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FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

Wednesday, 17 November 2021

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WEDNESDAY, 17 NOVEMBER 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.

REPORT

Auditor-General



Mr SPEAKER: I have to report that I received from the Auditor-General *Report 4: 2021-22—2021 status of Auditor-General's recommendations*. I table the report for the information of members.

Tabled paper: Auditor-General Report 4: 2021-22—2021 status of Auditor-General's recommendations [[1943](#)].

SPEAKER'S RULING

Big Bank Levy (COVID-19 Health Response) Bill, Order Discharged



Mr SPEAKER: On 28 October 2021 the member for South Brisbane introduced the Big Bank Levy (COVID-19 Health Response) Bill 2021. The bill seeks to enact a 0.05 per cent levy on the five biggest banks operating in Queensland. The bill is clearly a revenue bill. I rule that the bill is out of order and it is discharged from the committee and the *Notice Paper*. I seek leave to incorporate my full ruling circulated in my name. Is leave granted?

Leave granted.

SPEAKER'S RULING—BIG BANK LEVY (COVID-19 HEALTH RESPONSE) BILL 2021, CONTRAVENTION OF FINANCIAL CONVENTION

On 28 October 2021 the Member for South Brisbane introduced the Big Bank Levy (COVID-19 Health Response) Bill 2021. The Bill seeks to enact a 0.05% levy on the five biggest banks operating in Queensland.

The Bill is clearly a Revenue Bill.

The Explanatory Notes state:

'Until 16 June 2011, the Standing Orders of the Queensland Legislative Assembly stated that 'Only a Minister in accordance with a message from the Governor may introduce an Appropriation Bill or propose the imposition of a tax, rate, duty or impost or increase or alter the incidence of a charge.' (former SO 165(3)). However, as stated by the Clerk of the Parliament in correspondence dated 6 October 2021, under the current rules, 'neither statute or Standing Orders currently prevents a PMB (private member's bill) proposing revenue measures.'

The paragraph above understates the issue.

It is correct that neither statute nor current Standing Orders currently prevents a Private Members' Bill proposing revenue measures. However, our system of government is comprised of many fundamental conventions that are not expressed in statute or standing orders but must still be preserved.

Queensland's statute and standing orders

In Queensland, s.68 of the *Constitution of Queensland Act 2001* provides that the Legislative Assembly must not originate or pass a vote, resolution or Bill for the appropriation of (a) an amount from the consolidated fund; or (b) an amount required to be paid to the consolidated fund; that has not first been recommended by a message of the Governor. This provision replaced s.18 of the *Constitution Act 1867* of the same effect.

From its commencement in 1860 all money bills for the Legislative Assembly (Appropriation and Revenue) needed to be introduced in and by leave of the Committee of Supply (ie Appropriation) or the Committee of Ways and Means (ie Revenue). From the 1990s these Committees ceased to operate as a result of the suspension of Standing Orders.

New Standing Orders passed in 2004 provided (SO 165) that only a Minister in accordance with a message from the Governor may introduce an Appropriation Bill or propose the imposition of a tax, rate, duty or impost or increase or alter the incidence of a charge.

The 2004 Standing Order was replaced on 16 June 2011 when the new committee system was introduced and the replacement Standing Order more closely mirrored the requirements of s.68 of the Constitution of Queensland Act 2001. That is, it required a message for an appropriation bill, not a revenue bill.

Well accepted constitutional convention

The system of government in Queensland and the Queensland Parliament is guided by a number of constitutional conventions. One such convention is the 'financial initiative of the Executive'. This embodies the principle that only the Government may initiate or move to increase appropriations or taxes.

Standing Order 2 provides:

2. *Standing Orders govern procedure*
- (1) *These Standing Orders govern the conduct of business and proceedings in the House and are to be read in conjunction with any Sessional Orders and the practices of the House.*
- (2) *Where statute, these Standing Orders, Sessional Orders or practice of the House do not provide for a matter, the Speaker in determining the correct procedure, may make reference to the rules, forms and practices of other Parliaments operating under the Westminster system.*

Erskine May provides:

"It was a central factor in the historical development of parliamentary influence and power that the Sovereign was obliged to obtain the consent of Parliament (and particularly of the House of Commons as representatives of the people) to the levying of taxes to meet the expenditure of the State. But the role of Parliament in respect of State expenditure and taxation has never been one of initiation: it was for the Sovereign to request money and for the Commons to respond to the request. The development of responsible government and the assumption by the Government of the day of the traditional role and powers of the Crown in relation to public finance have not altered this basic constitutional principle: the Crown requests money, the Commons grant it, and the Lords assent to the grant. In more modern terms, the Government presents to the House of Commons its detailed requirements for the financing of the public services; it is for the Commons, acting on the sole initiative of Ministers, first to authorise the relevant expenditure (or 'Supply') and, second, to provide through taxes and other sources of public revenue the 'Ways and Means' deemed necessary to meet the Supply so granted. The role of the House of Lords is confined to assenting to such financial provisions of the House of Commons as require statutory authorisation.

The financial control of the House of Commons is exercised at two different levels. So far as policy is concerned, it authorises the various objects of expenditure and the resources to be used and the sums to be spent on each; it also authorises the levying of taxes. On the level of administration, it satisfies itself that its expenditure decisions have been duly carried out—in other words, that the amounts it has authorised, and no more, have been used for the purposes for which they were granted, and for no other purposes. For both sets of functions the House of Commons has, partly through its own procedure and partly through legislation and administrative practice, devised appropriate machinery."

House of Representatives Practice also provides:

"Financial initiative of the Executive

What is called the 'financial initiative of the Executive'—that is, the constitutional and parliamentary principle that only the Government may initiate or move to increase appropriations or taxes—plays an important part in procedures for the initiation and processing of legislation.

The principle of the financial initiative may be paraphrased as follows:

- The Executive Government is charged with the management of revenue and with payments for the public service.
- It is a long established and strictly observed rule which expresses a principle of the highest constitutional importance that no public charge can be incurred except on the initiative of the Executive Government.
- The Executive Government requests money, the Parliament grants it, but the Parliament does not vote money unless required by the Government, and does not impose taxes unless needed for the public service as declared by Ministers.

The reference to 'public charge' in this context means a charge on public funds (an appropriation) or a charge on the people (a tax). The traditional position is expressed in May—"A charge of either kind cannot be taken into consideration unless it is sought by the Crown or recommended by the Crown".

...

The standing orders of the House in relation to financial legislation reflect the principle of the financial initiative. In some matters the House has imposed on itself restrictions that appear to go beyond the letter of the Constitution, but which are based on constitutional convention."

Conclusion

Allowing a Private Members' Bill which seeks to increase or impose revenue would breach a fundamental constitutional convention (the financial imperative of the Crown) and the absence of a specific Standing Order does not mean that the Speaker cannot and should not rule out of order a bill that breaches such a fundamental convention and principle.

Indeed, Standing Order 2(2) notes that where statute, Standing Orders, Sessional Orders or practice of the House do not provide for a matter, the Speaker in determining the correct procedure, may make reference to the rules, forms and practices of other Parliaments operating under the Westminster system.

I rule that the Big Bank Levy (COVID-19 Health Response) Bill 2021 seeks to impose revenue and breaches the fundamental constitutional convention of the financial imperative of the Crown. The Bill is, therefore, out of order and is discharged from the committee and the notice paper.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

School Group Tours



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I wish to advise that we will be visited this morning in the gallery by students and teachers from the Caningeraba State School in the electorate of Burleigh and the Tamrookum State School in the electorate of Scenic Rim.

PETITIONS

The Clerk presented the following paper petitions, lodged by the honourable members indicated—

Herberton State School, Years 11 and 12

Mr Knuth, from 465 petitioners, requesting the House to reinstate senior secondary years 11 and 12 at Herberton State School Secondary Campus [\[1944\]](#).

Aged-Care Facilities, Care Providers

Mr Crandon, from 39 petitioners, requesting the House to allow a designated person attend to the additional care and needs of a resident in Aged Care, to maintain their mental health and general well-being, during times of aged care facility lockdowns [\[1945\]](#).

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

Electric Vehicles

704 petitioners, requesting the House to legislate to remove electric vehicles from Queensland roads until manufacturers can demonstrate resource neutral construction and disposal of the batteries [\[1946\]](#).

Petitions received.

TABLED PAPER

TABLING OF DOCUMENTS (SO 32)

MINISTERIAL PAPER

The following ministerial paper was tabled by the Clerk—

Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services (Hon. Ryan)—

[1947](#) Response from the Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services (Hon. Ryan), to a paper petition (3625-21) presented by the member for Callide, Mr Boyce, and an ePetition (3587-21) sponsored by the member for Callide, Mr Boyce, from 468 and 772 petitioners respectively, requesting the House to retain and not move or demolish the historically listed Courthouse building on the main street of Gin Gin

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Coronavirus, Update; Coronavirus, Vaccination



Hon. A PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympics) (9.33 am): In good news today I can report that we have zero community cases of COVID and one new case in hotel quarantine. Yesterday 10,871 tests were conducted—it is great that people are still going out and getting tested—and 14,432 vaccines were delivered by Queensland Health in the past 24 hours. I would like to do a special callout to the Townsville Community Vaccination Centre because they delivered 1,355 vaccines yesterday—more than anywhere else in the state. Go, Townsville!

Mr Healy: Get 'em up, Cairns. Come on!

Ms PALASZCZUK: Yes! Come on, Cairns!

Mr SPEAKER: Order, member for Cairns!

Ms PALASZCZUK: Mr Speaker, 82.75 per cent of Queenslanders have had their first dose and 71.07 per cent are now fully vaccinated. The COVID pandemic is the greatest peacetime challenge this country has ever faced. Just this past week New South Wales and Victoria recorded another 9,987 cases and, sadly, 67 deaths. The Northern Territory is also confronting a fresh outbreak, and we wish them all the very best. Let me make this as plain and as clear as possible. It is not a matter of if more cases will come to Queensland but when.

We are not helpless. Unlike southern states, we have the ability to protect ourselves before an outbreak arrives. We can get vaccinated, and we are. Last weekend's super schools event was one of the most popular. By bringing the vaccine to the people, people are getting the vaccine. That is why we are doing it again this weekend, but this super schools weekend will have an added bonus. Thanks to the Brisbane Broncos, the Gold Coast Titans, the Queensland Firebirds, the Brisbane Roar A-League Women, Swimming Queensland and the Queensland Reds you will not just get a jab at our super schools weekend; you can also meet some of your sporting heroes. Darius Boyd, Payne Haas, Justin Hodges and Jarrod Wallace are just a few of the players who are giving up their time to spread the 'get vaccinated' message.

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I do not think they will be coming out to see you, member for Kawana!


Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Neutral corners.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Sport has the power to unite and inspire us, and that is especially true of the Olympics. This week 2020 silver medallist beach volleyballer Taliqua Clancy and boxer Brad Hore are travelling through the Far North as part of the Olympics Unleashed program. They are visiting Thursday Island, Horn Island, Yarrabah and Lockhart River, inspiring a new generation to follow in their footsteps. They will also be spreading the message to get vaccinated. I must also thank Johnathan Thurston for the work he is doing to spread the vaccination message in some of our most remote Aboriginal communities in the Far North.

Vaccination means keeping the freedoms we have enjoyed throughout the pandemic. A vaccination makes us 86 per cent less likely to contract COVID and pass it on. If you are fully vaccinated your chance of dying from COVID falls by 90 per cent. Anyone who has questions should talk to their trusted health professional such as your GP or pharmacist or those at our vaccine hubs. They are there to help. They are always there to listen and support you and explain why these vaccines are so important not only to yourself but also to protect your family, your community and your state.

Skilling Queenslanders for Work


 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympics) (9.37 am): There are now 90,000 more Queenslanders in jobs than at the start of the pandemic. The numbers speak for themselves. We are not just creating jobs; we are also ensuring Queenslanders have the skills they need to get a job.

Today I am pleased to announce \$70.1 million in funding for the latest round of our successful Skilling Queenslanders for Work program. This will support more than 8,800 disadvantaged Queenslanders into jobs through 279 initiatives across the state, including: Deadly Eats hospitality traineeships in Cherbourg; certificate qualifications in construction in Doomadgee and Napranum; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander primary healthcare training in Yarrabah; fundamentals of community pharmacy training in Toowoomba, Bundamba, Brisbane, Loganholme and Nerang; and 30 lucky jobseekers will even complete their Certificate I in Conservation and Ecosystem Management at the Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary.

Today I can also confirm that applications will open for the next round of Skilling Queenslanders for Work in February next year. Since 2015 more than 40,300 Queenslanders have secured a job as a direct result of this initiative. That is why we have committed \$320 million over four years to deliver funding certainty for this program into the future. This investment is part of our \$1 billion skills and training budget, which also includes \$140 million for our Back to Work program to help unemployed Queenslanders secure jobs.

Our government has a strong record on skills and training. We reversed the cuts to TAFE. We introduced free TAFE—giving more than 44,000 young Queenslanders the opportunity to study at TAFE or get an apprenticeship for free. We are leading the nation in vocational education in schools. And we have delivered more than \$105 million to rebuild and revamp campuses across our great state. Ensuring Queenslanders have the skills they need to secure long-term employment is an important part of our economic recovery plan.

Tourism Industry, Jobs; Queensland Tourism Awards

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympics) (9.39 am): Queensland is the place to be. If you are living in Hobart, suffering through the sleet and snow and dreaming of a better life, now could be your chance. Right across the state, we are seeing strong

demand from tourists looking to book holidays in Queensland after 17 December. That means that, in our tourism industry, we are creating more jobs than we have Queenslanders who want to fill them. I am advised that currently we have hundreds if not thousands of vacancies in our tourism and hospitality sectors throughout our state—with chefs, cooks, waiters and waitresses, and tour guides in high demand.


That is why this week we will reignite our Work in Paradise marketing campaign to entice workers to join our tourism industry in North, Far North and Western Queensland. We will also target students, inviting them to take a gap year to work in paradise. Our \$7.5 million Work in Paradise campaign will be featured on TV, social media, radio and online. As long as they have had two doses of a COVID-19 vaccine, this program is available to workers in all states and territories—including our friends in Tasmania where I am advised it was snowing earlier this week.

I had the privilege of attending the Queensland Tourism Awards on Friday night. It was great to see the Scenic Rim Regional Council win the Richard Power Award for Tourism Marketing and Campaigns—less than a month after the Scenic Rim was named in Lonely Planet's list of the top 10 hottest destinations to visit in 2022.

Mr Hinchliffe: In the world.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I will clarify that: yes, in the world. It was also fantastic to see the largest crowd on record attend the Queensland Tourism Awards this year—with more than 1,100 people gathering to celebrate the resilience of this important sector. I want to thank the Minister for Tourism for his attendance, and I know many other ministers were also in attendance. I can say with confidence from my discussions with industry leaders that a shortage of workers is a concern for many operators in regional areas. I know that the assistant minister for tourism has also been raising that issue in Cairns. Why would you not want to come and work in paradise—seeing that George Clooney and Julia Roberts are also working in paradise at the moment?

Gaming Industry


 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympics) (9.41 am): I would like to update the House on an announcement I made last sitting week. I announced a new game-changing 15 per cent rebate incentive to drive more local, interstate and international games developers and studios to Queensland. Because of that announcement, today I can further announce that Australia's largest publicly listed video games company, PlaySide Studios, has decided to set up shop right here in Queensland. In its first expansion outside of Melbourne, PlaySide will open a brand new studio on the Gold Coast next year, creating around 50 to 70 new jobs as it grows. PlaySide is the developer of *Age of Darkness: Final Stand* and other self-published games and has worked with other companies like Facebook and 2K and studios such as Disney, Pixar, Warner Bros and Nickelodeon. This PDV games incentive was live for just three weeks before we attracted our first major games developer. I cannot wait to see what other games developers jump onboard.

Mr SPEAKER: Before calling the Deputy Premier: members, some people do not go to work on their birthdays but the member for Rockhampton has decided to join us. Happy birthday, member for Rockhampton.

Dr Miles: I had to work on my birthday, Mr Speaker.

Mr SPEAKER: Yes, you did. I call the Deputy Premier, who had to work on his birthday.

Olympic and Paralympic Games, Infrastructure


 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumbidgee—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics Infrastructure) (9.43 am): Hosting the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games will forever change Queensland. Not only will it generate \$8 billion in economic and social benefits, in addition to 91,600 jobs, but it will also kickstart a pipeline of infrastructure projects with lasting legacies, including new and refurbished sporting infrastructure. While the talk of the town might be the marquee venues like the Gabba and the proposed Brisbane Live, we are also determined to ensure the entire region benefits from new and expanded facilities. We are now working to ensure we can maximise our Olympic investment to create more economic opportunities across the region.

I am pleased to advise the House today that I have approved a ministerial infrastructure designation for the Sunshine Coast Stadium expansion. This Sunshine Coast Regional Council project will create an estimated 308 direct and indirect jobs and add more than \$100 million to the local economy. The expansion will see room for almost 5,000 more fans at the Bokarina stadium and will

attract and enable more local, regional, state and national sporting events there. It will also see upgrades to lockers and change room areas, kitchen amenities, corporate spaces, and media and commentary facilities.

I am glad I have been able to facilitate this development through the ministerial infrastructure designation process. The council has considered things like the traffic impacts associated with the stadium and transport management plans. I want to thank the Sunshine Coast Regional Council and Mayor Mark Jamieson for their vision and for their work in seeking feedback from key stakeholders and surrounding residents. The development will add significant value to the region and be a catalyst for economic growth, providing increased tourism activity as well as supporting a growing localised sports economy.

France, Trade

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (9.45 am): From our earliest days, Queensland has been an outward-looking, trade oriented state. Our major trading partners are in the Asia-Pacific region, but we also have important relationships bringing inward investment from around the world, including from Europe. Yesterday I was pleased to address the French-Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry to celebrate the ongoing trading and commercial relationship between Queensland and France.

Between 2015 and 2020, France's total investment stock in Australia almost doubled in value to \$42.7 billion as at the end of December 2020. French stock of foreign direct investment in Australia was valued at \$12.1 billion in 2020, representing Australia's 13th largest foreign direct investment source market. Major French companies with a presence in Queensland include Total Group, Thales, Veolia, Lactalis and Egis. We welcome companies like Neoen, building Australia's largest solar farm near Chinchilla with our publicly owned renewable energy company, CleanCo.

That relationship with France has been based on friendship and respect for more than 100 years. Sadly, that relationship has been put at risk by the Prime Minister, Scott Morrison. Nations will always act in their own interests. Everyone knows that, but there was a time in our country, Australia, when we would always treat our friends with dignity and respect. Enter Scott Morrison. Scott Morrison's fumbling of the future submarine program—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Everyone has an opinion. Please keep it to yourselves.

Mr DICK: Scott Morrison's fumbling of the future submarine project has left the French President labelling him deliberately dishonest—

Mr Lister interjected.

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

Mr DICK: And the American President calling him clumsy.

Mr WATTS: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. There have been multiple interjections of unparliamentary language from the member to my left.

Mr SPEAKER: That is my job, member for Toowoomba North; not yours.

Ms Grace: It's not like school.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, member for McConnel. You are warned under the standing orders. It is just like school.

Mr DICK: When the heat was on, what did Scott Morrison do? He leaked private text messages. For what purpose did he commit this diplomatic offence? It did not even prove the point he was trying to make; it just proved that Scott Morrison cannot be trusted and he cannot tell the truth.

An opposition member interjected.

Mr DICK: I will take the interjection. The reason for this ministerial statement is this. The Prime Minister's deceptions—Scott Morrison's deceptions—are now damaging our international relationship, and without action that will impact on the Queensland economy and Queensland jobs.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members! Treasurer, do you have anything further to add?

Mr DICK: My message to French and Queensland businesses yesterday and my message as trade minister is that Queensland does not support the actions of our blundering, dissembling Prime Minister. Whatever the Prime Minister does, our state will remain a trusted and respectful trading partner

of France because our shared heritage with France—whether it be in trade, in cultural pursuits, on the sporting field or on the battlefields of western Europe—will only be stronger in coming years, as we look to Paris hosting the 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games before it is our turn in 2032. Unlike the Morrison government, we will continue to treat that relationship with decency, with dignity and with respect, for the benefits of Queenslanders and the Queensland economy.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Maybe I was unclear earlier, members. There are differences of opinion in this place. There is no cause for that level of interjection. One person has the call; that is the Treasurer. The Treasurer will be heard.

Mr DICK: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take deep personal offence at the words used by the member for Kawana and I ask that he withdraw.

Mr Bleijie: You can't. You asked the Premier what I said. You didn't even hear it.

Mr DICK: I heard exactly what you said.

Mr Bleijie interjected.


Mr SPEAKER: Order! Member for Kawana, I did not hear the phrasing, but I will ask, due to convention, that you withdraw. The member has asked you to withdraw.

Mr BLEIJIE: I withdraw.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you very much. Treasurer, do you have anything further to add?

Mr DICK: No.

Racing Industry

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (9.51 am): I join others in wishing a happy birthday to the member for Rockhampton who is working in paradise. It has not been easy to continue racing in a pandemic, but the racing industry's hard work is continuing to pay off with some incredible events across all codes to look forward to. Thanks to our strong health response, one event Queenslanders will be adding to their social calendar is a return of Australasia's premier harness event, the 2023 Inter Dominion Championship, the first time it has been in Queensland since 2009.


Recently we saw 10,000 vaccinated people being allowed to attend the Melbourne Cup. That was only possible because Victoria had hit 80 per cent double dosed. It is clear across Australia and here in Queensland that to keep everyone safe, keep these big events going and help our economic recovery we need Queenslanders to get vaccinated. As I said, we have some huge events coming up in racing. However, once we hit 80 per cent double dosed, only vaccinated people will be able to attend.

This weekend, thousands of Queenslanders will be heading to the Sunny Coast for the start of the TAB Queensland Summer Racing Carnival. With more than \$20 million in prize money and bonuses at Australia's most exciting summer racing carnival, all eyes will be on Corbould Park to kickstart nine weeks of action-packed racing. The carnival will reach a thrilling conclusion at the Star Gold Coast Magic Millions—Queensland's richest race day taking centre stage with \$10 million in prize money and bonuses up for grabs. I am looking forward to attending with the Premier and other ministers.

