. We have heard of Charlie's Angels. We often joke in Glass House that, alongside Mavis Robb, Marlene Lewis and Coral McClintock, Annette should have been renamed one of 'Andrew's Angels'. Well, now she really is. Love you, Annette. Thank you for all you did. Rest easy.

Mount Ommaney, Small Business Awards

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (7.27 pm): Thanks to the Premier's strong leadership in Queensland, we are open for business and our economic recovery is underway. In Mount Ommaney, that means it is time for our annual small business awards. Nominations are now open for businesses based in Mount Ommaney to be nominated by locals for the Mount Ommaney Logies, as we like to call them. They are kind of a big deal.

I remember speaking with the member for Springwood a while ago when he told me he had a butcher friend in the electorate who was very keen to get nominated for one of these awards. That was a few years ago and he has been a steady nominee ever since and he does quite well. I understand he had a baby last year, along with pretty much everybody else in Mount Ommaney. Congratulations to him. There is something in the water.

My office organises these awards in conjunction with our local chamber of commerce. I congratulate the new chamber of commerce president, Brent Cue. He is an energetic and amazing addition to the role of president. He is an absolute dynamo and I really think the chamber will go from strength to strength under his leadership. Despite some tough operating conditions under COVID, we do have several new businesses that have nominated this year—many of which have only just recently opened, which is really exciting.

Vicki Hair Creations in Darra is run by longtime Darra local Vicki Harriden, who has set up in her home. This is an increasing trend we are seeing during COVID as more and more people are discovering and enjoying the benefits of working at home. We have longtime locals Achilles Concrete Services. I am sure they are very busy this year. Above and Beyond Fitness who go—say it with me now—above and beyond has a nutritionist, an accountability coach and a whole lot more. I have not heard a lot about these sorts of things in this realm before, but it sounds pretty fantastic to me.

We have a fantastic new local cafe in Westlake that I have been to for coffee, To Be or Not To Be. This is the second restaurant. They are all Shakespearian themed. It is a great spot for a girls lunch or a baby shower.

Sheena's coffee van at the Darra BMX park is perfect for those cold winter days watching the kids go around and around on their bikes or scooters, which can take several hours of our time. Of course, Forest and Petal is a beautiful new florist in Riverhills. They have saved my bacon whenever I have needed a birthday gift at the last minute this year. These Mount Ommaney businesses have shown real confidence opening during this time, a testament to the confidence that exists in the business community.

I finish with a plea to every single Queenslander who is yet to get vaccinated. I ask that you please protect yourselves and your loved ones. It is our best weapon to protect our community and especially our vulnerable Queenslanders from COVID. We need every single Queenslander who can roll up their sleeves to do so, to get it done. I say 'well done' to my big baby girl Allegra. She recently turned 12 and got her first jab yesterday.

The House adjourned at 7.31 pm.

ATTENDANCE

Andrew, Bailey, Bates, Bennett, Berkman, Bleijie, Bolton, Boothman, Boyce, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Camm, Crawford, Crisafulli, D'Ath, Dametto, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Frecklington, Furner, Gerber, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Hart, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, Janetzki, Katter, Kelly, King A, King S, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Linard, Lister, Lui, MacMahon, Madden, Mander, Martin, McCallum, McDonald, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Mickelberg, Miles, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Mullen, Nicholls, O'Connor, O'Rourke, Palaszcuk, 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