Mr Stevens interjected.

Ms GRACE: And the member for Mermaid Beach, of course. I am also pleased to announce that further increases to prize money, infrastructure grants and animal welfare will be delivered in the new year. This is made possible by the Palaszczuk government's changes to fund 35 per cent of the point of consumption tax back to the industry, enabling Racing Queensland to not only bring forward funding from July 2022 to January 2022 but also to increase it from \$7.5 million to \$15.3 million. As border restrictions start to ease, getting vaccinated is the best way for participants to protect themselves, their family, the racing industry and support Queensland's economic recovery. I want all Queenslanders to get vaccinated so they can enjoy the exciting calendar of summer racing ahead of us here in Queensland.

Coronavirus, Vaccination

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (9.54 am): Our vaccination rates continue to grow. Today we have seen our first-dose numbers grow at an impressive rate and we are speeding towards the 80 per cent double-dose mark. This is reflective of the significant

vaccine take-up we have seen since the announcement made by the Premier last week. Vaccination is our key to safely enjoying places like pubs, clubs, cafes and mass sporting events without the presence of the public health restrictions.

Building our vaccination rate is not just about removing restrictions; it is about reuniting Queenslanders. After hitting the 70 per cent double-dose rate, Queensland has been able to move to the next phase of our vaccine plan and facilitate the home quarantine of interstate arrivals from domestic hotspots.

Already we have seen 141 arrivals into Queensland and I am advised we are expecting a further 211 arrivals today, with 1,319 home quarantine border passes having been issued in the first day and a half since we hit our 70 per cent double dose and move to the next phase of our vaccine plan.

We are also working with those arrivals from interstate hotspots who are currently in hotel quarantine to transition them, where eligible, into home quarantine. Our HHSs have already identified more than 100 hotel quarantine guests who are eligible to undertake the remainder of their quarantine period at home and are working with many more to continue the work of assessing their eligibility. This progress is incredibly encouraging and it is a testament to the hard work of every single Queenslanders.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, all Queenslanders have been asked to make significant sacrifices. We have met and surpassed every challenge we have confronted. We have been able to protect ourselves, our vulnerable, our hospital system and our economy. But let me be clear: we will open up come 17 December at the very latest. COVID will come into Queensland and it will hunt down the unvaccinated.

We already have the Doomadgee community on high alert after a positive COVID-19 case in the nearby Robinson River and greater Katherine in the Northern Territory, with residents frequently travelling between Doomadgee and those locations. I want to thank the community because they came out in good numbers to get vaccinated yesterday and I am sure they will continue to do so. The great news is that so far there are no positive cases. However, it does remind us of the risks and it is sad to see the reports from the Northern Territory that for the first time they are seeing an outbreak of COVID in remote Indigenous communities. This is a reminder for everybody in Queensland, particularly our remote communities, but to our First Nations people right across the state, come out and get vaccinated now. Please do not wait. This virus will challenge communities. It will challenge our health system, just as it has done in every other jurisdiction where it has taken hold.

I want to thank all those who have stepped up and got the jab. I want to encourage any unvaccinated Queenslanders to get vaccinated and ensure that you are fully protected before COVID-19 comes to Queensland. The vaccine is safe, it is effective and it is free. If you are having doubts, talk to your family doctor and get proper advice from a medical professional. You can pop down to your GP, your community pharmacy, your local school this weekend or any other vaccination hub. Do whatever you need to do to ensure you are protecting yourself, your family and your community.

Tourism Industry, Jobs



Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Tourism, Innovation and Sport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics and Paralympics Sport and Engagement) (9.57 am): Getting Queenslanders vaccinated is the only way we can stay COVID-safe, which is critical to the economic recovery of our tourism industry. As the Premier revealed earlier, local and interstate demand for a Queensland summer getaway is gaining momentum. With every booking, the need for workers to help create world-class tourism experiences increases. From Mackay to the Far North and into Western Queensland's outback, there are hundreds of job vacancies in the tourism industry for the taking.


For the more than 50,000 young Queenslanders finishing year 12 and their interstate contemporaries, it is a land of opportunity. Today I can join the Premier in announcing a new component of the Palaszczuk government's \$7.5 million Work in Paradise campaign. Later this week, we will be launching a special social media based promotional blitz for Gap Year in Paradise.

For generations, it has been a tradition for many young Australians to take a year off between finishing school and starting an apprenticeship or university, or indeed at the end of their university studies. A gap year in paradise is a COVID-safe chance of a lifetime to live, work and play in some of Australia's favourite regional Queensland holiday destinations. Our social media video campaign shows the perks of working in paradise, such as days off white water rafting or boating in turquoise tropical waters.

We are encouraging young Australians to grab a couple of mates and head north or west for the freedom of a gap year in paradise. There are hundreds of jobs like tour guides and baristas that overseas backpackers have traditionally jumped at while having the time of their life exploring

Queensland. The difference with the Gap Year in Paradise is that we are providing cash incentives to successful job applicants as well as a travel bonus. We are also utilising our young tourism leaders to encourage the next generation of workers to take up a rewarding career in tourism, because there is every chance that once they have enjoyed their gap year in paradise they might never want to leave.

Skilling Queenslanders for Work

 **Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development) (10.00 am): Skilling Queenslanders for Work is one of the Palaszczuk government's flagship employment and training programs and one of the most successful of its kind in the country. Since 2015 more than 40,300 people have secured a job as a direct result of the Skilling Queenslanders for Work program, or SQW as we call it for short. We know this program works.

As the Premier just announced, we are so proud to be delivering the next round at such a crucial time in Queensland's economic recovery. We have committed \$70.1 million to support more than 8,800 Queenslanders into secure work. I know every single member of this House with SQW projects being announced for their electorates will be absolutely delighted about this. The 279 projects we are announcing today will continue SQW's incredible legacy. They are projects like: the Gladstone sea ranger program to be run by the Yalga-Binbi Institute, supporting 20 JobSeekers; the BUSY group's Pathways to Employment in Toowoomba where 14 trainees will gain a certificate in engineering pathways; and Cairns Indigenous Art Fair's well-known and loved Evolution Project for four aspiring local artists. More than just a qualification, these projects provide a whole range of assistance to overcome the different barriers Queenslanders face when finding a job. They target the skills needed by businesses in their area to drive key industries in Queensland's economy.


Since 2015 SQW has helped almost 65,000 Queenslanders, providing training, skills development and job opportunities to the most vulnerable. That is thousands of reasons to consider SQW a success. Seventy-three per cent of participants are in employment or further training 12 months after completing a SQW project. By comparison, the federal government's Jobactive initiative success rate is 46 per cent.

More than 40,300 Queenslanders have secured jobs as a direct result of Skilling Queenslanders for Work; that is, 22,684 young people aged 15 to 24 years, over 6,000 mature people aged 45 years or over, 20,474 women, over 7,000 Indigenous Australians, almost 8,000 who live with a disability; and almost 8,000 from non-English-speaking backgrounds—all with jobs. In fact, many of us will know that a number of times the participants have not even been at the SQW graduation because they have already got a job.

Every Queenslanders deserves a chance to be skilled or reskilled and to find their place in our state's economy. We believe there is dignity in work. The Palaszczuk government is doing everything it can to give Queenslanders the job skills they need now and in the future. That is what SQW is all about.

I thank all the organisations that submitted an application for this funding round. It was the biggest response on record. For those organisations that missed out, the good news is we are permanently funding SQW, with \$80 million every year. That is every year. However, we are only able to deliver programs like this because Queenslanders are safe and our economy is open. We need all Queenslanders to get vaccinated so we can continue to keep Queensland open and provide these excellent opportunities for Queenslanders.

Rail Infrastructure

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (10.03 am): More than 70 per cent of eligible Queenslanders have been fully vaccinated against COVID-19. In the weeks ahead, we need vaccination rates to climb even further. Getting vaccinated is the best way to drive Queensland's economic recovery and the best way to reunite families for Christmas. As other states and much of the world have gone in and out of long lockdowns, we have been able to live relatively normal lives in Queensland thanks to our strong leadership. However, there is no denying that our tough, necessary and effective health measures to keep Queenslanders safe have presented challenges for some of our regions.

While parts of the state have recorded a spike in domestic tourism visitors, other areas which rely on international tourists have done it tough. As our state border reopens and Queenslanders get away for summer, the Palaszczuk Labor government is doing everything we can to support our regions

through our rail network, including by quickly repairing the North Coast line after it was damaged recently by torrential rain and flooding, washing out in 18 places along an 11-kilometre stretch. Queensland Rail led the recovery works with help from local contractors including Rhomberg Rail and Schwarz excavations from Gracemere, Hopkins Brothers from Rockhampton and JWB Constructions from Gladstone. Fifty staff and contractors worked day and night to reopen the line in less than a week, and I thank them for their excellent work.

The North Coast line is now open and we want tourists to head west for less and make the most of the far north. Right now we have two-for-one tickets on the Inlander, the Westlander and the Spirit of the Outback tourist trains going to Longreach, Charleville, Mount Isa and everywhere in between, and people can take a mate for free. The Palaszczuk Labor government also waived the licence fee for Sky Rail in the far north, which is now offering a 50 per cent local discount. We have applied the same locals discount to Kuranda Scenic Railway and are giving free travel to our frontline workers.

We even had a colouring-in competition for Kuranda Scenic Railway's 130th birthday. Mr Speaker, I understand that you yourself crowned the winner, 11-year-old Cooper from Gordonvale State School.

Mr SPEAKER: He coloured within the lines.

Mr BAILEY: Cooper is now taking his class for a very special excursion on the Kuranda Scenic Railway. As people hit the road and our railways to regional Queensland for the festive season, they need to get vaccinated. Vaccination protects everyone around us, not just the individual. Remember before a jaunt, before a cab, get the jab. Travel to the max but listen to the facts and get the vax.

Coronavirus Vaccination, Indigenous Communities



Hon. CD CRAWFORD (Barron River—ALP) (Minister for Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (10.06 am): When people fly into the Aboriginal township of Doomadgee in the state's far north-west, it is easy to be forgiven for thinking they are entering a completely different world. The Gulf of Carpentaria stretches to the north, ancient riverways snake their way to the coast, and the town itself is but a spot of corrugated iron roofs and red dirt lined streets on a vast landscape of salt pans and flood plains. Like so many other Indigenous communities in Queensland, from the state's south-east cities to the tropical islands in the turquoise waters of the Torres Strait, the 1,800 residents of Doomadgee could also be forgiven for thinking they have more pressing matters to deal with than the spectre of COVID on the horizon.

Two weeks ago I was in Doomadgee to talk with elders, council and health workers on the importance of the vaccination program and protecting their community from COVID-19. Today COVID is on the doorstep of Doomadgee, with the outbreak in the Northern Territory posing a serious and very real threat. Health teams and disaster management groups are on high alert and testing is underway after families from the hotspot of Robinson River, four hours drive away, attended a funeral of a respected Aboriginal elder in Doomadgee. This morning I understand the federal government have issued a biosecurity direction for the Robinson River area to prevent any person from entering or exiting the homelands to try to stop any further spread of COVID-19 in the community.

I note that the Premier and my fellow cabinet ministers have also been working hard to encourage the lifting of vaccination rates in discrete Indigenous communities and supporting the local leadership and elders. Last Wednesday I met with Indigenous mayors from across Queensland and applauded them for their own terrific efforts, some of whom have faced both hostility and complacency, to work with the families and leaders in their townships to get the jab to protect themselves and their elders. I know I speak for all members of the government when I publicly congratulate the stand-up First Nations men and women who are leading the way for their mob, as together we prepare to tackle one of our greatest challenges yet.

Last week over 10,000 First Nations people in Queensland were vaccinated, but there are still 76,000 unvaccinated and out of those, 47,000 are under the age of 30. Aboriginal footy legend Johnathan Thurston, who has since transcended his last-gasp victories and heroics on the footy field to become a true statesman for his people, penned it beautifully when he wrote a personalised letter to the 2,500 people of Yarrabah. JT wrote how he was deeply concerned about the low vax rates of 54 per cent first dose and 30 per cent double dose in Yarrabah, the nation's biggest Indigenous township and in your electorate, Mr Speaker. In a stirring battle cry, JT urged the fans of this year's grand final winning Yarrabah Seahawks to show their 'never say die' spirit. It is time to draw on our stoic Queenslander spirit and prepare for the destructive scale of the storm that is barrelling towards us. It is time to be vaccinated.

Hydro-Electricity Projects



Hon. MC de BRENNI (Springwood—ALP) (Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement) (10.09 am): Queensland has a long history in hydro-electricity. Barron Gorge Hydro has been generating 66 megawatts in the pristine hinterland behind Cairns since 1963 and the Wivenhoe pumped storage units regularly deliver 570 megawatts of stored energy, vital to renewable electricity generation in South-East Queensland. Now we have identified Borumba Dam in the hinterland near Imbil as one of the best potential sites for this next mega energy project. Our next pumped hydro facility in Queensland is set to be one of the largest in the nation, second only behind the Snowy scheme. Sitting inside the southern renewable zone, Borumba has been selected for further analysis with its proximity to the high-voltage transmission network, existing dam infrastructure and good land access. A project of this scale will play a significant role in our renewable energy transformation. It will deliver more clean energy storage. It will support more than 2,000 construction jobs for local tradies. It has the potential to power 1.5 million homes and enable more than 2,000 megawatts of new renewables to enter South-East Queensland.

The Palaszczuk government via our publicly owned transmission company, Powerlink, has commissioned detailed analytical studies to determine Borumba Dam's capability and manage its critical role in the health of the surrounding ecosystem. Our pathway to a clean energy future must deliver the best for not only the state's energy network but also the local community. We recognise the critical role stakeholder input will have in an informed and careful handling of the Borumba Dam site and we are committed to engaging early and often.

Today I can announce that public consultation sessions will be held at Imbil on Wednesday, 1 December, and in Gympie on Thursday, 2 December, where locals are welcome to drop in. These sessions will facilitate direct engagement from the community, with one-on-one discussions with the project team. They are just one step in an extensive engagement program. In late September I visited Imbil and Borumba and was shown important sites and given detailed briefings from locals. We primarily acknowledge the traditional custodians, the Kabi Kabi nation, their connection to the land and its waterways and thank them for their generations of careful management.

I also place on record our appreciation to the Sunshine Coast Environment Council, which is also proud advocates for this superb ecosystem and its communities. Thanks also to the Lake Borumba Fish Stocking Association, members of which love their fishing and their time on the dam. They are also huge fans of the Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities, who they say is quite the angler. We also thank the local representatives, the mayor and the member for Gympie for their support of this intergenerational infrastructure proposal and the benefits that it proposes for the local workforce, water security and tourism. Our progress on this clean energy storage mega project demonstrates our down payment on a clean energy future, bringing clean energy jobs and lower emissions to Queensland.

Housing and Homelessness



Hon. LM ENOCH (Algeria—ALP) (Minister for Communities and Housing, Minister for Digital Economy and Minister for the Arts) (10.13 am): The Queensland Housing and Homelessness Action Plan 2021-2025 is backed by a \$2.9 billion total housing investment—the largest concentrated investment in social and affordable housing in Queensland's history—that will deliver more housing for vulnerable Queenslanders sooner. As part of this investment, we are providing \$11.5 million to enhance the Coordinated Housing and Homelessness Response in priority locations across the state to identify people experiencing homelessness and coordinate services for people with complex housing and support needs. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Coordinated Housing and Homelessness Response has assisted more than 4,247 households with emergency housing assistance, many of which have been assisted into longer term accommodation, including social housing and private rentals.

Importantly, my department is also working collaboratively with Queensland Health and the housing and homelessness sector to support the vaccination rollout strategy for public housing tenants and Queenslanders experiencing or at risk of homelessness. Vaccination is key to Queensland's economic recovery. During the Greater Brisbane lockdowns earlier in the year, we worked with St Vincent de Paul and Micah Projects to vaccinate rough sleepers temporarily accommodated across three hotel sites. In October Micah Projects offered COVID-19 vaccinations at a social housing complex in Kangaroo Point. Micah staff doorknocked departmental properties in the surrounding area and invited tenants to come along and get vaccinated or ask any questions about being vaccinated. This work

followed a successful pop-up clinic in Yeronga. Micah Projects has also established a vaccination clinic at West End which runs from 11 am to 2 pm every Friday until 17 December and at ChaplainWatch in Fortitude Valley which runs from 11 am to 2 pm every Tuesday until 14 December.

Micah is not the only one helping with this important vaccination work. I want to thank Brisbane Housing Co. which worked with Queensland Health to deliver a mobile vaccination clinic at one of its buildings in Yeronga last week. On the Gold Coast, the department has funded the Gold Coast Homelessness Network to employ a care coordination facilitator who is coordinating a vaccination strategy for rough sleepers. This position manages logistics for vaccination, including transport to the Ashwin medical centre for vaccinations. With vaccination being key to our economic recovery and uniting families for Christmas, my department, along with the housing and homelessness sector, is well and truly in the race to get Queenslanders vaccinated.

MOTION

Referral to Health and Environment Committee



Hon. YM D'ATH (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (10.15 am), by leave, without notice: I move—

That the Health and Environment Committee inquire into and report to the Legislative Assembly by 31 March 2022 on

1. the provision of:
 - (a) primary and allied health care;
 - (b) aged and NDIS care;
 - (c) the private health care system;
 and any impacts the availability and accessibility of these services have on the Queensland public health system; and
2. in conducting this inquiry, the Health and Environment Committee should consider:
 - (a) the current state of those services (outlined in 1.) in Queensland;
 - (b) bulk billing policies, including the Commonwealth government's Medicare rebate freeze;
 - (c) the Commonwealth government's definition of the Commonwealth Distribution Priority Areas; and
 - (d) the availability of medical training places at Queensland universities, compared to other jurisdictions.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

STATE DEVELOPMENT AND REGIONAL INDUSTRIES COMMITTEE

Report



Mr WHITING (Bancroft—ALP) (10.17 am): Mr Speaker—

Mr SPEAKER: You stay classy, San Diego! I call the member for—Bancroft?

Mr WHITING: Mr Speaker, every parliament needs a Ron Burgundy! I lay upon the table of the House report No. 15 of the State Development and Regional Industries Committee titled *Subordinate legislation tabled between 16 June 2021 and 31 August 2021*. I commend the report to the House.

Tabled paper: State Development and Regional Industries Committee: Report No. 15, 57th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 16 June 2021 and 31 August 2021 [\[1948\]](#).

NOTICE OF MOTION

Caloundra, Youth Remand Centre



Mr BLEIJIE (Kawana—LNP) (10.17 am): I give notice that I will move—

That this House notes:

1. the Palaszczuk Labor government's plan to build a youth remand centre in Gregson Place, Caloundra;
2. the proposed youth remand centre will be close to a school, a retirement village, an RSL, an early learning centre, a hospital and an ambulance station.


and calls on:

1. the member for Caloundra to stand with the over 6,000 residents who signed a petition against this youth remand centre and strongly oppose it; and
2. the Palaszczuk Labor government to listen to the people of Caloundra and abandon its plans for a youth remand centre in Caloundra.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Mr SPEAKER: Question time will conclude today at 11.18 am.

Mackay Base Hospital

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (10.18 am): My question is to the Premier. I refer to the review of obstetrics and gynaecology at the Mackay Base Hospital. The opposition has been made aware of three clinical incidents in a 48-hour period resulting in at least one death, permanent patient harm and multiple doctors leaving the hospital. These events occurred in departments not covered by the review. Does this prove that the Mackay health crisis is deeper than the government is admitting?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for the question. Let me say from the outset that the health minister has already announced that there is going to be an investigation into that matter. My understanding is that the investigation commenced on 1 November 2021 and the investigation team were on site on 9 November. I am also advised that there will be a final report given once it is received by the Mackay HHS chief executive. They have committed to releasing the report's findings and recommendations and consulting with the staff and the community. Let me say that, as we saw with the Caboolture Hospital, there was a thorough review and assessment done and that was publicly released.

Opposition members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Secondly, this is happening as well. I do not think it does anyone any favours what the Leader of the Opposition is doing, which is scaremongering.

An opposition member interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Don't worry, I will come to you in a moment. Let me make it very clear that those opposite have zero credibility when it comes to health care in this state. Zero credibility! We know that under their reign regional communities were decimated because they cut health care in this state.

Mr Dick: You cut 32 staff in Mackay!

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right, they sacked 32 staff. These were people working in the health service delivering vital services to the community. How do I know this? Because I travelled the length and breadth of the state when I was Leader of the Opposition hearing firsthand what that did to regional communities in this state. The member for Broadwater was part of the cabinet that sat around and made horrific decisions.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Members, clearly you can see I am not here for a haircut. The Premier has the call. Interjections will cease. Premier, do you have anything further to add?

Ms PALASZCZUK: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Those opposite sacked nurses across this state. They want to ignore it, but that is their legacy. That is the legacy that Queenslanders to this day still have not forgotten. Not content with that, they had the fight with the doctors.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

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

Ms PALASZCZUK: They had the fight with the doctors and had no understanding of health care in this state. Then they closed the Barrett Adolescent Centre, which looked after the most vulnerable in our community. We rebuilt that—Jacaranda Place—helping hundreds of young people going through complex medical care.

Mackay Base Hospital

Mr CRISAFULLI: My question is to the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services. Barbara Kelly went to the Mackay Base Hospital for routine shoulder surgery. She was administered the wrong dose of drugs under anaesthesia which resulted in a brain bleed and, sadly, she passed away. Does Barbara's death outside the obstetrics and gynaecology department prove the Mackay health crisis is far deeper than the minister is admitting?

Mrs D'ATH: I thank the member for his question. For someone who claims that they are going to have a different strategy as a leader and go for hope over fear, the only thing I ever hear—

Mr Crisafulli: We are asking a question about somebody dying!

Mrs D'ATH: It is very serious issue, but the allegations from those opposite, the inferences that they make in these questions without knowing whether it has been clinically reviewed or what the outcome would be, is really reckless and irresponsible. They do not write to me and say, 'Was this

death investigated by the coroner? Was this death clinically reviewed at the time? Was there a complaint process? Has it gone to the Health Ombudsman?' No, they wait until they can come into parliament and go, 'I've got another one.' These are serious issues and when we talk about clinical reviews—

Mr Crisafulli: They come from whistleblowers.

Mr SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition will cease his interjections.

Mrs D'ATH: I will take that interjection. If it has come from a whistleblower then there are proper processes that every single member of parliament is required to follow. The first step is to refer it to the relevant department and minister to investigate the complaint. That is the proper process. We heard those people interjecting around deaths. Let us be clear: every death in our health system is a tragedy. Some are expected deaths, some are unexpected. There are protocols around unexpected deaths being investigated and referred to the coroner for consideration.

Those on that side of the House should not come in here with alleged clean hands about clinical reviews and deaths. As I said yesterday, there were 23 cases, including three deaths at the Gold Coast Hospital, that those opposite set up an independent clinical review on. There was criticism of a clinical review of Rockhampton Hospital in 2013. The headline was 'Health Minister Lawrence Springboard defends "unexpected deaths" at Rockhampton Hospital.' 'The number of patients who died at Rockhampton Hospital after medical errors is not "remarkably higher" than any other regional hospitals, the Health Minister says.' Those on the opposite side have no credibility when they come in here with these matters.

Coronavirus, Vaccination

Ms PUGH: My question is to the Premier and Minister for the Olympics. Will the Premier update the House on how the Palaszczuk government's push to get Queenslanders vaccinated is driving the vax rate to our next major milestone?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Mount Ommaney for the question because on this side of the House we are absolutely unified when it comes to talking about the need for Queenslanders to get vaccinated. We might not hear much from those opposite—a bit of silence, not game to stand up and talk about vaccinations in their communities, prepared to put their communities at risk—but on this side of the House we will stand proud and we will stand with Queenslanders and continue to keep them safe. I can advise the member for Mount Ommaney that the people in her electorate are really doing a great job. Nearly 96 per cent of residents in Jamboree Heights, Jindalee, Middle Park, Mount Ommaney, River Hills, Sumner, Sumner Park and Westlake, have had their first dose and 86.5 per cent are double vaxed.

In the member for Cooper's electorate, in Ashgrove and Ashgrove West, Dorrington and St Johns Wood, more than 90 per cent of residents are double dosed and The Gap is at 91.2 per cent first dose. In Southern Downs electorate, in the communities there, we have 92 per cent double dosed. In the Logan electorate, in Munruben, Park Ridge and Park Ridge South, 83.4 per cent of residents are double dosed, which shows that people in communities are coming forward and getting vaccinated. In the Waterford electorate, 82 per cent of residents in Logandale and Loganholme are double dosed. In the Moggill electorate, 92.4 per cent of residents in Brookfield, Chapel Hill, Kenmore, Kenmore East, Kenmore Hills, Pinjarra Hills, Pullenvale and Upper Brookvale are double dosed. In the Algester electorate, in the suburbs of Acacia Ridge, Heathwood, Larapinta, Pallara and Willawong, 82.5 per cent of residents are double dosed. In Townsville, in the suburbs of Arcadia, Arcadia Bay, Horseshoe Bay, Magnetic Island, Nelly Bay and Picnic Bay, 84.1 per cent of residents are double dosed. The regions are doing well.

Redcliffe residents in the suburbs of Redcliffe, Redcliffe North and Scarborough are 84.79 per cent double dosed. In Pumicestone, in the suburbs of Banksia Beach, Bellara, Bongaree, Bribie Island, Bribie Island North, White Patch and Woorim, 84.3 per cent of residents are double dosed. In the Hill electorate, in Lake Barrine, Lake Eacham and Yungaburra, 86 per cent of residents are double dosed and in the Clayfield electorate, in the suburbs of Albion and Breakfast Creek, 89 per cent of residents are double dosed. In Lytton, 94 per cent of the residents of Doboy and Hemmant are single dosed and 79.5 per cent are double dosed. Communities are doing this, but we need all of Queensland to follow suit because that way we are protecting our families and our communities and continuing to keep Queenslanders safe.

Mackay Base Hospital

Ms BATES: My question is to the Minister for Health. The night before Barbara's tragedy, another patient at Mackay Base Hospital had a stent inserted in their kidney. When they woke, the patient informed the doctor that it was on the wrong side and was rushed back into surgery. Two days later they suffered from septic shock and soon after the doctor was stood down. Does this event, outside the scope of the review, prove that the Mackay health crisis is far deeper than the health minister is admitting?

Mrs D'ATH: I thank the member for her question. I am not across the details of that particular case, when it occurred and whether, as I say, there has been a clinical review in relation to it. It is important that members do not come in here and make accusations about entire hospital systems when they know themselves that when they were in government a number of incidents occurred that led to independent clinical reviews. When they were in government they did quite a few critical reviews because of complaints from patients and because of deaths, so they know that the proper process is to undertake a review.

They have moved on from Caboolture and now it is all about Mackay. When we talk about Mackay, why is it that the Leader of the Opposition thinks it is appropriate to stand up in Mackay supported by George Christensen, who is undermining the most important rollout of vaccinations in this—

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order under standing order 118(b), relevance. I was allowing the minister to go on, but clearly the question was about the Mackay Hospital, patients dying and one patient having a stent put in on the wrong side of their body. I ask the minister to be brought back to the question and not politicise the question, as she is attempting to do.

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members. Minister, under standing order 118(b) I ask that you come back to the question as asked.

Mrs D'ATH: I know they do not want to talk about George Christensen. As I said, if those opposite are saying that these matters have come to their attention through whistleblowers then the public interest disclosure process can be and should be undertaken. There is an obligation on every member of parliament to follow that process and go through proper channels to bring forward such complaints. If members want to refer these matters to either the HHS or my office, I will make sure that they are followed up so that we can tell the public exactly what happened, whether these matters have already been investigated and whether they have gone through the proper processes.

Coronavirus, Tourism Industry

Mr HEALY: My question is to the Premier and Minister for the Olympics. Will the Premier update the House on the government's strategy to support tourism businesses to rebuild and recover from the impacts of COVID-19?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Cairns for that question. From the outset I must say how proud I am that Cairns has a first-dose vaccination rate of 81.9 per cent, which as I said yesterday in this House is up 3.5 per cent, and 69 per cent of residents are now double dosed. We want to see those vaccination rates really increase. As I have said, the Gold Coast, the Whitsundays and Cairns are among our most popular destinations for tourists. We really need to see their vaccination rates at least as high as those in Brisbane to counter delta when it gets here either later this year or early next year.

As I announced today, our Work in Paradise scheme is absolutely vital. I know from discussions with the Minister for Tourism, the assistant minister and a large number of operators in Far North Queensland that there is a shortage of workers. We need to make sure that we continue to support the industry, which is what our Work in Paradise program is essentially designed to do. As I said in my ministerial statement, the program is open to people from right across the nation. They have to be fully vaccinated, they have to produce their—

Mr Mickelberg interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I am sorry?

Mr Mickelberg: Are you going to block people out like you did last time when—

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Buderim, you are warned under the standing orders. It is not time for a conversation.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Yes, the borders were shut to keep Queenslanders safe and to keep the people in your electorate safe, member for Buderim. Our plan is working. Perhaps the member would like to read the plan. The plan is working and it will continue to work as long as every member in this House supports vaccination. Rogue Senators on your side—

Mr SPEAKER: Premier, through the chair.

Ms PALASZCZUK:—supporting the rallies in Victoria are absolutely disgraceful and should be condemned. I repeat: that is absolutely disgraceful and should be condemned.

In relation to the Work in Paradise program, already 1,500 people have been approved to relocate to Queensland to work in tourism businesses: 575 in Cairns, 1,050 in the Whitsundays, 426 in Port Douglas, 99 in Townsville, 50 in Cook, 34 on the Cassowary Coast, 25 in Carpentaria, 23 in Cloncurry, 21 in Winton and 21 in Isaac. We know that the tourism industry has been savagely hit and we acknowledge that they have undergone pressures, but there is a bright future for tourism in this state. One benefit has been that Queenslanders have been able to get out and about and see what Queensland has to offer. In Hervey Bay accommodation has been booked out and out west it has been booked out. We want to see the industry continue to go from strength to strength for many decades to come.

Mackay Base Hospital

Ms CAMM: My question is to the Minister for Health. On the same night as Barbara's tragedy, another patient at the Mackay Base Hospital suffered a heart attack in ICU. Concerningly, it was not picked up immediately as allegedly the monitor was switched off. During resuscitation attempts the doctor did not recognise key symptoms. The doctor resigned four weeks later. Does this event, outside of the scope of the review, prove that the Mackay health crisis is far deeper than the health minister is admitting?

Mrs D'ATH: I thank the member for her question. These are serious issues. I would appreciate it if the member has in her possession any additional information that she refer it to my office immediately today. I hope that all of the issues that the opposition are raising today are issues that have come to light only after the review's terms of reference were issued. If they have held on to those matters having full knowledge of the issues at the time that the review was initiated and the terms of reference were being developed, it would be very irresponsible of them.

It is really important to get these reviews right. It is important to have transparency and accountability around these investigations. That is why, when 23 patients made complaints on the Gold Coast, they actually said at the time—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

Mrs D'ATH: I take those interjections.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Leader of the Opposition, you have consistently interjected. I have tried to give you guidance. You are warned under the standing orders.

Mrs D'ATH: These are very concerning issues. The opposition yells out, 'When was that?' Does that matter? Does it matter that it was under their watch? At the time of that investigation, senior doctors at the hospital warned that controversial measures to meet emergency department wait-time targets had put patients at risk. Under the targets hospitals were encouraged to either admit or discharge patients within four hours of arriving at EDs. Doctors were worried that the four-hour rule was putting patients' lives at risk. In fact, the Australian Medical Association Queensland president at the time said that the allegations were deeply troubling. Who was that? It was Christian Rowan, the member for Moggill. To his credit, at that time he said that the allegations were deeply troubling.

Those on the other side stand up and say, 'Our system was perfect. Nothing ever happened. There were never any complaints. There were no issues.' Members opposite need to take responsibility for what they did to the health system. They have no credibility. One critical review that should have happened was into the Barrett centre, but they never did that.

I am happy to hear from anyone on that side of any issues or complaints from patients. Please refer them through the proper channels. They will be properly considered and investigated, but I will not be lectured to by the LNP who think the only way to look after the health system is to cut and sack.

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The minister may wish to hear about that, but our question under standing order 118(b) concerned the current Queensland Health crisis under her watch and issues at Mackay Base Hospital. That is all the question was about. I ask that the minister be drawn back to the question.

Mr SPEAKER: And the minister has just indicated that she has finished her contribution.

Olympic and Paralympic Games, Jobs

Mr BROWN: My question is of the Deputy Premier and the Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympic Infrastructure. Can the Deputy Premier outline to the House how the Queensland Olympics and Paralympics will provide opportunities for Queensland businesses and create more jobs for Queenslanders?

Dr MILES: I thank the member for Capalaba for the question. I know he knows that the Olympics will bring benefits right across the state, including in his part of the world in the Redlands. We are determined to ensure that all Queenslanders benefit from hosting the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games. That is why we are working with businesses right across the state to make sure the Olympics are a great success and that we create as many jobs here as we can.

Initial modelling suggests the Olympics will have a value of \$8 billion to the economy and create 91,600 jobs, but we are determined to make sure that all of those opportunities are realised. That is why the Palaszczuk government announced the forward procurement plan where businesses are able to register for Buy Queensland supplier updates. They can do that on the Brisbane 2032 website. Already, 2,300 Queensland businesses have registered to be suppliers for the Olympic and Paralympic Games. We will need a lot of them. Whether that is to build and upgrade more than 30 venues, to feed the 16,000 athletes—wouldn't it be wonderful to give them an experience of Queensland beef, Queensland seafood—

Mr STEVENS: Mr Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I seek guidance in terms of the bill that is currently before the House in relation to the Olympic Games and the board that will be put in place to guide all these matters that the Deputy Premier is now considering.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Mermaid Beach, in my reckoning there are specific elements to the bill which I do not believe that the Deputy Premier is intruding on. I will continue to listen, though. I thank you for your point of order.

Dr MILES: Then there are the medals. Last week I was pleased to visit a Queensland business that has registered to be a local supplier—a gold mine 130 kilometres outside of Townsville that has expressed an interest in providing gold for the gold medals. They have been mining gold in Ravenswood since 1868 and, since then, have mined millions of ounces. The Palaszczuk government has worked very closely with the Ravenswood mine to ensure that it can continue to operate and to employ people. We have given approvals for its new pits and infrastructure, new leases the resources minister has provided, allowing it a \$300 million expansion. I recently extended its proscribed project declaration. There are 400 full-time workers there and, when I was there, more than 1,000 were on site, including in construction. As part of the expansion, they built a new primary school in town. They are protecting heritage buildings and relics. They have made Ravenswood a tourism attraction. In 2032 wouldn't it be wonderful to see a Queensland athlete standing on a podium in Queensland with a Queensland-made gold medal around their neck?

Mackay Base Hospital

Mr LAST: My question is to the Minister for Health. Will the minister confirm that Mackay patients are already being offered compensation, proving there is a full-blown crisis at Mackay Base Hospital?

Mrs D'ATH: I thank the member for his question. As anyone on that side who has ever served in government is aware, there are sometimes claims for compensation and compensation given for a range of reasons, including complications in patient services and surgeries. That certainly was happening under the LNP's watch and it happens under any government of any political persuasion. Where there are complications and there is acknowledgement of fault, that compensation is provided, which is the appropriate thing to do.

I have just been provided some information in relation to the person those opposite referred to earlier in questioning, who passed away as a consequence of a surgical procedure. I am advised that this happened in September 2019, that this was properly investigated and that it has gone through a proper referral. The coroner was advised of the matter in September 2019 as was the Queensland

Police Service. A severity assessment code 1 root cause analysis was conducted by Mackay Hospital and Health Service. I do not want to keep going through too many particulars as this is an individual case and it was very distressing to the family and the staff involved at the time. As I said, any death is a tragedy. We express our deepest sympathies to that family. Any unexpected death in a health care facility is fully investigated by the hospital and health service, the Queensland Police Service and the coroner. I hope that clarifies that information for those opposite.

Economy

Ms HOWARD: My question is of the Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment. Will the Treasurer please update the House on the Palaszczuk government's plans for Queensland's economic recovery? Is the Treasurer aware of any alternative approaches?

Mr DICK: I thank the member for Ipswich for her question. As the member for Ipswich knows, our government is resolutely focused on delivering for Queenslanders: protecting their health, creating new jobs in new industries, making Queensland an even better place to live. It was my misfortune to come across a new book in a book store recently that set out some alternative approaches. It is titled *Australia Tomorrow*, which is really contrary to its theme—Australia yesterday. It seems to be some sort of frequent flier rewards points scheme for people who want to go on *Sky News* after dark. Maurice Newman rails against cultural Marxism. Queensland LNP Senator Amanda Stoker talks about identity politics, woke ideology and cancel culture. Right on cue, Queensland LNP Senator James McGrath then talks about cancelling the ABC in its current form. Gary Hardgrave says the Liberal Party should reject existing structures of rules and regulations. Well, there goes workers compensation and workplace health and safe—again. Of course, there is a good dose of LNP anti-vax sentiment.

Barnaby Joyce and Tony Abbott downplay the seriousness of COVID-19. The Deputy Prime Minister of Australia, Barnaby Joyce, calls COVID a 'created crisis'. I am not making this up! Peta Credlin talks about the nationwide disunity among Liberals and says the best thing they can do is 'stay in and fight within a party of government'. That is pretty funny because Campbell Newman is in the book as well. He could not wait to rack off to the Liberal Democrats. The Leader of the Opposition's mentor—what is his contribution called? It is called 'Backing the Forgotten People'. It should be called 'Sacking the Forgotten People' because Queenslanders have not forgotten Campbell Newman. He did say one thing I agree with—and I do not say this often about Campbell Newman—that 'imposters have taken over the Liberal Party'. What a surprise!

Wait for it, guess who else is in the book? The Leader of the Opposition. Amongst this collection of progressive thinkers, what did we learn from the Leader of the Opposition? Look, he is texting editors at the moment. What did we learn? Absolutely nothing. What do we get? More autobabble, something, something, something. The Leader of the Opposition says—I cannot make this up!—'It is time to dream.' The Leader of the Opposition dreams of cuts—just not savage ones—and of vaccinations but no mandates. He dreams of winning big but just keeps on losing. Do not take my word for it; ask the member for Stretton. Queenslanders might have their own contributions to make to the Leader of the Opposition. The one thing they would like to tell the Leader of the Opposition: tell him that he is dreaming.

Queensland Building and Construction Commission, Review

Mr JANETZKI: My question is to the Minister for Public Works. I refer to the minister's QBCC review terms of reference released yesterday and note their focus on process and ask: will any potential corrupt activities involving the board be investigated?

Mr de BRENNI: I thank the member for the question. As I have said in this place time and time again, I have full confidence in the Queensland Building and Construction Board and all of its staff. I say to those opposite and any member of the public that if they have any allegations they are fully across the avenues through which they can raise those, and I invite them to do so. The terms of reference are quite broad. I am very confident in Jim Varghese's ability to work through the issues to ensure that the regulator remains contemporary and high performing and continues to support the 110,000 licensees and 230,000 Queenslanders who work in this critical industry.

Education

Mrs MULLEN: My question is of the Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing. Can the minister please update the House on the implementation of key education election commitments and advise of any alternative approaches?

Ms GRACE: I am looking forward to going out to the electorate of Jordan next week to look at the infrastructure that we are delivering in this fast-growing area of Queensland and to talk about future needs. We opened two schools in Palmview last week—the special school and the state school. The high school will be opened in 2023. We are delivering infrastructure right throughout Queensland. It is pleasing that our policies amount to a \$1.9 billion spend in infrastructure right around the state.

We are implementing all of our election commitments. We are opening homework centres. We have 50 GPs in schools. We have psychologists already in place and working in schools on the Sunshine Coast and in other areas. We have students lining up to take advantage of our Turn to Teaching Internship Program. We have more teachers, more teacher aides and more staff in our schools. We are undertaking a \$45 million upgrade of training facilities—outshining any other state or territory in Australia when it comes to VET in schools. These are the policies we took to the people last election and these are the policies that we are rolling out.

It was pleasing to read a survey this morning that indicated that the happiest students in Australia are Queensland students. This is absolutely amazing. When we look at alternative approaches, I notice that the LNP had their state conference last week. After the bungled education policy that they took to the last election which contained wrong figures and all kinds of bungled statements, they had an opportunity to come out with an education policy after their conference. They came out with an education policy. Wait for it! Their big education policy announcement is that they want children to sing the national anthem. That is it. I do not think I have ever been to a school where they have not sung the national anthem. They are already doing that every week in schools. The member for Mansfield and I last week opened the new Upper Mount Gravatt State School building after the previous one was burnt down and it was extraordinary.

It is interesting that those opposite are not singing about vaccination. I notice the member for Kawana has an *Islands in the Stream* post on Facebook. At least he got more hits than the Leader of the Opposition did for his live telecast, which had three people watching including the Deputy Premier. They are out of ideas. They are a joke and they deserve to be over there.

(Time expired)

Queensland Building and Construction Commission, Review

Mr MANDER: My question is to the Minister for Public Works. Andrew Hickman was a QBCC board member when the organisation made changes to the fire protection regulation which benefited his business. Will the Mr Hickman's conduct form part of the review of the QBCC?

Mr de BRENNI: I thank the member for the question. I reject the premise of the question because it was this parliament that made changes to the fire protection regime.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr de BRENNI: You supported them. The regulations were made and tabled in this parliament. The board does not make the regulations. This parliament does those things. I have full confidence in the conduct of all of the members of the board and all of the staff of the commission. I look forward to ensuring that the commission continues to perform at a high level and support Queensland's incredibly strong construction industry.

Community Safety

Mrs McMAHON: My question is to Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services. Will the minister update the House on how police are keeping the community safe from both the virus and those who would do harm to the community and whether the minister is aware of any alternative approaches?

Mr RYAN: I thank the member for the question. Like this government, the member is tough on COVID by being tough on borders. It is the way of keeping the community safe. Our police have been doing an outstanding job in making sure that COVID stays out of the state, being strong on the borders and being strong in quarantine hotels.

The other thing that they have been doing as a result of being tough on borders is being tough on crime. By being tough on borders you can also be tough on crime. It was only last week that we did a favour for our friends south of the border. The New South Wales police minister sent me a text saying, 'Thank you for catching Australia's most wanted criminal, Mostafa Baluch.' We caught him. Why? Because we are tough on borders. We are tough on COVID. That means that we are also tough on crime. The New South Wales police commissioner said, 'Fortress Queensland has caught Australia's

most wanted criminal.' By being tough on borders and by being tough on COVID we have also been able to catch other criminals—people coming across the border with fake numberplates; all these people from New South Wales with guns and drugs. We are catching them on the border.

If you are tough on COVID, you are also tough on borders and you are also tough on crime. If you are not tough on borders and you are soft on borders, you are soft on crime. If you were soft on borders all of those people coming across the borders, including Australia's most wanted criminal, would have kept going.

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

Mr RYAN: I wonder who is soft on borders. We know those opposite put big billboards up saying, 'Get rid of the border restrictions'—soft on borders; soft on crime. We know those opposite go down to the border and say, 'Come on in. Come on in COVID. Come on in criminals'—soft on borders; soft on crime. The former opposition leader allegedly had conversations with the former New South Wales premier about the borders and said we should open up. The former leader denied that, but maybe we need to check the phone taps to see what they said.

If you want to be serious about COVID, you have to be tough on borders. Because we have been tough on borders, we have also been able to stop criminals coming across the borders and have caught some pretty serious criminals. We pay tribute to our police for being tough on borders. They have kept us safe from COVID and kept us safe from crime coming across the border.

Gender Diverse People, Registration

Mr BERKMAN: My question is to the Attorney-General. This week is Trans Awareness Week. It is also the second last sitting week of 2021 and the Attorney-General has previously committed to introduce reforms this year that better recognise gender diverse people in our registry laws. When will the government introduce legislation to meet that commitment?

Ms FENTIMAN: I thank the member for Maiwar for the question. As the member is well aware, I have corresponded with the member on many occasions. We do have reforms to births, deaths and marriages, building on the reforms of the former attorney-general to modernise our laws and make sure that people's lived identity in Queensland match their legal identity. I am very firmly on the record as saying we believe that that is very important.

As the member also knows because I have written to tell him, I have hosted the first round table with stakeholders to get their initial feedback. Again, these laws are complex. We are looking at modernisations that have happened in every other jurisdiction. I do want to listen directly to the LGBTIQ+ stakeholders and make sure that we are listening to people with lived experience. It is really important that we hear directly from them.

The round table was held in October to obtain their feedback. As I have said to the group and publicly, we hope to have changes to these laws introduced into the parliament next year. They will be introduced as soon as possible, but we do want to make sure we are consulting widely. Once implemented, we will see improvements in the delivery of important frontline services that Births, Deaths and Marriages deliver to Queenslanders. This is about marriage certificates, death certificates, changing a person's name. It is absolutely important that we make sure that our laws reflect the community. I am very proud of the work we are doing in this space. I am really proud that stakeholders are working with us to get this right. Those laws will be introduced next year.

Coronavirus Vaccination, Small Business

Mr McCALLUM: My question is of the Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development. Will the minister please inform the House why getting vaccinated is important to supporting small business?

Ms FARMER: I thank the member for his question and for his commitment to seeing Queenslanders vaccinated. I know he is especially proud of Ipswich TAFE, where people are literally receiving their vaccinations as we speak.

The Palaszczuk government has been steadfast in its commitment to small business since the pandemic hit. In fact, since March last year we have delivered \$470 million in grants alone to small businesses including our business support program, which just closed yesterday—we have paid out over \$290 million in that program so far—and the business boost program I announced last week. Successful recipients will be receiving their money really soon.

Despite the success of those programs, the best thing we can do for small businesses is to keep our economy open and trading. The only way we can do that is to see Queenslanders getting vaccinated. That is why the Premier and every single member on this side of the House have been across Queensland putting that message out. I personally have been to Cairns, Aurukun, Rocky, Mackay, Logan, the Gold Coast and the Sunshine Coast in the last months to get that message out. It is something we need everybody in this House to be pushing. Small businesses—Queenslanders—need everyone behind that.

In the last sitting I had a go at the member for Buderim as the shadow minister for small business for not getting out and pushing that vaccination message. He got a bit upset with me because it turns out that he did once actually say something about vaccination. It was buried in a response to a media report. Shadow minister, once in the last year—great. My bad!

Since the last sitting there has been one more post. There was a photo of him getting the AZ jab. He says he got it because he wants to show leadership in the community and because he and his LNP colleagues will always promote hope over fear. Quick as a flash that was the last time we heard from the shadow minister for small business about vaccination. He did talk about LNP and leadership and hope and vaccines. What does that actually look like?

George Christensen likened vaccinations to slavery. Gerard Rennick's website has a form on it where if you have an unverified vaccine injury you report it to him and he will just put it out on Facebook. Matt Canavan said, 'I myself just won't go to places that require a vaccine passport.' Luke Howarth said the vaccine mandate is segregation. Cairns LNP councillor Brett Olds compared it to South African apartheid. Life member of the LNP Phillip Di Bella has publicly said he will breach the public health directive, and of course we know about the member for Mudgeeraba. What a motley crew they all are. What has the Leader of the Opposition said about this to lead Queensland through this crisis? Absolutely nothing.

(Time expired)

Ms Bates interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Mudgeeraba, you are warned under the standing orders. You will direct your comments through the chair.

Port Hinchinbrook, Sewerage

Mr DAMETTO: My question is to the Deputy Premier. Normalisation at Port Hinchinbrook has the support of local, state and federal government, yet failures of the existing sewage treatment plant continue to see sewage making its way into the marina basin and subsequently the marine park. Can the minister update the House as to what is being done to expedite negotiations with the current liquidator to solve the land based issues at Port Hinchinbrook?

Dr MILES: I thank the member for Hinchinbrook for his question. It is one we have talked a lot about including in here. I remain, as I know he does, very concerned about the situation there, particularly with the sewage treatment plant. I understand that on 5 November there was another overflow reported at the plant. That is very concerning. It is concerning for residents who really should be entitled to have proper sewage treatment as well as not have their local environment impacted by a sewage overflow, not to mention the potential impacts on the Great Barrier Reef. I know that the Department of Environment and Science investigated that. They have investigated a number of breaches there.

First and foremost, it is incumbent on the liquidator to meet their responsibilities to properly maintain and operate the sewage treatment plant. It is very concerning that it appears to me that they continue to fail to do so. We have been working with the local council and the member for Hinchinbrook to try to find a resolution. We have offered the liquidator an agreement that would allow the council to take over management of the facility while we sort through the other details. We have also offered a commercial arrangement that could buy out the liquidator and allow for the proper maintenance and operation of the facility. Unfortunately, the liquidator has rejected both of those approaches which is very disappointing and frankly not good enough.

We are left as a state with our last resort. That is why the Coordinator-General has notified an intention to resume the land and associated tenures. It is not the approach we would normally want to take, but with the liquidator being so unhelpful and obstructive and not meeting their obligations we are determined to ensure that residents there get the services that they need—that they do not have to put up with sewage overflowing into their local community—as well as protect the Great Barrier Reef.

We have put \$6.4 million aside. I understand that the Commonwealth has already committed \$6 million as well. This is all three levels of government and the local member working together to resolve a situation that really needs to be resolved. The situation there right now is not good enough. I give the member an assurance that we will do what we need to do to sort this out. I would like to thank him for the assistance he has provided us locally to get a solution.

Infrastructure

Mr HUNT: My question is of the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. Can the minister update the House on the Palaszczuk government's infrastructure delivery in the year since the election, and is the minister aware of any alternative approaches?

Mr BAILEY: I thank the honourable member for Caloundra for his question. It has been a year since his election and isn't he doing a fantastic job! Bells Creek Arterial Road, Ridgewood Road, 611 bus—he has achieved more in one year than the previous member did in a career. It is great to see such strong representation from him and also from the member for Nicklin. They are both doing a great job on the Sunshine Coast, where we have a record program of infrastructure—road and rail.

We have finished the Caloundra Road to Sunshine Motorway upgrade. The Mons Road-Maroochydore Road interchange on the Bruce Highway is going very well—\$300 million there. The Gympie bypass is going very well. We are seeing a record level of expenditure. Broadly, with Cross River Rail we are ahead of schedule on the tunnelling. We are seeing the M1 upgrades—\$5.2 billion going into the M1 after not a single dollar went in under the opposition. We are seeing Bruce Highway upgrades like we have never seen before—48 projects are underway on the Bruce Highway right now. The stimulus is hitting regional Queensland. It has been a very good year for the member for Caloundra. I congratulate him.

It has not been such a good year for the Leader of the Opposition. He said he would be different. Remember he was distancing himself from the member for Nanango and the member for Everton. He punted them right back. He said he would be different. All we have seen is a year of the LNP at war with themselves. The big crusade—he was going to clean out his head office. Do members remember that? They needed a bright, new generation and a new president to run. They could not find anyone, so they ran Lawrence Springborg. He was the only person they would not fight over.

They brought in Tony Ayers as their great 'white knight', but it only took a couple of weeks for him to get the ires and he left LNP headquarters faster than a Tesla on 'Ludicrous mode'. That is what happened. This is what we have seen from those opposite: the Leader of the Opposition voted against the voluntary assisted dying legislation; there was a shadow cabinet meeting with George Christensen; the member for Mudgeeraba is a member of an anti-vax union; the member for Callide did not say a word at estimates; and the member for Burleigh told us that public transport will be obsolete in five to 10 years time, and if we act on climate change all the plants will die. We remember the Leader of the Opposition's doona statement bagging our world-leading health response, and he is still doing it. He is still not listening to the health advice even now. Even now he is making stuff up on health while we are still in the middle of the pandemic. He just does not learn. He never stands up for Queensland. He grovels a lot to Canberra but he never stands up for Queensland, and that will never get him there.

(Time expired)

Agriculture Industry, Skills and Training

Mr MILLAR: My question is to the Minister for Agricultural Industry Development. Given the government's refusal to fund a business case to use the Longreach Pastoral College for vocational training and their failure to sell the campus to the Longreach council, how will the minister address the agricultural skills crisis in Central Western Queensland?

Mr FURNER: I thank the member for Gregory for his question. I thoroughly enjoy going to Longreach. In fact, we attend that region so often that the mayor has threatened to give me a rates notice. If the member for Gregory went to Longreach the number of times I do, he would have an understanding of the proponents who are lining up to look at the Longreach agricultural college for repurposing, which is what this government did several years ago in terms of repurposing not only the Emerald but also the Longreach QATC—

Mr Millar interjected.

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

Mr FURNER: We will continue engaging as we always do. We will continue listening to our regional centres as everyone in the Palaszczuk government does.

Mr Millar interjected.

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

Mr FURNER: Every member of cabinet visits the regions and will be visiting the regions very soon, in fact, to make sure we continue that engagement and listening to those proponents, whom my department and I will be listening to, to make sure the repurposing of the college will be sustainable and—

Mr Millar interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Under standing order 253A, the member for Gregory will leave the chamber for one hour.

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

Mr FURNER: Because we are thorough in terms of integrity, probity and what we do as a government we tabled the Coaldrake review. We made sure that everyone understood what we were proposing. We made sure that everyone throughout Queensland, whether it be in Longreach, Emerald or other parts of the regions, knew what was ahead of them.

The fact is when the member for Gregory was the media adviser for the previous LNP minister for agriculture he lacked the intestinal fortitude to table the Ernst & Young report on the review of those colleges. The member for Gregory did not have the decency or integrity to table the Ernst & Young report. They were going to sell not only the Longreach college but also, as I understand it, they were going to sell the Emerald college. We will continuously engage with all of the regions and ensure the proponents who are lining up have the opportunity to make sure those colleges will be repurposed in the manner proposed in the Coaldrake review.

When you look at the funding, we put aside \$16.74 million over five years to continue the maintenance and sustainability of these sites. We will continue to engage with all of the proponents across the board like the butchers that are in there now at Longreach. They are doing a fantastic job—

Ms Enoch: Get serious butchers!

Mr FURNER: Savage butchers—Savage by name, not by nature. They are a great example of what Longreach has to provide, and we will make sure we continue to engage with all of those proponents.

(Time expired)

Coronavirus Vaccination, Tourism Industry

Mr WALKER: My question is of the Minister for Tourism, Innovation and Sport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics and Paralympics Sport and Engagement. Is the minister aware of the tourism industry's stance on the vaccination of Queenslanders and business to our state?

Mr HINCHLIFFE: I thank the member for Mundingburra for the question. As a North Queensland, I know that the member has seen firsthand the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on our great tourism industry. That is why the Palaszczuk government has committed more than a billion dollars to support tourism operators throughout the pandemic. Tourism leaders have united behind the government's vaccination campaign as the clear path to protecting our way of life in Queensland. Our way of life makes this state Australia's favourite visitor destination.

As you would appreciate, Mr Speaker, Cairns is among the Queensland destinations that have been hardest hit by the loss of international tourists and interstate lockdowns. Mark Olsen from Tourism Tropical North Queensland understands the importance of double-dose vaccination to the industry's recovery and that it is the best way of protecting communities. Mr Olsen said, 'The road map is clear that our ability to travel is linked to the rate of vaccination.' He has been one of a number of leaders in the tourism industry across the state who has voiced support for the Queensland government's position on vaccination and the campaign that ministers have led right across the state.

Patricia O'Callaghan at Destination Gold Coast tells me that since the vaccination rollout was released there has been a 235 per cent jump in the number of people searching for accommodation, something that is very welcome right across the Gold Coast. To quote Ms O'Callaghan, 'Our industry has been waiting to welcome back our visitors, and that is why we are encouraging everyone to get the jab.' Village Roadshow, which is the operator of some of the Gold Coast's most popular theme parks, is quoted in today's media as saying, 'We need vaccination so we can get back to normal.' Gus Stedman from Gladstone Area Promotion Development Limited sums up the industry's support for job campaign when he says—and I am a bit worried he may have been inspired by the Minister for Transport and Main Roads—'Don't be lax, get the vax.'

It is very important that so many people across the whole of our tourism industry support our vaccination program and support vaccination. It is a shame we do not have the same level of enthusiasm for vaccination from those opposite. Both the Leader of the Opposition and the shadow minister for health have continually refused to support mandatory vaccination as part of our economic recovery plan, which is already so well underway. I am very worried that they are beholden to some wackos and weirdos. There are wackos and weirdos out there whom it seems they are worried about and they do not want to offend. There is some sort of reason they do not want to offend them, but it seems to me that some of those wackos and weirdos are in the darker corners of the LNP. Sometimes it seems that those dark corners are in the Senate and House of Representatives, but there are also some really fake unions. Do not believe them. Support the industry; get the vaccination.

Redlands, Homelessness Services

Dr ROBINSON: My question is to the Minister for Communities and Housing. Can the minister explain why Footprints has been awarded a homelessness service tender in the Redlands with no record of presence or service delivery in the area over Homeless United, which has four years of successful local service delivery and had its funding ceased?

Mr SPEAKER: The period for question time has expired. I ask members to please leave the chamber quietly.

MINISTERIAL PAPER

Electoral Commission of Queensland



Hon. SM FENTIMAN (Waterford—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (11.18 am): I lay upon the table of the House a report by the Electoral Commission of Queensland titled *Audit report on the conduct of preselection ballots: 2020 state general election*.

Tabled paper: Electoral Commission of Queensland—Audit report on the conduct of preselection ballots, 2020 State general election, October 2021 [1949].

The Palaszczuk government is committed to ensuring the Queensland public can have confidence in the democratic and transparent candidate preselection processes across our state's registered political parties. In tabling the report today I am pleased to advise that the EQC is expecting to develop recommendations for amendments to the model procedures in early 2022 with a view to modernising the model procedures to ensure they are fit for purpose and able to be complied with by registered political parties in our state.

JUSTICE LEGISLATION (COVID-19 EMERGENCY RESPONSE—PERMANENCY) AMENDMENT BILL

Resumed from 15 September (see p. 2765).

Second Reading



Hon. SM FENTIMAN (Waterford—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (11.19 am): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

On 15 September 2021 the Justice Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Permanency) Amendment Bill 2021 was introduced into parliament and referred to the State Development and Regional Industries Committee. The committee tabled its report on 1 November 2021 making six recommendations. Many aspects of this bill are very complex and I thank the committee members for their thorough consideration of the different reforms in this bill. I would also like to thank those stakeholders, organisations and individuals who made submissions to the committee and participated in the public hearing. The first recommendation was that the bill be passed. I thank the committee for its support for the bill. I formally table the government response to the State Development and Regional Industries Committee's report.

Tabled paper: State Development and Regional Industries Committee: Report No. 14, 57th Parliament—Justice Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Permanency) Amendment Bill 2021, government response [1950].

I will shortly address the other recommendations in the committee's report, and I foreshadow that I will be moving amendments to the bill during consideration in detail in response to some of these recommendations and other issues raised by stakeholders during the committee's inquiry into the bill.

The bill permanently implements, and builds upon, four key temporary measures that the government put in place during COVID-19 to support Queensland businesses and the community and which are due to expire on 30 April 2022. These include modified arrangements for the way in which certain documents are made and the way in which civil proceedings for protection from domestic and family violence are conducted in certain circumstances.

The bill will also amend the Liquor Act to allow licensed restaurant operators to apply for a permanent condition of licence authorising the sale of 1.5 litres of wine—that is, two bottles—with a takeaway meal up to 10 pm. The bill also extends the expiry of the Retail Shop Leases and Other Commercial Leases (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Regulation 2020.

The first key area of reform in the bill relates to the Justice Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Documents and Oaths) Regulation 2020, which was made in May last year. Before then, important legal documents needed to be made on paper and in person. The regulation allowed technology to be used to make certain documents, allowing court and tribunal proceedings, business and commerce to continue, despite lockdowns and social distancing. The bill makes permanent a number of these reforms in relation to: affidavits, statutory declarations and oaths; powers of attorney, other than an enduring power of attorney; deeds; certain mortgages; and advance health directives.

Submitters to the committee strongly support the documents reforms in the bill. The Queensland Law Society commented that the temporary measures—

... have been of great assistance to our members and their clients. In addition to the need for these measures during the course of the pandemic, the legal profession and the community at large have derived significant benefit from the modernisation of legislation which has led to increased access to justice, increased certainty and reliability as well as time and cost savings.

I would like to address a number of issues raised through the committee inquiry, some of which are also the subject of recommendations in the committee's report. Recommendation 2 of the committee's report was that the minister, in the second reading speech, explain the benefits of utilising regulations to determine standards of accepted methods of electronic signature. The bill adopts a technology-neutral approach to give the legislation maximum flexibility as technology changes, and it is intended to translate the main characteristics of a physical signature in a digital environment.

For affidavits and statutory declarations, the bill allows, but does not require, for a regulation to be made under the Oaths Act 1867, and for rules of court or practice directions to be made about affidavits and statutory declarations filed or admitted into evidence in a proceeding, to specify the methods of electronic signature that can or cannot be used. The bill similarly allows a regulation to be made under the Powers of Attorney Act 1998 to specify or limit the acceptable methods of electronic signature for general powers of attorney made for businesses. Such regulations, if made in the future, would allow government to respond to any issues that may emerge given that these reforms are a radical departure from traditional legal practice and introduce new risks. This regulation-making facility allows necessary flexibility as technology changes over time and to maintain consistency with reforms in other jurisdictions.

The bill does not allow a regulation to be made about acceptable methods for electronically signing a deed. Instead, the bill respects party autonomy by replicating the requirement in the Electronic Transactions (Queensland) Act for signatories to consent to the method used by other signatories. Extensive consultation was undertaken with stakeholders on this issue and the majority of stakeholders support the proposed approach. I do not propose to move any amendments with respect to these provisions in the bill. I will be moving amendments during consideration in detail to further clarify the modified arrangements for making statutory declarations and affidavits. These are clarifying amendments to give expression to the policy intent of the bill.

Recommendation 3 of the committee's report was that further reforms be considered to address the execution of deeds by the state. The policy intention of the bill is to enable government, as well as businesses and the community, to benefit from the reforms so that a lawfully authorised person for a government department, agency or statutory body can execute deeds in the same way as other entities. Therefore, I foreshadow that I will be moving amendments to clarify that the state of Queensland can execute deeds under the new modernised framework, and to validate any deeds that may have been executed by the state under the temporary modified arrangements in the Justice Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Documents and Oaths) Regulation 2020. I will also be moving amendments during consideration in detail to clarify the application of the modified arrangements for deeds to corporations sole. This again is all about giving expression to the policy intent of the bill.

The bill allows an individual to sign a deed on behalf of a partnership or unincorporated association without a witness. The common law provides that a person authorised to sign a deed on behalf of a partnership needs to be appointed by a deed signed by all of the partners in the partnership. Some legal stakeholders suggested that the bill should be amended to allow an individual to sign a deed for a partnership, whether or not that individual was appointed by deed.

Recommendation 4 of the committee's report was that further reforms be considered to address the execution of deeds by partnership in cases where an individual is not appointed by a deed. I do not propose to make any amendments to this bill in relation to this recommendation because it would substantially alter the way that deeds are ordinarily executed within a partnership framework. The common law rule ensures that a person acting on behalf of a partnership in executing a deed is duly authorised to do so. The removal of that particular requirement could introduce significant risks for partnership. Such a change is beyond the scope of the bill, which is to make permanent certain temporary measures that were put in place during COVID-19. However, the government will further explore whether changes should be made to address this issue in the future.

The bill restricts who can witness statutory declarations and affidavits over audiovisual link to a narrow cohort of special witnesses. Special witnesses are Australian legal practitioners, notary publics and certain justices of the peace. Only JPs and commissioners for declarations employed by a law practice or employed by the Public Trustee are special witnesses, in addition to a small number who are approved by the director-general of my department.

Some questions were raised during the examination of the bill by the committee about the restricted category of special witnesses. Again, we consulted widely with legal stakeholders in developing this list of special witnesses and this list is deliberately more narrow than those who can witness a document in person. This is the key safeguard against the risks of using electronic signature and witnessing over audiovisual link. This is because special witnesses are more likely to have access to and be more familiar with using audiovisual technology and will be more astute to the risks of fraud and more likely to have the appropriate training and experience to verify identity and assess capacity and duress in an online environment.

The committee's report commented that training would be beneficial for these JPs to ensure consistent and appropriate witnessing practices. I am pleased to report that the Department of Justice and Attorney-General already has a training program in place for the approved JPs who are special witnesses and that training will be reviewed following passage of the bill.

The development of these reforms has been a complex task that could not have been achieved without the cooperation and expertise of key stakeholders. I want to particularly acknowledge and express my appreciation to the Queensland Law Society and the Bar Association of Queensland for their valuable input into the development of the bill.

In my role as Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence, I am acutely aware of the terrible impact domestic and family violence has had on the lives of Queenslanders, particularly as a result of the pandemic. Sadly, almost one in 10 Australian women in a relationship experienced domestic violence during the pandemic, with two-thirds saying it started or became worse. The government responded to ensure ongoing access and flexibility for those seeking protection from domestic and family violence by introducing temporary measures to reduce physical contact between persons seeking protection or responding to an application for a domestic violence order. These measures have been useful in facilitating access to justice in these matters.

The bill proposes to continue accessibility in domestic and family violence proceedings by making permanent measures largely based on the temporary arrangements to allow for domestic and family violence matters to be heard via video or audio link at the court's discretion, alternative verification processes for temporary protection orders in urgent situations, and electronic filing, where approved by the Principal Registrar.

The bill will also amend the COVID-19 Emergency Response Act 2020 to extend the operation of the Retail Shop Leases and Other Commercial (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Regulation 2020 until 30 April 2024, unless it is ended sooner. This will allow the Queensland Small Business Commissioner to continue to provide crucial mediation services in commercial leasing disputes.

The bill also amends the Liquor Act 1992 to allow licensed restaurants to apply for a permanent licence condition authorising the sale of 1.5 litres of takeaway wine with a takeaway meal. Transitional arrangements provide that the application fee for the new permanent licence condition will be waived until 1 July 2022 for any restaurant operator who was eligible for the temporary COVID-19 takeaway liquor authority prior to the commencement of the amendments. The provisions arise from concessions

the government initially introduced as temporary measures in response to the extraordinary circumstances of COVID-19. Certain aspects of the temporary measures are proposed to be made permanent to the extent that they do not expand the current permanent takeaway liquor framework for restaurants.

For decades, restaurant licensees have had the ability to sell one opened and one unopened bottle of takeaway wine to adults dining on premises. Allowing restaurant licensees to sell 1.5 litres of takeaway wine—that is, two bottles—with a meal to customers dining off-premises is consistent with the existing permanent takeaway framework, as it does not expand the type or amount of takeaway liquor able to be sold.

I note the committee's recommendation that consideration be given to amending the bill to provide the option of allowing 1.5 litres of wine, beer, cider or premixed drinks to be sold with a takeaway meal. The committee report suggests that this amendment offers 'a middle ground that meets the needs of all parties and supports small businesses as well as harm-minimisation strategies'.

I acknowledge the views of the committee and stakeholder submissions from the brewery industry that takeaway beer, in particular, can pose a low risk of alcohol related harm, particularly given the range of low- and mid-strength beers currently available. However, the government has initially adopted a very cautious approach of introducing a takeaway liquor allowance for off-premise diners that mirrors the longstanding takeaway liquor allowance for on-premise diners.

The amendments provide restaurateurs with the necessary flexibility to meet growing customer demands for greater choice and convenience in takeaway food and beverage offerings. The liquor amendments support the recovery of small businesses from COVID while providing harm-minimisation measures to address concerns regarding the potential for alcohol related harm. Accordingly, the government will not be introducing additional amendments to the bill to allow takeaway beer and premixed alcohol drinks to be sold. However, we are very interested in seeing the uptake of takeaway liquor with takeaway meals from restaurants and the associated economic benefits to guide future policy development in this space.

The committee also recommended that further clarification be provided around the measures that will support the responsible service of alcohol by restaurant and cafe licensees selling alcohol with takeaway meals. The government shares the committee's concern that adequate safeguards need to be in place to ensure the responsible service of takeaway alcohol. That is why the bill includes several measures to minimise the risk of harm from the misuse and abuse of takeaway wine sold with takeaway meals. The bill limits eligibility for the takeaway licence condition to licences with a principal activity of providing meals that are prepared and served to be eaten on the premises. Meal service with alcohol is a known harm-minimisation measure.

To be granted the new permanent takeaway licence condition, restaurateurs must have in place systems and processes to ensure the responsible service of takeaway alcohol, such as ensuring liquor is not ordered by or supplied to minors. Any approval is subject to conditions the Commissioner for Liquor and Gaming determines necessary to ensure takeaway wine is served responsibly. While the specific conditions to be imposed is a matter for the commissioner, ensuring liquor is only delivered to the adult who ordered it and is not left with minors or unduly intoxicated persons will be central to the conditioning process. In this way the bill provides for the growth of restaurant takeaway offerings in line with market trends while retaining the necessary safeguards to ensure potential alcohol related harm is minimised. I thank the committee for their consideration on the liquor amendments.

In addition to the matters raised in the committee's report, the government proposes to move other unrelated amendments to the bill during consideration in detail. I foreshadow that I will be moving an amendment during consideration in detail to the Queensland Building and Construction Commission Act 1991 to clarify a minor technical issue relating to directions to rectify defective or incomplete building work, or remedy consequential damage, issued by the Queensland Building and Construction Commission. To remove any doubt about their validity, the amendment will retrospectively validate directions issued by QBCC since 11 November 2019 and any actions taken in reliance on those directions. This will ensure nobody's rights are prejudiced. Importantly, Queensland homeowners can continue to have confidence that any problems they may experience with defective or unfinished building work will be fixed as quickly as possible.

I also foreshadow amendments to be moved relating to the pension arrangements for Queensland governors. An individual appointed as governor often has had a distinguished career prior to their appointment and long established superannuation arrangements. Amendments progressed in the last sitting week enable an incoming governor to elect to retain their current superannuation fund,

or to receive a lifetime pension at the end of their term of appointment. Building on those amendments and given the complex nature of the interrelationships between superannuation and pensions, advice was sought from the State Actuary about how best to calculate the offsetting arrangements for lump sum superannuation payments. The amendments moved in consideration in detail will provide for the offset of the state funded component of the superannuation benefit payable to a former governor under the defined benefit scheme.

The arrangements relating to superannuation benefits are complex and it requires detailed actuarial advice to ensure that the calculation of the offsetting arrangements is accurate. That is why we are progressing these further amendments this sitting week. It was important that we get the further advice for these changes to the act.

Under the Governors (Salary and Pensions) Act 2003, a governor, at the end of their term in office, may become entitled to a lifetime pension, with reversionary rights to their partner should they die. A former governor's pension is offset, including to nil, by the amount of any other pension or retiring allowance, wholly or partially payable by an Australian state or Commonwealth government. While it was always intended this offset arrangement would apply to superannuation benefits, the act does not apply as intended where such benefits are paid by lump sum, such as under the defined benefit category of the state public sector superannuation scheme.

This bill delivers real and measurable benefits and efficiencies for Queensland. I commend the bill to the House.



Mr NICHOLLS (Clayfield—LNP) (11.37 am): Debate on this bill, I am sure, will be worthy and, in some respects, it might even be exciting, but I am sure for most people the word 'dull' will come to mind as we barrel through amendments to the Oaths Act and various aspects of the law of agency, partnerships, deeds and all those things. There will, of course, be a few highlights in relation to the takeaway liquor reforms that have been proposed. I am sure everyone will be thinking of that in the lead-up to Christmas and Christmas parties coming on. Importantly, there are some very worthwhile amendments around the domestic violence field that the LNP will be supporting.

Of course we have, as always at Christmastime, a few little surprise amendments that have just been announced in relation to this government's ongoing inability to sort out the superannuation arrangements for the Governor. Despite having had many months to get the arrangements in place, and despite last sitting week making amendments to the superannuation legislation, we are now back again moving another amendment outside the long title of the bill to facilitate the appointment of the Governor and the option in relation to superannuation entitlements and benefits. How many times will it take for this government to get it right? After all, they have only had six months to make sure they know what they are doing.

It is absolutely an interesting debate. Let me say that the Liberal National Party welcomes debate on the subject matter of the bill, particularly the bill in its original form but not necessarily the amendments which have been proposed. It is often said that necessity is the mother of invention—and that could certainly be considered to be the case with this bill that we are debating today—and, perhaps a little more unkindly, the phrase 'needs must' or, as it was known in earlier times, 'needs must when the devil drives'. Certainly the devil has been driving over the past two years or so given the genesis of this legislation was a response to the COVID-19 pandemic. In reaching a position to support this bill, the opposition is aware that it changes some longstanding accepted practices in courts and commerce.

It is also the case that upon assuming my role in the first debate of this parliament on the extension of the temporary measures that were introduced in 2020, I expressed our desire to see some of the responses to the COVID pandemic that made practical sense made permanent. That was a year ago. This legislation does that in respect of the making, signing and witnessing of important legal and commercial documents. It introduces the capacity for the electronic execution of certain documents in a technology neutral way. It also preserves the option for paper documents to continue to be used. It does this by, amongst other actions, amending the venerable and well-known in legal circles Oaths Act of 1867. This affects the signing and witnessing of common legal documents including affidavits, statutory declarations and oaths. These are indeed the common currency of the legal system and of commerce.

In this day and age of email, e-signatures, apps and commerce on the go, the insistence on relying on and using paper based documents signed in the physical presence of a witness would seem anachronistic. I am sure many members in this place have experience of using documents transmitted and signed electronically. They are now used in all facets of commerce from obtaining a personal loan to signing a mortgage agreement and everything in between. In fact, my colleague the good doctor and

member for Moggill tells me that even prescriptions are issued electronically straight away these days by doctors. We see it happening everywhere. Because I do not get sick and I do not go to doctors, I do not know about these things, but I am told they happen. In our everyday lives we know that e-commerce and the use of apps is exploding.

There may be those with some misgivings about these changes. In particular, in the event of a dispute over the correct execution of a document there may well be questions raised. In fact, oftentimes we read about cases of forgeries of signatures on mortgages or deeds. They make the headlines and they are the subject of controversy. There will be those who will say the best way to validate the execution of a document is to call the witnesses who were all together at the time to witness the signing of that document. However, we believe that the safeguards included in the bill are sufficient to ensure questions about the signing of these documents can be resolved, especially as we note now there is an ability to track versions of documents and follow a chain of electronic communications through commonly applied IT and address protocols. If one reads the submission made by Allens Linklaters and King & Wood Mallesons, they give some examples of how that could be done and how it is done and potentially how there is greater security and safety over documents by using electronic methods rather than paper methods.

There is no doubt in my mind that these changes will be of benefit to the community and the legal profession. I note the comments made by the Queensland Law Society in its submissions to the inquiry and, in particular, the statement—

... the legal profession and the community at large have derived significant benefit from the modernisation of legislation which has led to increased access to justice, increased certainty and reliability as well as ... cost savings.

While many may choose not to believe it, solicitors are in fact acutely aware of the cost and difficulty of protracted legal proceedings and most are anxious to reduce both the cost and the complexity for their clients where they can. The process of preparing, signing, witnessing and filing affidavits as well as the need to read and mark hard copies is time consuming, laborious and expensive, as I am sure, Madam Deputy Speaker, you can attest to. I am sure the member for Nanango can also attest to that. Anyone who has had to go through the process of complex commercial litigation knows just how time consuming that can be.

In litigation, affidavits and exhibits can run into several hundreds of pages, and the use of electronically completed affidavits can potentially save many thousands of dollars and many hours of practitioner time. This is just in simple terms of being able to access the document, mark the document electronically and refer to the document electronically rather than having to pore over a paper document, let alone the old process of having to get deponents to sign every page, witness every page, sign the exhibit marking on every exhibit and put those through the process as well. This is something that I dare suggest the Clerk of the Parliament would be turning his eye to as well as he signs every document that comes into this place.

These changes to that part of the practice and process of the law are ultimately going to be to the benefit of clients and courts and the administration of justice. It is a welcome acknowledgement of the benefits technology can bring now that we are in the 21st century. Equally, the legislation does preserve the longstanding practice of using paper documents so that those who do not have access to the digital resources necessary to complete documents electronically are not disadvantaged. I would suggest that in the main, practices in cities and towns that carry out a lot of this business will move quite rapidly to using the e-signature proposals that are being put forward in this legislation. However, it inevitably takes a little longer to get further out into the regions and, of course, it is more difficult in more remote places.

Concerns about the use of e-signatures were raised in submissions by both the Queensland Law Society and the Crime and Corruption Commission. Those concerns were not about the actual application of e-signatures but the consistency of the form that those e-signatures have to take. In particular, the Law Society raised concerns that proposed subsection 1B provides for a rule or regulation to be made about how a document may be signed electronically and then, in effect, provides a fallback that the method outlined in the Oaths Act itself is to be used. The concern of the Law Society was that this may potentially lead to inconsistencies. Different jurisdictions make different rules in relation to the signing of documents. Those rules may well comply with the basic provisions of how an oath is to be sworn under the Oaths Act but are different in different jurisdictions, leading to inconsistency. So a document that is signed and valid in one jurisdiction may not be accepted as signed and valid in another jurisdiction, for example, the Supreme Court and QCAT or the Industrial Relations Commission.

In that sense, according to the Law Society's submission, it would make sense for the Oaths Act itself to prescribe the way that a document should be signed, as it does now. In effect, the way it prescribes for an ink or wet ink signature, as it is described, to be applied should be the format that is used rather than allowing for rules and regulations. I do note the Attorney's explanation. However, I would suggest this is something that will need to be closely monitored to ensure discrepancies do not arise, notwithstanding the requirement that to the extent possible the parties who are setting the rules and regulations must act in a way to make sure they are consistent.

This is obviously a matter of concern. It has been raised by those two parties. It is something that is important in the signing of documents in the conduct of litigation. I should also point out that from what I have been able to see that is the practice used in the electronic transactions legislation, which has been in force since 2001 and has worked without confusion successfully for many years.

The bill also updates and modernises many aspects of the law relating to the signing of deeds. People often ask, 'What is the difference between an agreement and a deed?', because they are often used interchangeably in commerce and the terms are often misunderstood. It is a fair question and it is important to understand the difference because the law treats deeds and agreements quite differently and different legal rights arise from each of those documents. As an example, an action for a breach of an agreement or what we would probably call a contract under the statute of limitations must start within six years. However, as the member for Kawana would happily inform us and confirm, for an action under a deed the limitation period is 12 years. There are actually some quite significant differences in that respect.

Most importantly, an agreement or contract requires consideration to pass between the parties whereas a deed does not. A deed is in fact a special type of promise by one party to do something and it is a public commitment of a promise that is held out to all the world as a commitment that the person signing the deed will honour, so it does not require any consideration to flow. What are some examples of that? One is a guarantee of a loan or a debt by someone other than the borrower—for example, a parent guaranteeing a child's loan. There is no consideration flowing between the parent and the lender, but the parent guarantees that loan and they do so by signing a deed. A deed of confidentiality about information is another example, as is a deed of termination ending an employment bargain or a deed settling a legal dispute.

Traditionally under the common law a deed had to be on paper, parchment or vellum. As one of the submissions said, parchment and vellum now are really only used by scrapbookers. No-one else publishes in that form. I am not sure whether the Parliament of Queensland still uses parchment for certain things. I see a nod from the Deputy Clerk that we still do.

Mr Bleijie: I use it in my office.

Mr NICHOLLS: The member for Kawana, as he sits at his wooden desk with an inkwell, a feather pen, a hot candle and the ring on his finger, continues to perform in that way; however, we are talking about those who operate in the 21st century.

Mr Hinchliffe: Not to the mention the pantaloons!

Mr NICHOLLS: I think that is going a little far! Traditionally, a deed did have to be on paper, parchment or vellum and a personal seal was placed on the document—obviously that was at a time when seals were used, rather than signatures, because people were illiterate—and the document had to be delivered to the party to whom it was meant to be given. It led to the well-known phrase that I am sure many people hear these days of 'signed, sealed and delivered'.

Part 6 of the Property Law Act 1974 updated these procedures. That act was a visionary piece of legislation that changed hundreds of years of antiquated procedures and brought things up to date at that time, but it is probably well out of date by now. Now a deed has to be signed by the individual making the promise. It need no longer be expressed as a deed or indenture or be sealed. Finally, it must be witnessed by someone who is not a party to the document. That is still the case.

Just by way of a brief stroll down memory lane, when I first started working as an articled clerk I had to sign my articles of clerkship, in effect, to be apprenticed as a trainee solicitor. However, as I was only 17 at the time, my dad had to also execute those articles and he had to execute them as a deed to ensure that I faithfully and honestly carried out my duties and that in the event of any loss, damage or other significant failing on my part he would indemnify my master for any of that loss or damage.

Mr Hinchliffe: With trepidation.

Mr NICHOLLS: You got there ahead of me! To his great credit, he did so with barely any hesitation or question, despite potentially being on the hook for any malfeasance I may have engaged in. I can say that, five years later, those articles were discharged satisfactorily without a cent being paid. That is a long way of saying that deeds are very common documents.

Despite being the common currency of very many commercial and legal transactions, deeds are subject to some pretty ancient and arcane rules and it is well past time that the rules about executing those documents were updated. This bill does that effectively, by replacing current sections 44 to 46 in part 8 of the Property Law Act. New section 44 defines an accepted method for electronically signing a document. It sets out a number of subsections as to what that must constitute.

New section 46C sets out the new rules for deeds generally, including the requirements for execution: that the deed be in writing—it must be in writing but it does not need to be on paper, so it can be electronically stored or recorded; that it is clearly stated to be a deed—so you say at the top of the document ‘This is a deed’ or ‘This deed is made on’, so that you give a clear indication that it is done that way; and that it is delivered in accordance with section 47 of the Property Law Act, which sets out some specific rules around delivery of that document. That is what makes it a binding deed. It also makes it clear that a deed takes effect even if it is not on paper or parchment and if it is not sealed or stated to be sealed. We are finally getting away from those arcane practices.

Some concerns were raised by various submitters to the committee, and the departmental responses are contained in the committee report presented to the House. These submissions and the committee report indicate that there may be a bit of a lost opportunity to simplify the process for signing deeds in the area of regular and substantial commercial activity, in particular deeds executed by attorneys for corporations, corporations sole and deeds to be signed by an individual on behalf of a partnership. I note the comments made by the Attorney-General in respect to the partnership but also the submissions in that respect by the Law Society and by Allens Linklaters and King & Wood Mallesons that highlight the very real benefits of what would be relatively minor changes to the bill. We would certainly support further consideration of those changes being made.

Having had a look at it, though, and having heard the Attorney’s explanation, I think there is much more to the explanation than we have heard today, particularly in relation to the law of agency and the ostensible agency of one partner or signatory to represent themselves as signing on behalf of all partners in a partnership and whether this is a matter that the government ought to be regulating or whether this is a matter for parties themselves to ensure they are checking the appropriate authority and the status of the authority for a signatory to execute. I would argue strongly that these are matters that are in the purview of the parties to the agreement and are not matters where the state acts as a guarantor in relation to the authority of the person signing the deed. That is a matter of ‘buyer beware’. That is a normal standard commercial practice in terms of the execution of any documents and I would expect some slight changes would be necessary to do that. Again, that would facilitate business and commerce occurring far more regularly.

I was going to say that it is also difficult to understand why the state government continues to be excluded from the ability to execute deeds electronically, but the Attorney has indicated that she will be moving amendments to ensure that departments of state can execute deeds electronically where it is properly authorised and those proper authorisations are in process with the appropriate delegations. In this regard I also note that the Law Society helpfully provided the example of New Zealand, where the state can execute deeds electronically. I am glad to see that we can implement a provision if the New Zealand national government can do it! We are supportive of that change.

While there may be further fine-tuning required, particularly in respect of some of those finer points regarding the execution of deeds by partnerships and by corporations sole, I am actually quite supportive of the provision around personal powers of attorney. We hear about instances of elder abuse more and more, and there is some value to be had in maintaining the requirements for people to sign personally in the presence of a witness.

I turn now to the reforms to the Liquor Act and in particular—

Mr McDonald: This is the most exciting part.

Mr NICHOLLS: Well, that says more about you than I think it does about anyone else in this place, member for Lockyer. The problem for the member for Lockyer is that 1.5 litres is not enough and 2.25 litres may never be enough!

The particular change is to sell up to 1½ litres of wine with takeaway meals. That is equivalent to two standard 750-millilitre bottles of wine. We note that at the height of the pandemic temporary measures were put in place to allow licensed restaurants and cafes as of right the ability to sell up to

2.25 litres of liquor, excluding straight spirits, with takeaway meals up to 10 pm. This proposal reduces both the quantity and the type of liquor that can be sold with takeaway meals and imposes some requirements about responsible service and delivery of alcohol.

This is one of those types of changes that we may not have seen had we not had to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic. Introduced to provide a lifeline and support for thousands of restaurants and cafes during severe and often sudden lockdowns and border closures, this measure has become in many ways an accepted part of ordering a takeaway meal. Many in the community will welcome this proposal and see it as just another commonsense step that aligns with things like Deliveroo, Uber Eats and Menulog; alcohol delivery operations like Jimmy Brings; and the online delivery offerings of the major chains like Dan Murphy's and BWS and a growing list of independents including a new one I discovered with the apt name BoozeBud operating here in Brisbane.

This is the reality of life these days and what was once an emergency measure has now become an accepted part of society. In this respect, Wes Lambert of Restaurant & Catering Australia hit the nail on the head when he said—

The desires of consumers and the desires of businesses change over time, and COVID has accelerated both consumer behaviour and technology by a decade.

He went on to say—

Ultimately, we can never go back to the way things used to be.

I think that in fact is spot on the money. This is a reaction to one of the immutable laws of nature, almost like $E=mc^2$, and that is the law of unintended consequences. Lawmakers and policy makers are all too familiar with this law and nothing we or any other parliament can do is going to change that law. That is not to discount the concerns of organisations like the QHA and its members who have invested substantially in licences and in responsible service of alcohol training for their staff and nor does it detract from issues surrounding the appropriate overview of the online ordering of alcohol and its associated delivery business, and I note a wider examination into that part of the alcohol and liquor industry is proposed for 2022.

There are many and valid competing interests in this area, as any quick read of the committee report and the submissions reveals, but in accepting this change proposed by the government we do need to be very mindful of the many small hotel operators who may be affected by this change, especially in rural and regional areas. These licensees pay substantial fees and have a complex regulatory environment and understandably will be concerned that their investment may be diminished as a result of these changes. Of some comfort is the evidence to the committee that 73 per cent of respondents to a departmental survey in regional areas indicated they bought some or all of their liquor from hotels or bottle shops, so they are effectively buying from their local pub or their local pub's bottle shop to sell in their restaurants.

It is also important to note the evidence to the committee that turnover for liquor sales between March 2020 and February 2021—and I cannot ascribe all of this to the member for Lockyer—was \$16.06 billion, an increase of almost 30 per cent from \$12.43 billion the previous year. That would indicate that there is some room for limited sales from restaurants without significant detriment to the bottle shop industry. I acknowledge the committee's recommendation to expand the types of liquor to be offered for sale and I have noted the Attorney's comments in relation to those suggestions for change, but given it is a reasonably substantial change and unexpected I think where it has landed on to date is satisfactory. What the future may hold, only time will tell.

Other changes in the bill include important changes to enshrine some procedures in the domestic and family violence act that were also part of the emergency COVID response legislation. The bill increases accessibility to the court for applicants in urgent situations and where it is not possible to locate a qualified witness to verify an application to a magistrate for a domestic violence offence. In this bill procedures are provided to allow the applicant to verify the application directly before the magistrate, so in effect instead of having to swear a complaint in front of a justice of the peace or another person authorised to take a complaint and then file that paper complaint in the court the matter can proceed directly to the magistrate and the magistrate can hear the applicant make their verification of the events leading to the application straightaway. This takes out that step in urgent matters of having to find someone to witness a document and filing another piece of paper, and in urgent circumstances we think that is worthwhile and we will be supporting it.

There are also provisions in relation to a magistrate's discretion to conduct hearings by audiovisual means or audio link and we support the magistrate having the discretion in that regard, not mandating it as to a particular course of action. I note that these changes are supported by both the

Law Society and the Women's Legal Service. There is some concern in relation to the ability to test the veracity of the evidence being provided by witnesses by having people appear in person in court, but, again, this is something that is best left to the discretion of the magistrate.

Finally, the proposals in relation to leases preserve the operation of the regulation under section 23 of the emergency response act 2020. It provides for mediation of retail shop lease disputes which are disputes about rent relief. The rent relief provisions were introduced last year for the period from March 2020 to 31 December 2020 and relate to unresolved disputes, and also disputes about a small business lease or the use or occupation of leased premises.

We will look at the amendments, which have only just been announced—and I am yet to see them being circulated. As I say, it is somewhat concerning that with very late notice we are seeing some substantial amendments being proposed. One is obviously to rectify the failings in the QBCC which we have been hearing about in question time and other matters. We now read—I think it was last week or 10 days ago—that there is a deficiency in the legislation in respect of notices to rectify, so we will have a look at that and deal with that during the consideration in detail stage. Of course, there is the second bite at the cherry in relation to the Governor's pension and not being able to—


Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mr NICHOLLS: Yes, member for Kawana, we have been through that already, so we appreciate it. I am sure you will have a welcome opportunity to contribute during the consideration in detail stage, so we will deal with those at that stage.

There is no doubt that COVID-19 changed many facets of our life almost two years ago. Actions once considered unthinkable have not only happened but will continue to emerge as we as a community move on from the pandemic. Moving parts of the legal system, as this bill mainly does, from old and accepted practices into the 21st century might have been thought a herculean task 24 months ago, but here we are. I acknowledge how businesses and the community have accepted and indeed encouraged these changes.

These reforms are, in the main, welcomed, especially around the signing and execution of documents. The issues around the sale of limited amounts of liquor are obviously more contentious. The domestic violence changes are welcomed and appropriate. We now look forward to the Attorney bringing forward the balance of reforms that have been pending for far too long on her predecessor's watch, including the body corporate and community management reforms and the balance of the Property Law Act reforms from reviews that were commenced some six and seven years ago. In conclusion, I feel sure that the Attorney relishes the challenges of reform in these areas of importance to so many Queenslanders.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mrs Gerber): Before I call the next speaker, I remind members in the chamber and those listening of those currently on warnings under the standing orders: the members for Southern Downs, McConnel, Nanango, Buderim, Broadwater, Kawana, Mudgeeraba and Gregory.

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (12.06 pm): I rise to speak in favour of the Justice Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Permanency) Amendment Bill as presented and the amendments as outlined by the Attorney-General. I want to start by thanking the minister for her consideration of our report and the work that she has done in presenting this bill to the parliament. These are some very necessary reforms, as we have heard. I also want to thank my committee. We came up with a report to which there were no statements of reservation. We worked hard to get to recommendations that we all agreed with, and I want to thank members of the committee for that. I also want to thank our secretariat, and as we know secretariats work very hard in getting all of this together. In response to what the member for Clayfield said, it may seem a bit pedestrian and boring, but we somehow enjoyed this bill and exercised a fair bit of thinking and discussion about what we were going to recommend. We did not find it boring. I do not know what that says about our committee, but we will not go there.

This bill creates a permanency to some of the COVID provisions that have worked well in the last year or so, and I will start with the legal document reforms. Quite simply, as we have heard, we have been working for years with what the legal profession has called 'archaic laws', and that was a term that was used by one of the witnesses in the inquiry for this bill.

As we have heard, affidavits and statutory declarations traditionally have needed to be signed on paper in the presence of signatories and witnesses. They have had to be a single-paper document signed contemporaneously—at the same time—and oaths had to be administered in person then and there, but the changes we have made to cope with the pandemic showed that there have been considerable savings made by modifying what have been called 'archaic laws'. Affidavits and stat decs,

for example, could be made electronically and signed electronically if witnessed over audiovisual link by prescribed people and oaths could be administered through audiovisual link by authorised people, and the people authorising these have to verify identities.

One of the principles of this bill is that changes made during the COVID-19 pandemic have emphasised that we need to treat paper transactions and electronic transactions in the same way. The public expects it. It was best summed up by Elizabeth Shearer, the president of the Queensland Law Society, when she said to us, 'I think the consistent theme is that an electronic signature should be equivalent to a wet-ink signature.' That goes to the crux of what we are doing with this bill. As I pointed out, the Electronic Transactions (Queensland) Act has been in legislation for 20 years. Electronic transactions are now a part of everyday life so there is a precedent for the reforms that are being proposed.

Another important principle of this bill is that these reforms increase access to justice. Ordinary working people will find these documents more accessible and they are more capable of executing these documents in their day-to-day life. For those who cannot travel to make these documents due to their health or because they live in rural and remote areas and they cannot get to court, these changes make access to justice easier.

This bill also includes important changes to the constructions of deeds. I thank the member for Clayfield for his erudite, law-lecture explanation of the history of deeds. Under the current law deeds must be executed on paper, parchment or vellum. Vellum is animal skin, mainly calf skin. Medieval documents were written on vellum. Vellum is good because it can be well preserved. Under these old laws deeds must be, as we have heard, signed, sealed and delivered. Sealed in medieval times meant applying wax and stamping it with a seal. As members can see, these laws regarding deeds are quite archaic. One could go into a court or a legal office with a deed written on calf skin and that would be fine if it has a stamp on it. It was alive a number of months ago. Changes being proposed to deed construction in this bill will mean that deeds can be in electronic form, signed electronically with both parties consent, and signed in counterpart—not all in one document—and deeds will no longer need to be sealed by being stamped with an ink stamp or a wax seal.

Mr Kelly: Or on vellum.

Mr WHITING: We can use vellum, but perhaps not at this stage. We have made similar changes to the execution of mortgages over the years. People are used to it. People expect it. There is no reason why we cannot do this with deeds. These reforms will be a great improvement. Improvements in relation to the state dealing with deeds electronically are also welcome. We heard in our hearings of a case where a statutory declaration needed to be signed by a company director but that person was in lockdown overseas due to the pandemic. This company had to locate, appoint and then immediately remove another director in New South Wales to sign that physical document. That was not easy either because New South Wales was in lockdown. These changes will mean considerable time and cost savings for everyone.


As I said, we need to apply this modernisation approach to deeds signed by the state. I certainly welcome what the Attorney-General has talked about in relation to modernising the approach by the state. I will give an example of what has happened to me just this week regarding deeds. I am currently the president of the Moreton Bay Cycling Club. I am helping to arrange a cycling event, the Moreton Bay 100. To get Transport and Main Roads permission to use a road for the event I need to sign a deed of indemnity as the club president, but it has to be stamped. I went out to Officeworks and ordered a stamp—'This is the common stamp of the Moreton Bay Cycling Club'—at a cost of \$82 and stamped the document. I will probably only use that stamp once. Yesterday I scanned the document and sent it electronically. I now have to ask the question: do I have to take that document I have stamped down to TMR and present it to them? There is a lot of rigmarole around deeds and some of that is still held by the state so it is a really good initiative by our Attorney-General to move towards getting rid of those processes when dealing with deeds for the state.

Legal reforms included in this bill will suit modern life and business in Queensland. The domestic violence reforms contained in this bill are welcomed and significant. Magistrates having the discretion to verify an application or a variation by audio visual or audio link is very much welcomed in limited urgent situations. Parties will now be able to file these documents electronically with the approval of a court. This will make a huge difference in some cases of family and domestic violence.

Touching on the issues of liquor reform, I welcome statements from the Attorney-General that we will continually work to improve licensing and regulatory regimes for our craft brewers and our catering industry. The committee has spent a lot of time with craft brewers. That is not a bad thing. We

have managed to suffer that. As a government we have developed a great craft brewing strategy which we are implementing. It is clear that we can improve the environment for this small business sector. That is very much welcomed. Independent brewers employ half the people employed in brewing within Queensland. These micro brewers are mostly working class people who are putting their savings into creating a business that they are passionate about. They are also a great boon to tourism and events throughout our regions. I look forward to continuing the journey with them and working with the state to keep improving the environment for them.

Finally, I want to draw to the attention of the parliament a worrying trend—that is, the alarming growth in the use of the word ‘bespoke’. We have heard about bespoke legislation, bespoke wine, bespoke products and bespoke producers. I blame the member for Lockyer. I call for an end to this scourge.

 **Mr McDONALD** (Lockyer—LNP) (12.17 pm): It is a pleasure to be able to stand and speak on this bespoke bill and the way in which our committee has dealt with it to make sure that if you are going to one of your favourite restaurants to take away your favourite meal and perhaps a favourite bespoke wine matched to that meal, you have the ability to do so. I thank the State Development and Regional Industries Committee and our secretariat. I appreciate the work that was done on the 26 submissions received on this bill. The bill proposes to make permanent measures that support the making, signing and witnessing of certain legal documents through electronic means. The bill includes changes to domestic violence legislation and also, as we have heard, some important liquor reforms, as well as some other administrative matters regarding deeds and leases, which were well supported by submitters.

In summary, it was the view of the committee that the reforms will deliver real and practical benefits and increase access to justice, certainty and cost savings. The committee heard from a number of legal stakeholders who put forward suggestions as to how the legislation could be further enhanced. I note the words of the shadow Attorney-General when he said that, while we support the bill, the government should be held to account and must make sure that, when looking at temporary emergency powers, the committee and the government make really good—not ad hoc—decisions. We should use the bill process to make sensible changes, as we have done here.

The bill proposes changes to the making, signing and witnessing of certain documents by allowing for electronic signing and witnessing via video link for documents such as affidavits, statutory declarations, general powers of attorney for businesses, deeds and particular mortgages. The purpose of the reform is to modernise the way legal documents are created and improve accessibility. The bill also allows a nurse practitioner, in addition to doctors, to sign a certificate which forms part of an advance health directive, stating that the person making the document appears to have the capacity to sign that document and make that declaration.

This pandemic has increased the use of already-available technologies, whether it be video conferencing and the many platforms that support it or secure signing methodologies. As a justice of the peace, qualified, and former officer in charge of police, I have come to understand that there are many circumstances where coercion can occur before or at the time of signing and also many different circumstances where documents need to be signed. This pandemic has further emphasised those issues. Fundamentally, when witnessing the signing of a document you have to make sure that the person who wants to sign that document does so with informed consent and without any form of duress. That does not change with regards to electronic processes. In fact, as submitters said, it is vitally important that we take the time to ask the right questions, or extra questions if needed, to ensure that there is informed consent for signing the document and that no coercion or duress has taken place.

During the committee inquiry process I expressed my appreciation to the many legal practitioners who appeared before the committee to speak about a recommendation that there be a technology-neutral approach to witnessing. A technology-neutral approach does not prescribe a certain type of technology or methodology. The person witnessing the signature must ensure that the person using technology knows what they are doing, is acting with informed consent and is signing the document without duress. Importantly, the bill provides that the signature must be obtained by an acceptable method that identifies the signatory and as is reliable as appropriate for the purposes of the document. I think a good summary is that wet ink equals electronic ink however that is achieved by the responsible people involved. One witness, Mr Shute, described witnessing dozens of documents since the pandemic began and said that no two cases were really identical. He said that you may not see what happened before a person arrives to have a document witnessed, but asking the right questions and making sure that they have informed consent and that no duress has taken place is the focus.


The bill proposes to streamline domestic and family violence proceedings by permanently retaining measures adopted under the Domestic and Family Violence Protection (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Regulation 2020. In any case where documents are to be signed in temporary protection orders, electronic signing enables the aggrieved and the respondent to be kept apart and that has to be a good thing. During the pandemic arrangements were put in place to reduce physical contact and I commend the continuation of those changes. The bill makes permanent that option and other arrangements regarding court processes in relation to the use of video and audio links. We are really just catching up with the technology that was available.

I move to the liquor reforms, which I think are the most contentious part of the bill. I believe that the committee has moved to a sensible position having listened to both sides. The amendments aim to extend the legislation to enable restaurateurs who already have a liquor licence to sell two bottles of takeaway wine with a meal until 10 pm. Strong representations were made by both sides, particularly the boutique brewing industry. Recommendations were made to the government regarding the inclusion of beer, cider and other premixed drinks. During the committee process I mentioned that the QHA had stressed the importance of protecting the rights of existing licensees of hotels and I am pleased that the government did not take up the recommendation to include beer, cider and premixed drinks in the legislation. We need to ensure that a bespoke wine acquired by a restaurant or bought through a local takeaway is what has been sold.

Mr Bernie Hogan made representations on behalf of all hotels. He provided a couple of case studies from regional and rural hotels. He drew us to the example of the small country town of Mirani, where he grew up. That town has one pub, a Chinese restaurant, a cafe and a golf club. Under the proposed changes, not only the hotel but also the other three venues would be able to sell takeaway liquor. He expressed concern for hotels such as the ones in Mirani and Barcaldine as well as other rural and regional hotels and asked that we ensure that the interests of such hotels, pubs and clubs are protected. I recognise my colleagues who represent rural and regional electorates. We have to ensure that our hotels, which could be described as the social fabric of Australia, are protected and are able to operate for many years to come. The grey nomads are certainly enjoying our local pubs as they travel around the country.

Another form of control spoken about in the submissions is the cost of obtaining a licence. The application for a hotel to have a single detached bottle shop is \$9,500. That is one control. More important than the application and advertising processes is probity and ensuring that a fit and proper person supplies those products. This is not just about having some alcohol to sell with food. The committee considered some really important issues around that. I think we have fallen in the right place through the recommendations in this bill.

The Liquor, Gaming and Fair Trading division of the department surveyed 4,000 licensed restaurant and cafe operators and found that 51 per cent obtained their liquor from nearby hotels and bottle shops; in regional areas, 73 per cent obtained their liquor from nearby hotels and bottle shops. Whilst there are concerns that hotels, pubs and clubs might be disadvantaged, as the shadow Attorney-General mentioned, millions of dollars are spent on alcohol and I believe the committee recommendations have got it about right. As I have said, this bill will allow people to go to their favourite restaurant, pick up their favourite meal and maybe two bottles of their favourite wine to take home. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr SMITH** (Bundaberg—ALP) (12.27 pm): At some point we may need to move that the word 'bespoke' become unparliamentary, but we will see how we go. I rise to contribute to the debate on the Justice Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Permanency) Amendment Bill 2021. Innovation often comes in times of great global challenges. We have seen that reflected in times of war, in the grips of terror, in the times of plague and, of course, during pandemics. Yet again society is at a time of innovation and again government is ready to respond.

Whilst the amendments within this bill are mostly technical and for the most part non-controversial, they are indeed important and complementary to the innovations occurring across and within the Justice portfolio. The need to amend the existing act, as outlined in this bill, largely came about through the need to keep people safe during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. Social distancing, restricted travel, regional lockdowns and health mandated isolation to await test results have seen society embrace technologies that can bring those absent from one another into the boardroom, before the magistrate and into the legal office.

In April 2020, the Legislative Assembly passed the COVID-19 Emergency Response Act 2020. To date, a host of regulations have followed under or pursuant to the COVID-19 Emergency Response Act. The bill that is being debated aims to make permanent selected temporary measures amended in

legislation within the Justice portfolio as a result of the COVID-19 emergency, those being the Justice Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Documents and Oaths) Regulation 2020 and the Domestic and Family Violence Protection (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Regulation 2020.

Further amendments will bring about a permanent licence authorisation for the sale of 1.5 litres of wine with a takeaway meal as outlined under legislation from 10 am to 10 pm. As well, the bill seeks to extend the expiry of the Retail Shop Leases and Other Commercial Leases (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Regulation 2020.

As mentioned, the health response necessary to confront the ease with which COVID-19 and its variants spread has seen the domestic violence regulation provide temporary measures to allow electronic signing or witnessing over audiovisual link when pertaining to certain documents. This bill in enacting permanency of a number of the temporary amendments will modernise for individuals, businesses and government the methods in which legal documents are created and can be accessed.

Debate, on motion of Mr Smith, adjourned.

FOOD (LABELLING OF SEAFOOD) AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction

Resumed from 27 October (see p. 3306).



Mr KATTER (Traeger—KAP) (12.30 pm), continuing: I continue my contribution on this private members' bill, the Food (Labelling of Seafood) Amendment Bill. In the last parliamentary sitting week when my speech was interrupted due to time constraints, I spoke about how this legislation had already rolled out in a number of areas in other forms and had been discussed. Whilst there had been many initiatives nationally and in some states, this had still not followed through to legislation, which is what we propose in Queensland. This legislation in terms of intent is not at all without precedent. Similar laws operate right across the country. We can buy seafood from a supermarket or a fish market. There are federal legal requirements for the country of origin to be stated. In fact, that extends to every single product sold, packaged or unpackaged, but not in the dining space. The law is silent in that area. That is what we are seeking to challenge with this amendment bill.

Since 2008, the Northern Territory has required a very similar scheme to what the KAP proposes in Queensland. In the Northern Territory there is a requirement for all venues to identify imported seafood at the point of sale to the consumer. This scheme has been operating successfully for the past 13 years. I was in the Northern Territory two weeks ago sampling their fish and there were certainly no complaints about it up there.

In 2017 and 2018, the New South Wales government debated a very similar piece of legislation moved by Labor MP David Mehan. Disappointingly, his bill was voted down. In 2017 New South Wales voted on the Food Amendment (Seafood Country of Origin Labelling) Bill 46 to 35, with National-Liberal MPs opposing the bill.

Our Australian seafood producers, whether they work in wild-caught, farm produced or the aquaculture space, operate to very high environmental and sustainability standards as many in this House would well know. That is certainly not replicated around other parts of the world. I suggest that Australia would be among the best in the world in terms of those standards. We regularly hear scary stories about where overseas our food is coming from. Certainly, people are more tuned in to the way in which their food is produced and the impact that it has. This very much fits in with many of the principles and ideologies that have been put forward in other forms by the government in this parliament.

We cannot say that these same standards exist all around the world. At the same time, the purpose of the bill is not to vilify those imported seafoods nor the dining outlets that participate in their sale. We acknowledge that there is a place for a variety of seafoods and a variety of different price points in selling that fish, but it is important that people identify properly what they are getting and are not misled. The real nuts and bolts of how this works is that any imported seafood can be identified in terms of regional, state or national origin if desired. They can be specific if they want at the dining outlet, but what is satisfactory is simply putting 'I' labelling on the menu or at that point of sale so it is indicated to the consumer that it is imported. We just need the 'I' represented in much the same way as we have gluten free with 'GF' required on the menu. It is not that big an imposition.

If a pub, restaurant or cafe has been buying overseas fish but may not know if their supplier buys the fish from Egypt, Asia or Africa, that is okay because all they have to put is 'I'. They do not have to identify exactly what country it has come from. It should not be much of an imposition on those people. Providing that identification stops that misinformation which really has an impact on price.

The price is an interesting point to reflect on. A submission made to the seafood origin working group paper submitted to the Standing Committee on Agricultural and Water Resources said that a majority of Australian consumers are prepared to pay more for locally caught or produced seafood; however, they cannot consciously do this without being provided by default the necessary country of origin information.

We are denying the ability of these producers in all likelihood to get the proper price of their goods in comparison to that competition. For example, the ABFA suggest that the willingness to pay more is true for more than two-thirds of consumers who indicated that they would be prepared to pay a premium of up to 30 per cent for Australian seafood. That is a real opportunity for market-driven growth if we adopt this amendment to the laws.

To be effective, Australia's seafood industry body argues that country of origin labelling must be mandatory. I think that is a key point that comes up in the context of this legislation, because often it comes back to, 'Oh, we do not really want to force people to do stuff. Let us just invite them in to do it and just passively do that.' It is strongly identified that that is a big threat which pulls the rug from under any initiative. It can create perverse outcomes where labelling is foreign, many consumers believing the absence of labelling indicates that the seafood is Australian which undermines all the other efforts everyone else is putting into the labelling.

Moreover, there are industry-wide concerns that the participants in the supply chain have taken advantage of the freedom afforded to them by the voluntary country of origin scheme in the food service sector to price imported seafoods as if they were Australian. This bill is not only about stimulating, protecting and growing our own industries; it is about stopping these people from manipulating the system where they make more money by misleading the consumer, giving them imported seafood and passing it off as Australian. That is a really important part of this bill to consider as well.

The real intent of this bill is market-driven growth. We are certainly a net importer of seafood in Australia, but as I understand we never used to be. That should not be so. We have enormous capacity through aquaculture, our fisheries and our commercial catch to be able to feed ourselves. That is a really important point. It is probably why this bill has captured the attention of the KAP and why we felt it necessary to make sure this one made it into the parliament. It stops that exploitation of price. Surely we all have an interest when people go to market and gouge or mislead consumers by making more profit themselves by putting what I would call an inferior product into the market where it is passed off as something different.

As I said in the last sitting week in the initial part of this speech, most people associate the word 'barramundi' for instance with an Australian-caught fish. It could be an overseas barramundi but, as soon as it is called 'barramundi' when it is sold in the shop, restaurant or cafe, people immediately assume it must be Australian because it is barramundi and you are paying the full price for it. The majority of consumers would be prepared to pay 30 per cent more if they knew it was Australian. We are denying those people that opportunity when this sort of legislation is not in place.

Mr Dametto: There's a difference when you bite into it.

Mr KATTER: I take that interjection. You do taste a difference when you bite into it, particularly if you live in areas where you can access this fish readily and are accustomed to eating it.

Another important point to go back over is the showcasing of our ethical and environmental standards. There is a lot of pain suffered by the industry. We have often been a voice for the industry in arguing against the government imposing a lot of these standards. They are imposing these standards but then not allowing the industry to take full advantage of the imposition of those standards. The industry gets it from both ways in Australia. Without arguing the rights or wrongs of some of these standards, would the government not want to at least ensure that after all the effort they have gone to to impose these standards on the fishing industry they get the full benefit of them and give those benefits back to the industry? On that issue alone, I cannot see how the government could disagree with what is being proposed.

It is important to recognise—and I sure this will come up during the consideration of the bill by the committee—existing labels. The Queensland Seafood Industry Association with its 'Queensland catch' label does a fantastic job of promoting the industry. The 'Wild caught' label for barramundi is a

good label that is identifiable. As I said earlier, it is not going to do the job if there is not 100 per cent buy-in and people are not forced to do it. There will still be an undermining of the industry. Where there is no labelling people will still assume it is Australian. That is short-changing the industry.

This is a warning to the House that we are not going to accept any watering down of this provision—that is, a passive introduction of this provision; an opt-in system or there being loopholes for people to get out of this. It needs to be implemented across the board to be effective.

Locally, I acknowledge Farmer Meets Foodie's Lindsey Hughes, a good fellow I went to school with. He is promoting locally caught produce out from Mount Molloy. He is one of many people who gets that 30 per cent premium from consumers. It demonstrates that it can be done. All we are advocating for is going that step further and making sure everyone can enjoy the benefits of making the effort to do this in Australia. It is a case of capitalising on the natural advantages that we have in this country.

The last major point I would make about why this is an important bill for the KAP is that it brings forward the principle of national interest. Perhaps it is considered we are doing it in a minor way here. The seafood industry is a big industry. We need to promote seafood labelling to stimulate our industry. I think it is a pretty fair criticism to make of governments at all levels that we have become globalists that are obsessed with free markets and economic rationalism. Today we are debating the proposed freeing up of regulations around cafes and pubs. There is this obsession with the global market. We often lose sight of the national interest and nationalist economics. Those living in the regions see firsthand the damage that causes and the prosperity that is forgone and handed over to overseas producers who take advantage of our effort and our primary resources.

This legislation that we are introducing into the parliament is a test case to see whether there is an appetite on the part of the government or the opposition to embrace nationalist ideals. We want to say to our industries, 'We are going to look after you.' We want to do things that will stimulate growth for our industries instead of being obsessed with allowing in cheap imports and making sure we do not have trade barriers so that everybody can bring things into our country. At some point we need to say, 'We have to do things for our own industries.' As I have said, we are now a net importer of seafood. That is a real shame. It is a blight on the management of our resources that we are not stimulating this industry enough.

We have brought a number of these sorts of initiatives into the House. The member for Hill has twice brought fair milk mark logo legislation into the House. It attracted some support in some ways, but it was rejected. That legislation advocated for an opt-in label for retailers to use that meant the processor was bypassed and the price went back to the farmer to try to stimulate the dairy industry. That is another example of a nationalist attitude to our economy and a recognition that we want food security and we consider it important that we maintain and assist these industries. That was the most passive, discreet way of market intervention. Even then, I remember in the debate in the House members commenting, 'You can't have market intervention like that. We do not agree with that.'

It brings to the surface the tension between economic nationalism and economic rationalism that we rarely debate in this House. There is hardly anyone opposed to it. It certainly does not come out at a policy level from either level of government. It is something that we in the KAP are strongly against, but not in the sense that having a free market or deregulation is bad. It is just that in some cases we need to pull up and say, 'Hang on! This industry is important. There are some real impacts if you compromise it by trying to make it compete with other countries that do not have the same ethical standards or environmental standards. You are making them compete.'

It becomes all about the consumer getting access to cheap product. There is a price to be paid for that. We see the cost of that daily. We have seen industry after industry collapse. We are slowly watching the dairy industry disintegrate into nothing. We keep introducing these bills and they keep getting blocked. People say, 'You can't interfere in the market.' Who is going to stick up for industry and the national interest?

There is an important principle being played out in Brisbane with the abattoir in the city. Everyone says, 'Let's just turn it into urban development. What a great opportunity.' What about having a family owned abattoir that employs local workers in Brisbane? That is in the national interest. Someone needs to stick up for the national interest. Forget about the owner, but do not forget the fact that an Australian owns it and they employ Australian workers in that abattoir which value adds to the beef that we produce. That is a really important principle to protect. Let us not just leave it up to the market and say, 'Oh well, it is not that important. Housing will go up there and the abattoir will be built somewhere else.'

No it will not. A lot of the time these things collapse and we lose them. I cannot help but feel that no-one sees any value in it. In this House this government and others pay lip-service to it and say, 'We stand with the dairy farmers.'

It is not support where it counts—that is, when it comes to voting for legislative intervention in the market to make sure we preserve a spot for this industry and try to stimulate it because it is important to our state interest and our national interest. They are important points to make. We want to keep introducing bills like this into the parliament and watch closely how people vote on them and relay that to the Queensland public. We feel that there is not enough support for the national interest and it is not tested enough in this parliament.

It is important to send a message to people about seafood labelling. Like political labelling, let us show our true colours and indicate where we stand on these issues. Do we want to stimulate and embrace policies around economic nationalism or do we want to blindly adhere to free market policies where we deregulate the hell out of everything? We can pay a bit of lip-service to our industries, but when it comes to the crunch we let them go because that is how the market works. That is what we have seen with 90 to 100 per cent of policies that have rolled through this place in the last 20 or 30 years. A lot of people agree with that, and that is great. It is good to have a debate on this. We want to show our true colours on this and stand firm on our principles. It is important to test that.

We ask the House to treat this seriously. It is not an earth-shattering bill. It is a fairly discreet intervention into the marketplace. It needs to be mandatory: that is a critical component of this amendment. It needs to be implemented to demonstrate to people in Queensland that there is some consensus here in the state to at least provide some support to our domestic industries and that we would like to see these things develop. They are not going to develop by themselves. You have to stimulate that demand. It can be market driven through this amendment. We strongly advocate that the House consider this bill.

First Reading

Mr KATTER (Traeger—KAP) (12.49 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Referral to State Development and Regional Industries Committee


Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mrs Gerber): In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the State Development and Regional Industries Committee.

JUSTICE LEGISLATION (COVID-19 EMERGENCY RESPONSE—PERMANENCY) AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from p. 3589, on motion of Ms Fentiman—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mr SMITH** (Bundaberg—ALP) (12.50 pm), continuing: Such amendments are amendments that meet the contemporary technology, social rationale and general community sentiment. In other words, they pass the pub test.

The Justice Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Permanency) Amendment Bill 2021 will also provide for the permanency of affidavits, statutory declarations and oaths, excluding oaths of office and oaths of allegiance, to be witnessed by special witnesses or prescribed persons via audiovisual link. The explanations of those deemed special witnesses are outlined in the bill and ensure a level of qualified standard that should indeed oversee such procedures.

Perhaps some of the most important reforms in this bill are those that give greater concern towards victims of domestic and family violence. We are all aware of the scourge of domestic and family violence that is in our communities. Whilst I may be the loudest voice in this House when promoting the

abundance of positive characteristics of my Bundaberg electorate, I too will be the loudest voice to say that domestic and family violence is present in my electorate and that we, as a wider community, need to undertake every effort to eradicate such heinous and despicable actions from our region.

The requirements of social distancing, self-quarantine and self-isolation that were implemented as public health directions last year by the then Queensland chief health officer saw temporary modifications to the process in which an applicant could make their claim for a domestic violence order to a magistrate. This bill amends the Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act and the Domestic and Family Violence Protection Rules to better fall in line with community standards informed with the understanding of accessibility and the trending norm of audiovisual links.

Where there is an urgency to submit an application for a domestic violence order, this bill will increase the accessibility of the court via a verification process between applicant and magistrate. The change in such a scenario as being urgent is that an ordinary process initiated by a private applicant would require a signed and witnessed statutory declaration before a lawyer, Cdec or other person who is authorised under the Oaths Act 1867 subsequently then being filed for application. It is outlined clearly in the explanatory notes that an urgent situation is considered to be when an applicant is not able to access a JP, Cdec or a solicitor before the respondent is served the application.

The bill also provides greater discretion to magistrates wishing to conduct all or part of the proceeding through an audiovisual link or simply an audio link. While this does not prevent the initial violence of a domestic or family violence attack, it does give greater support to the subsequent safety and support of victims.

I also note the changes to the temporary regulations regarding liquor reforms. The committee did hear from a range of stakeholders wanting to discuss the intention of this bill to reform the current temporary regulation allowing for 2.25 litres of liquor to be sold as takeaway from an establishment when accompanied with a takeaway meal. The bill will see a change of up to 1.5 litres of wine available to be sold with a takeaway meal. This change does see the exclusion of beer and spirits from the now temporary regulations.

When considering craft brewers and artisan distillers, I can see that further discussion into the future between government and industry is of importance and I encourage that dialogue to continue. Indeed, whilst not amending the bill at present, the Attorney-General's words in her second reading speech were well considered and understanding of an industry that is growing and diversifying. I note that in my electorate we have Ballistic Bargara, who are craft brewers. They have just released their new range of lagers and ales.

Mr Power: Excellent.

Mr SMITH: Excellent, indeed. I take that interjection from the member for Logan. I am sure that the member for Logan also knows about Kalki Moon, who are our artisan distillers. I am sure he is a big fan of them as well. Craft brewing will contribute about \$62 million each year to our economy by the end of 2024. It is anticipated that it will eventually be over \$100 million in years to come. I note that the minister is here and I know that he is a proud champion of craft brewing throughout regional Queensland.


It is also important to recognise some of the potential unintended consequences that could come about through making the decision to include beer and spirits. Whilst the committee did recommend it, we note the Attorney-General's comments. Also, there are some relevant concerns in regard to the traditional employment of young 17-year-olds as delivery drivers. How does that sit when they have done their RSA but their RSA does not come into place until they turn 18? Are there concerns around those deliveries, particularly with new companies such as Uber Eats, Deliveroo and Jimmy Brings? There are some legislative concerns that I am sure at some point will come to the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee to be discussed around the responsible service of alcohol and the method in which alcohol is delivered.

In closing, I would like to thank the committee for their work and efforts on this. We are a good committee. We make sure we try to include as many stakeholders as possible. We are led by a good chair. In fact, when the bill was first referred to the committee the chair was clean shaven. Now we can see that at this point he has taken Halloween far too far and far too seriously, and I cannot wait to see it shaved off!

Mr Power: It's a bespoke moustache.

Mr SMITH: A bespoke moustache, absolutely, that we cannot wait to see gone. In all seriousness, this is an important piece of legislation. Whilst it may not have all the bells and whistles of something exciting, it is good to see that there is bipartisanship on this across the House. We are making critical

reform for a new era that is bringing innovation to the way we communicate. Our justice portfolio should reflect the current trends of society but also the expectation of those within our community. I support this bill.


 **Ms CAMM** (Whitsunday—LNP) (12.57 pm): I look forward to being able to contribute today to the Justice Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Permanency) Amendment Bill 2021. The focus of my contribution in the House today is in regard to domestic and family violence reforms which have been much welcomed by the sector but also, most importantly, by those victims of domestic and family and sexual violence across our state.

I would like to draw the attention of the House to the changes that will be made and that have been outlined by many members of the House. In particular, accessibility was highlighted by the Queensland Women's Legal Service, as well as many other stakeholders when I have travelled across the state, and the fact that these reforms, which were once put in place just to deal with the pandemic, will benefit victims across our state more broadly and will mitigate some of the barriers for victims, predominantly women and children, when it comes to domestic violence orders.

I would also like to draw the attention of the House to the accessibility component of that. The explanatory notes outline that it is now much easier, in very concerning and dangerous circumstances, for victims of domestic and family violence to be able to access and have legitimised a domestic violence order when they cannot access a solicitor, a justice of the peace or a commissioner for declarations to verify documents in urgent situations when they are seeking temporary protection orders.

I would like to highlight that there are also limitations which still exist and barriers posed to women in particular who come from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and who may require interpreters for legal advice during court appearances. Whether that be by the introduction now of video link or telephone link, there are still barriers and we have demonstrated that there is more work to do. I would also like to highlight that there are significant barriers and an interrelationship that exists between domestic and family violence and those suffering from sexual violence.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.00 pm.

 **Ms CAMM:** Legal consultation on the reforms was undertaken. We acknowledge the submissions of the Queensland Law Society and Women's Legal Services. Both parties outlined their support of the bill. The focus was on changes whereby AV and audio links can be utilised at the discretion of the magistrate so that victims can provide their evidence virtually. The real life translation of this is that victims who have experienced significant trauma and violence do not at some point have to be in the same room as the alleged perpetrator. Through my engagement with counselling services across the sector, in particular speaking with survivors firsthand, this reliving of trauma in front of the perpetrator can be just as terrifying as experiencing the trauma itself. The alternative verification of private applications for domestic violence orders facilitates agility and responsiveness when there is a serious risk posed.

In the interest of victims I ask the minister whether this data will be reported, as the number of times this provision is used and the circumstances in which it is utilised can help better inform further reform and continuous improvement in the process. While legal stakeholders have indicated they believe that in domestic, family and criminal matters the best evidence is obtained in person, this is not always the view of the victim, their court support worker, doctor or counsellor, in particular in the circumstances of a high-risk case.

We know from Queensland Domestic Violence Services Network and DVConnect that throughout the pandemic and as we emerge from lockdowns the rate and severity of domestic and sexual violence has increased across our state. Whilst this pandemic has contributed to an increase in victims, it has also facilitated—through this legislative reform and this bill—innovation and alternatives that provide genuine options for victims. This reform enhances their accessibility to the provision of evidence; however, not for all victims, as I mentioned prior to the break. Women who come from non-English-speaking backgrounds still face significant barriers in the court system and evidential process which we need to overcome.


I travel across the state in my role as shadow minister for the prevention of domestic, family and sexual violence, and on a recent visit to the Cairns Regional Domestic Violence Service I attended an integrated response meeting. I also attended the Gladstone's Women's Health Centre. As reported in the national media today, victims are being advised they have to wait up to 36 hours for a forensic examination in terms of providing evidence of rape. Hospitals and emergency services are short-staffed.

With regard to intimate partner violence, every service I meet with reports that we are seeing an increase in sexual violence between intimate partners. If a woman or man is sexually assaulted or raped, rape victims have to wait 24 hours. In the case of Gladstone, they could not even be seen by a forensic medical officer and were advised to go to the police station to pick up a rape kit.

I raise this issue on behalf of every victim in the state, advocates of Queensland sexual assault services and advocacy groups. This bill seeks to implement permanent changes as a result of COVID-19, yet under our existing and failing health system a rape victim in a traumatised state cannot be seen by a health professional to ensure important evidence is obtained because there is no adequately trained person or the emergency department is failing. This is shameful. The words 'we must do better' are an insult to victims who have been sexually assaulted or raped. This situation must be immediately addressed across the entire state.

I would like to also bring the attention of the House to the court support that is happening on the back of this legislative change, particularly in my local community, and commend the Broken Ballerina Foundation. It has been working very closely with magistrates, the Mackay court service and court support workers to ensure that victims, the majority of whom are women, are supported through the process of giving evidence. I will be very pleased to attend one of the future domestic violence courts later in the month to witness firsthand the extra facilities they have fitted out in the court support room for women.

I would also like to touch on the liquor reforms in this legislation. I take this opportunity to thank the State Development and Regional Industries Committee, their members and the secretariat. One of the artisan breweries that operates in the Whitsundays—I know they operate in other parts of Queensland as well—is Ballistic Brewery, and I would like to encourage the industry and ensure we consistently engage with this part of the sector. Craft beer is not just a growing industry but in North Queensland beer in general is well-received and a really significant contributor to our local economy. I know that while this legislation touches on wine—which I know that many in this House are fans of—many across the state who support the craft brewery industry have certainly been advocating loud and hard. I hope this is something the government continues to monitor and that we work closely with that part of the industry. Along with my colleagues, I will support these amendments to the bill.

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (2.06 pm): I rise to support the bill. It has been an unbelievable 22 months since we declared a health emergency back in January 2020. We were one of the first states to do so. Queensland has done an absolutely world-class, remarkable job managing the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. We had to move quickly at times and decisively to put in place measures not only to keep Queenslanders safe but to obviously ensure that courts and the world continued to tick over. We implemented an emergency response, and we are now looking at making some of those learnings permanent.

When I became Minister for Education I never would have thought we would see a complete change to the way schools operate. We learned a lot through those changes. Technology allowed us to deliver a way of learning we had never seen before. We are even now looking at the School of Distance Education to see how we can improve delivery for isolated children and other students and what technology we can use to make that a better environment for our students. I take this opportunity again to thank all of our hardworking school staff and students for adapting to these changes and implementing ongoing remote learning when it was required.

Thank goodness that in Queensland we experienced nothing like some of the remote learning time frames of the southern states, particularly New South Wales, Victoria and the ACT, for that matter, where I believe all of term 3 last year was basically through remote learning. That is an incredible burden on any education system. What learnings we get out of this and how to implement them permanently is the way to go. We have had a lot of learnings from COVID at the same time, and technology also allowed businesses to continue to operate smoothly during the pandemic.

One of the temporary measures we put in place was to allow important documents to be signed electronically. I think we have learned that that is a much more efficient and better way of doing it. I think that making those provisions permanent now just makes sense. Importantly, it helped reduce the spread of the virus in our communities because people were not able to have face-to-face contact. It allowed court documents to be filed in a way that we really had not thought of.

We were very innovative and we moved quickly. For example, people could get their mortgage documents signed electronically rather than meeting their solicitors in person. This not only limited the number of people being physically present; it also made it more convenient for individuals and

businesses. That is why making those measures that have worked extremely well permanent makes so much sense. I think the committee found that and consequently recommended that the bill be passed.

The bill will permanently implement these temporary measures and modernise the way important legal documents are created and signed. I think that is a step in the right direction. The bill will also streamline domestic and family violence proceedings. For instance, it will allow these matters to be heard by video or audio link, which is an excellent step in the right direction, and will allow the electronic filing of documents where approved by the principal registrar. We know there are so many shades of a terrible colour when it comes to domestic violence. These victims and perpetrators find themselves in all kinds of situations. We have learnt that there is a better way of collecting and presenting evidence that protects the families and victims because the perpetrators are not there to make it even more difficult on the victims. This is an excellent step.

The bill will make this permanent. It recognises domestic and family violence and the effect of courts bringing the perpetrators and victims together. Allowing vulnerable Queenslanders to make documents or give evidence under oath from the comfort of their home or workplace using technology will further support those victims in what is already a stressful time. We have learnt that this is helping those in domestic and family violence situations, and that is a step in the right direction. Often things go unnoticed, but when there is a health pandemic—like we have been through—things like this are brought to the forefront and people think of different ways of addressing them and then make them permanent if they work. I commend the Attorney-General for doing that.

There is no doubt that businesses were hit by COVID. Those that adapted quickly and were innovative did well, particularly those in my electorate. Some of those restaurants with their takeaway menus were second to none. They adapted very quickly and were able to offer a bottle of wine with their takeaway. I remember the Premier and I ordered our takeaway lunch from the New Farm Deli, and I give a shout-out to Maria and Vince Anello who offer a fantastic product. During COVID they established a takeaway picnic lunch. The Premier and I both ordered one, and when we picked it up it came with a beautiful bottle of Italian wine as well.

Mr Lister: Grace, is that where you get the cannoli from?

Ms GRACE: No, I actually get the cannoli from Gerbino's. The Gerbino's cannoli are absolutely fantastic. I will take that interjection from the member for Southern Downs, who I know loves a good cannoli. I remember that he brought me an Italian cookbook from Stanthorpe and his reward was a few cannoli from Gerbino's, which he absolutely enjoyed. They are very good, but the New Farm Deli has beautiful cannoli as well.

The Premier and I got our wine and it was a lovely way to do that. It will make a big difference to those businesses in my electorate when they can do that permanently—when customers can enjoy a takeaway meal and up to two bottles of wine. As I said last night, 18 of the 20 best restaurants are in the electorate of McConnel.

Honourable members interjected.


Ms GRACE: This is according to the *Courier-Mail*. They were not my findings. Before everyone starts complaining, I know that a lot of you love dining and going out in the electorate of McConnel. I am sure these small changes will make those fantastic local businesses—

Mr Boothman: What is your favourite?

Ms GRACE: I will take that interjection. My favourite would have to be Tartufo, the Italian restaurant in Fortitude Valley. Tony and Gordana do a fantastic trade there. The Italian food at Tartufo is second to none, but there are so many. I cannot even mention how many great restaurants there are in my electorate. All of them are great and I urge all members to support them. If you do not want to dine in, you can get one of their takeaways and order a couple of bottles of wine. As I said, that helped them to keep their doors open. A lot of them innovated and, importantly, it kept Queenslanders in jobs. Now that we are open, you cannot book a restaurant in my electorate. Good luck trying to get in. They adapted and were innovative. These small steps assisted them, and it is good to see these steps are now permanent and are assisting them even further.

These are important measures to improve efficiency, and they make very good sense for both the individuals and the businesses. Michael and I would often order takeaway and buy one of their bottles at the same time. A lot of the time we had wine at home but we bought the wine to support the business during tough times.

Making this permanent is a step in the right direction. These changes make eminent sense. These are the things that you learn through dark clouds. The dark clouds of a world health COVID pandemic have shone some light on some old ways that we were doing things. This bill is all about taking those learnings and making them permanent. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mrs GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (2.15 pm): The Justice Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Permanency) Amendment Bill 2021 aims to make permanent several temporary changes which were introduced during the COVID-19 pandemic. Over the course of the pandemic, the LNP has strongly advocated that emergency legislation is no substitute for proper legislative reform, so the certainty provided by this legislation is welcome—particularly considering certainty is something that has been in short supply during the health crisis thanks to the Palaszczuk Labor government.

For almost two years, I have stood in this chamber calling on the state government to provide my constituents with certainty and clarity, but all we received was chaos, confusion, ever-changing border restrictions and zero transparency. As the saying goes 'See not, hear not, speak not', and this Premier is doing everything in her power to see not, hear not and speak not of the struggles of my border community.

Our border community has shouldered the burden of border closures and restrictions for the rest of Queensland for too long with insufficient support from the Palaszczuk Labor government. With Christmas fast approaching and a critical holiday trade period for our small and family businesses, my community is still left wondering what the newest measures that have been announced will look like when they come into play. Small and family businesses need certainty to invest, to trade and to grow. Whilst I am glad the government has brought proper legislation before this parliament, like the LNP has called for, it is a pity Labor has not listened to the LNP's calls for certainty regarding a pathway out of the pandemic.

The reforms in the bill can roughly be divided into four areas: liquor reforms, document reforms, domestic and family violence reforms, and leases reforms. I will address each in turn. I will first turn to the liquor reforms, which prompted several strong submissions—with no one submitter being entirely happy with where the government has landed on this. The bill proposes to make permanent the temporary measure during COVID-19 that allowed restaurants to also sell takeaway liquor. During the pandemic, licensed food venues could sell up to 2.25 litres of alcohol, excluding spirits, so a restaurant could sell takeaway beer, wine, premix and cider along with a takeaway meal.

The bill proposes to permanently retain aspects of that arrangement by allowing licensed food venues to sell up to 1.5 litres of wine with a takeaway meal. That equates to around two bottles. Groups including Restaurant & Catering Australia, the CCIQ and the Independent Brewers Association all submitted that the watering down of the temporary measures so as to only allow takeaway wine will negatively impact on an already struggling industry. Restaurant and Catering Australia stated—

The removal of beer and RTDs—
which stands for ready-to-drink beverages—

from the legislation, as well as a cap at only a 1.5 litre bottle of wine, will have a devastating effect on an already hurting industry. They went on to state—

This announcement, without consultation, makes little sense as to why the sale of beer and RTDs would be removed from the current laws. The loss of RTDs and beer from takeaway sales will have ... adverse effect—

They are their words, not mine. This is an issue that has struck a chord locally in my electorate of Currumbin, with local brewers like Currumbin Valley Brewing and Balter Brewing Company now missing out.

The feedback I have received from local brewers, including Currumbin Valley Brewing, is clear. These temporary measures that included beer and premixes provided a much needed additional income stream for both breweries and hospitality venues. Brewers and restaurants are concerned that by winding back these emergency provisions, a portion of their wholesale revenue stream that they have come to rely on will be cut off.

The government's justification for the removal of beer and premixed alcoholic drinks is that some beer and premixed alcoholic drinks with spirits have a high percentage of alcohol by volume, therefore pose a greater risk of adverse intoxication. However, as many submitters to the committee noted, there is in fact little evidence to suggest that beer or premixed alcoholic drinks pose a greater risk of adverse intoxication than wine.

Pete from Currumbin Valley Brewing pointed out to me that craft brewers and venue owners alike need as many income streams as they can get, especially at the moment. Pete and his team are passionate about ensuring an even playing field in these reforms, and I acknowledge his advocacy for

craft beverages to be included in the reforms. Pete notes that beer rarely has more alcohol by volume than wine. In fact, he says that beer often has less. He also notes that craft beer usually costs more which is understood to be a factor in the amount of alcohol consumption by a person.

My local brewers' comments are backed up by the peak national body, the Independent Brewers Association, who submitted—

It is difficult to understand the exclusion—

of beer—

given we have seen no data that provides evidence to back claims made about adverse intoxication.

Also, Spirits & Cocktails Australia submitted—

There is simply no policy justification for restricting the sale of alcoholic beverages and takeaway meals to the wine category, from either a harm minimisation perspective or an industry and economic perspective. The current drafting of the bill allows for higher amounts of alcohol to be sold via two bottles of wine and is contained to a sixpack of premixed spirits or a sixpack of beer.

There were stakeholders opposed to the sale of any takeaway liquor by restaurants and cafes, namely the Queensland Hotels Association, Clubs Queensland, Retail Drinks Australia and the Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education. In summary, their concerns highlighted the risks associated with the irresponsible supply of liquor, such as adverse intoxication outcomes, and that there was a lack of community need or justification for continuing the arrangements on a permanent basis, and they emphasised the potential adverse impacts this reform could have on existing liquor retailers.

Whilst there are strong positions on this matter, I believe it is possible to balance health and responsible service of alcohol while still supporting small and family businesses and our local craft breweries. I am glad that the Attorney-General has indicated that, in the future, she is willing to consider the committee's recommendation that the bill be amended to provide the option of allowing 1.5 litres of either wine, beer, cider or premixed drinks to be sold with a takeaway meal. I will always fight for my community in this place, and that includes my local craft brewers like Currumbin Valley Brewing and Balters.

The other areas of reform in this bill, namely documents reform, domestic and family violence reform and leases reform, are largely uncontroversial. Turning to documents reform, it makes permanent certain aspects of the emergency powers which allow certain legal documents, including affidavits, statutory declarations, oaths, deeds, certain mortgages and general powers of attorney, to be signed electronically or witnessed over an audiovisual link. Stakeholder feedback on this was predominantly favourable. The Queensland Law Society noted the benefits provided by the modernisation of legislation which, it reports, resulted in increased access to justice, in particular for regional Queensland and for those who have work and/or care commitments. The bill also permanently implements arrangements introduced which allow nurse practitioners to sign a certificate which forms part of an advance health directive.

The leases reform seeks to preserve any rent relief arrangements made under the leases regulation and allows the Queensland Small Business Commissioner to continue to provide mediation of eligible lease disputes until a permanent statutory office of the QSBC is established.


Finally, the domestic and family violence reforms make permanent commonsense measures introduced during the pandemic, including providing alternative options in certain circumstances to the traditional methods of verifying and filing applications and appearance at domestic and family violence proceedings. The bill provides that the modified verification arrangements are limited to urgent situations only for the purpose of seeking a temporary protection order where an applicant is unable to access a justice of the peace or commissioner for declarations or a solicitor before the respondent is served the application.

The move towards using technology to support our legal system and increased accessibility to court services while maintaining the safety of those who experience domestic and family violence is widely supported. The domestic and family violence provisions are a positive move towards protecting survivors from having to come face to face with their perpetrator in circumstances where justice is better served by allowing a vulnerable witness to give evidence by audiovisual link. The LNP will always support survivors and changes to technology which will help keep them safe during legal proceedings.

In summing up, this pandemic has devastated the hospitality and tourism industry across Queensland, but especially in my electorate of Currumbin. We have had to plead for the Queensland government to listen, and fight for the provision of any support, and even then there are still small and family businesses falling through the cracks. Yet, despite all the challenges our community has

endured, we still see the incredible spirit of our locals who have banded together and will not give up—the spirit of locals like Dane and Veri who organised a surfboard giveaway to promote our border businesses despite their own business, the Coolangatta Board Store, being significantly impacted by border closures. Stories like this are a testament to the amazing community spirit which I am so proud to represent.

I am pleased that the Attorney-General is going to look at the reforms further in relation to the liquor space because when I buy my buddha bowl from Sumptuous Fine Food in Currumbin Valley, I would like to also get a fourpack of beer from Currumbin Valley Brewing.

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (2.25 pm): I would like to assure the member for Currumbin that members on this side of the House did listen to the advice put forward by the LNP in relation to handling the pandemic. Many of the people who listened suffered whiplash from violently shaking their heads. Several other people rolled around the floor laughing and when they finally picked themselves up, they realised that probably what we should do is listen to the health advice being provided by the Chief Health Officer and other fine people.

This bill is seeking to make permanent a range of matters that have come into play as a result of the pandemic. I would like to acknowledge the work of the minister and the committee in relation to this bill. I will come to the committee's contribution in a moment. I also want to acknowledge the many people who made submissions to this bill. It is a testament to how broad-ranging this bill is, the variety of people who made submissions.

I want to start with the thoughts of my union, the Queensland Nurses and Midwives' Union, and the support that they give, which I also give, to the move to make permanent the changes in relation to enabling nurse practitioners to carry out capacity assessments, necessary to making an advance health directive. Anybody who has a background in health care will know the turf wars that often erupt between various health professions, but I think it is really important that all professional groups rise above those turf wars and start to think about how we use all professionals to the full extent of their scope of practice. If we do that, we will get significantly better outcomes.

I am really pleased to be part of a government that looked at what pharmacists can contribute and were able to now push pharmacists into the field in terms of vaccinations which has been a really important part of responding to this. I certainly support that part of the legislation.

I turn my attention to the parts of the legislation that deal with domestic and family violence and changing the way that people interact with the criminal justice system. Last night I spoke about Sue and Lloyd Clarke receiving the Queensland Australians of the Year award and the foundation that they started, the Small Steps 4 Hannah Foundation, which is aimed at ending domestic violence generally, but also looks specifically at coercive control. We know that coercive control does not happen in one place or a location; it is a function of a dysfunctional relationship, if I can put it that way, and it can happen anywhere at any time, including in a courtroom situation.

I note that the Women's Legal Service of Queensland supported these provisions because they have direct experience of this in a practical sense. I also note that the QLS talked about the fact that, while they felt that having a person give evidence and be able to be cross-examined in a live court setting was the best way to guarantee very sound evidence, the reality is that they said also it has to be acknowledged there are times when we need to step away from that model, so they were supportive of this as well.

Every Wednesday the Queensland Women's Legal Service provide legal service support at the Holland Park courthouse, where there is a domestic violence list. When I was first elected they asked me to come down and have a look at the facilities there. We had people who were victims of alleged domestic violence and people who had been accused of domestic violence separated from each other by a small partition. The reality is that you did not have to be very tall to look over this partition. Often the victims were confronted by the people they were accusing of domestic violence and, sadly, many of them were talked out of pursuing those matters. I am really pleased to say that, after representations to various attorneys-general and thanks to the hard work of the registrar of the Holland Park courthouse, we have been able to put in much better facilities there. This shows me that the issue of coercive control can follow victims into the judicial process. That is why these provisions are really quite important. I note the support of the Women's Legal Service for these provisions and I certainly support them as well.

I turn my attention to the provisions that relate to the sale of alcohol from cafes and restaurants. I acknowledge the work of the committee in relation to that. I would like to see the range of beverages expanded. I read pretty carefully the submission from FARE. I always take their submissions very

seriously. The last time I worked at the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital, in the rehab unit, I estimate that on any given day 50 per cent to 75 per cent of the patients were there because of problems related to alcohol, either abuse of or injury because of. I have seen the impacts of alcohol in our healthcare system.


From my perspective, people buying alcohol from a cafe or a restaurant in a relatively small quantity to have with a meal represents a very low risk to the community. To me, this does not represent anything that would nearly resemble the sorts of damaging or binge-drinking behaviour that I saw when I was working most recently at the Royal Brisbane hospital and that we know is quite a significant problem in our community and in our culture. In fact, most cafe and restaurant owners will go to great lengths to ensure that the beverages people drink are part of the entire dining experience. It is probably helping us to form good habits in relation to alcohol and break some of those not-so-great Anglo-Saxon habits around the consumption of alcohol. I do not excuse myself from those, either.

I would like to see greater options in this regard. During the COVID pandemic shutdowns, I worked with a whole range of small businesses—cafes and restaurants—in my electorate. We ran a thing called #thetakeawaymessage campaign. We used the power of social media to try to motivate people to do what they were already wanting to do naturally, which is to support local people who were doing it tough. About 40 cafes and restaurants participated. During each of those lockdowns we would pick one particular day and use that to motivate everyone to get out and buy takeaway food. I have to say that it was pretty successful. People were looking to support those businesses. In accordance with these provisions, many people, as well as buying a meal, took the opportunity to buy some wine.

I looked at the submission from the Griffith Uni Bar and Function Centre by my good friend Chris Edwards. Chris owns Australian Catering Services. He has been around the catering industry. He is involved with Restaurant & Catering Australia. When he comes to see you, it is worth listening to what he says. Right throughout this pandemic he has said that that small measure has allowed many small cafes and restaurants to remain viable and keep their heads above water. He is supportive of this change. Obviously he would like to see it broadened as well.

That is a really important part of what we have done as a government. This bill, at its core, is about starting to lay the platform for COVID recovery. If you are going to recover from COVID, you have to do a number of things. You have to invest in infrastructure. We have been doing that, particularly in my electorate, with the Veloway investments, Cross River Rail, school investments and sporting infrastructure. You have to make sure you invest in skills and training. We have done that through Skilling Queenslanders for Work, with organisations like Vision Australia receiving funding. You have to make sure that you continue to look for ways to expand your economy. The most recent announcements in relation to hydrogen are an important part of that economic expansion. Where we have problems and challenges, we have to target assistance to people, and we have done that. The tourism dollars and the small business grants are great examples. Importantly, if you are going to recover from COVID you also have to back small business. This provision in this bill is about backing small business. This is COVID recovery.

I support the provisions in relation to domestic violence, to cafes being able to sell alcohol and to nurse practitioners. I support the other elements in the bill, but I do not have time to talk through those today. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr LISTER** (Southern Downs—LNP) (2.35 pm): I, too, rise to make a contribution to the Justice Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Permanency) Amendment Bill 2021. In a nutshell, this bill is about providing some permanency for some of the innovations that were implemented through COVID which have proven to work well and which bring us into the 21st century in terms of use of technology, expectations from consumers and so forth. I do not wish to speak to every part of the bill, because I think there are plenty of people who have gone before me and made an eloquent contribution. I particularly note the member for Clayfield, who is always a treat to watch in the House when he wants to deliver a point.

Mr Stevens: A treat?

Mr LISTER: That is right, member for Mermaid Beach. I would like to speak to the document reforms. These strike me as being quite sensible, really. It is about using technology to enable people without undue inconvenience, and also with the ancillary benefit of providing fewer face-to-face opportunities for the transmission of COVID, to conduct the business of legal documents. As has been said to me by a number of people, we sign off on contracts online. If you have leased a car in recent

times you will know that it is all done in a day, because the documents are sent to you online and you provide an electronic signature. That seems to have been very effective. There appears to be no reason that cannot be used in signing and witnessing legal documents.

There was also the innovation of having a nurse be able to witness advance healthcare directives. This is another convenience method which in certain circumstances could be very valuable to people who are vulnerable and in need of being able to produce a directive like that.

I will talk about the liquor reforms. COVID had a very significant impact on our restaurant and hospitality industry. I would say that all of us have in our electorates much beloved providers of food—restaurants, takeaways and so forth. We get to know them in our electorates. In today's busy world, a lot of people do rely on access to restaurants and takeaways to keep their schedule going—once or twice a week. I know that if it has been a tough week in parliament and I get back and find that my wife, Belinda, has been busy driving to Warwick to take the kids to swimming lessons, pick them up from school and so on, it is really nice to get a takeaway. This innovation seeks to reduce regulatory barriers and support the recovery of small business from the economic impacts of the pandemic. Restaurants and takeaways that do food delivery or allow takeaways can now sell up to 1.5 litres of wine with a takeaway order. That is good for those restaurants, and I sincerely hope that that does assist those who have been impacted by COVID to recover.

I have a counterbalancing concern particularly with regard to my electorate of Southern Downs in that there are a number of small pubs that depend on takeaway liquor sales. On the balance of public interests, I do understand that this reform is a necessary and valuable one, but I have not forgotten the many pubs in my electorate that serve very small communities and for whom they are the centre of the community—that is, if you take the pub away from some of the small crossroad villages in my electorate, you no longer have a community. I am talking about pubs like the Maryvale Crown Hotel run by Mick and Annie; the Blue Cow Hotel at Allora run by Denise; the Yangan Hotel Motel; the Sandy Creek Pub, which is quite a famous one just outside of Warwick—a great spot to have a drink with Kev; and the Karara Tavern, and I was there seeing Pete just on the weekend.


The Coronation Hotel at Toobeah is run by Michael Offerdahl. He is also known as the mayor of Toobeah, and rightly so—he has a thumb in just about every pie—and that is a cherished institution locally. Without the pub there, Toobeah would hardly be a speck on the map. Others I refer to include the Talwood Hotel and the Victory Hotel in Cecil Plains owned by the Volz family, who have been involved in country pubs for many years, and the Ballandean Tavern run by Naomi and Chris.

These are the smallest of them and none of these pubs have poker machines. They have very onerous costs associated with keeping their doors open. Some of them pay up to \$40,000 a year to be able to insure their business. It is not uncommon for pubs in these circumstances to forego insurance and self-insure simply because the turnover of the business in a small area cannot justify the cost of full insurance. They also pay licensing fees, and I acknowledge that the government has waived the licensing fees during COVID. When they are reintroduced—and no doubt that will happen down the track—these small businesses would still be paying the same licence fee that a large successful pub like the Breakfast Creek Hotel would be paying. They have high staff costs because of their smaller size of operations with smaller economies of scale. They are at a disadvantage against the big guys in that sense.

Then there is the cost of general inputs such as electricity. Keeping the lights on and the fridges going has become increasingly expensive for these small pubs. There may be some impact on their businesses, particularly when country based locals go into a major centre like Goondiwindi, Stanthorpe or Warwick for a takeaway and they might choose to grab some wine from there rather than over the counter at their local pub. I am alert to that. I do not think it will be an entire elimination of their business of over-the-counter sales, but I would be very concerned to see any further expansion of the ability of dine-in licensed premises being able to provide takeaway liquor. The pubs in my electorate and our communities depend on them and they depend on having a monopoly in certain areas because they pay for that. They pay for the privilege to be able to sell alcohol for takeaway purposes.

A number of constituents have come to me in recent times, many of whom have been motivated by concerns over what they have seen in Victoria in terms of the legislative response to COVID. They have said to me, 'James, I want you to make sure that you don't let the government take any of our rights away.' I want to assure those in my electorate that this particular bill is, in that sense, quite innocuous. It does not propose to limit the freedoms of individuals and it is not something which I would have concerns about in terms of the freedom of action of the people whom it is my duty to represent. I

want to assure my constituents that I am alert and vigilant to the possibility that there could be gradual encroachments on the liberties of Queenslanders necessitated or proposed in dealing with things like COVID, but I assure my electors that I do not see that to be the case with this bill.

 **Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement) (2.43 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Justice Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Permanency) Amendment Bill 2021. As others have said, when the COVID-19 health emergency was declared, the Palaszczuk government acted swiftly to protect Queenslanders and to swiftly protect the Queensland way of life. It is because of our measured, swift health response as well as the hard work of all Queenslanders that we as a community are recovering strongly from the pandemic.

On all major economic indicators, Queensland comes out on top. Whether it is economic growth, retail spending, household lending, dwelling investment, business investment, interstate migration or labour force participation, Queensland has either grown faster than the national average or we are the best performing state in our own right. Most importantly, we have led the nation on jobs. There are now more than 90,000 more Queenslanders in work than there were before COVID-19 arrived last year.

Queensland has recently reached the 70 per cent double dosed mark—well ahead of the date we set ourselves—and there are now more than three million Queenslanders fully vaccinated. Border restrictions, as a result, are lifting. Our next target—80 per cent double dosed, when restrictions will lift even further—is all due to the hard work of Queenslanders. Becoming fully vaccinated is vital for all Queenslanders to return to a normal way of life—the great Queensland way of life—including things like crowds at our matches at venues like the Gabba and Metricon Stadium. I look forward to being there over the summer.

This bill introduced by my colleague the Attorney-General builds upon and permanently implements four important key temporary measures—measures this government put in place during the COVID-19 emergency to support Queensland businesses and our community. These measures that are due to expire in April next year include modified arrangements for the way in which certain documents are made, for the way in which civil proceedings for protection from domestic and family violence are conducted in certain circumstances and amendments to the Liquor Act 1992 to allow licensed restaurant operators to apply for a permanent condition of licence authorising the sale of up to 1½ litres of wine with a takeaway meal up to 10 pm, and the changes rightly include sensible limits on the provision of alcohol to reduce the risk of harm. As other speakers have said, we have no doubt how popular this sensible move will continue to be. That means that is two bottles of red that you can pick up with a pizza—there are three great pizza shops in the electorate of Springwood—or two bottles of wine with a pad thai on takeaway night. The bill also extends the expiry of the Retail Shop Leases and Other Commercial Leases (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Regulation 2020.

In many circumstances these changes have proven to enhance the operation of the respective legislation and it is terrific that these enhancements are now being made permanent—enhancements like providing for the electronic signing and witnessing via video link for a range of documents including affidavits, statutory declarations and particular mortgages.

Another important change this bill will make permanent is with regard to the Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012 and the Domestic and Family Violence Protection Rules. The changes will permanently allow for domestic and family violence matters to be heard via video link and audio link—I think that is an incredibly compassionate measure—and the operation of alternative verification processes for temporary protection orders and electronic filing when approved by the principal registrar. Importantly, these changes mean an applicant for a domestic or family violence order will not need to be in the same location as a respondent to the proceedings.

I also want to flag amendments that will be moved in consideration in detail that relate to the Queensland Building and Construction Commission Act 1991.

Mr Mander: Just by the by?

Mr de BRENNI: These are minor technical amendments that will clarify—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr de BRENNI: I am happy to take the interjection from the member for Everton. If he wants to raise objections and concerns around what legislators do and do not do in this place, I remind the member for Everton it was in 2014 that he, as the minister for public works, promised plumbers in this state that they would have reductions in red tape around their occupational licence, but then the

member for Everton came into this parliament on repeated occasions and failed to legislate to deliver on his commitment, leaving plumbers in this state exposed to \$54 million in fines. That is what that incompetent minister did.

The reality is that between 22 May and the end of 2014 this House sat for over 20 days. During that time the member for Everton himself sponsored two bills and both passed with amendments during consideration in detail, yet on both of those occasions and on all of those 20 days he failed to lift a finger to deliver on his commitments. Talk about a failed legislator!

In contrast, the minor technical amendments that I have asked the Attorney-General to introduce will clarify an issue relating to directions to rectify defective or incomplete building work or remedy consequential damage—just days after the amendment was identified as being required.

One of regulator's key functions is to ensure Queensland's high standards are maintained and that timely remedies are provided for defective building work. Defects can range from faulty painting work or sticking drawers to leaking roofs or substandard waterproofing. In 2019 amendments were made to the act to lift important matters—like the way in which the commission administers its functions to direct builders to rectify defective work and ensure they are financially sustainable—from board policy into regulation. I thought that was an important factor to ensure that there was transparency and the parliament had visibility of those arrangements. At the time the advice was that there was no urgency with respect to the making of the regulation, given we enacted transitional provisions. However, I was recently made aware that our approach would benefit from greater clarity around the timeframes for these directions issued by the regulator. This parliament is acting within a matter of weeks.

Mr Mander interjected.

Mr de BRENNI: We did not wait years. We did not make promises that we did not keep, member for Everton. The amendments to be moved in consideration in detail will respond to this matter in two ways: to clarify the power the commission has to issue directions to rectify—it will do that; and bring certainty and confidence for all directions issued since November 2019 and actions taken in reliance on those directions.

The proposed amendments will insert a new part 8 clauses 56A to 56C into the bill. Clause 56A provides that the new part amends the QBCC Act. Clause 56B will amend section 72 of the QBCC Act to clarify that the absence of a regulation that provides for the period within which the QBCC must make a direction does not affect the ability to issue, or the validity of, a direction. This is achieved by stating a regulation that prescribes the period 'may' be made. Clause 56C inserts new schedule 1, part 18 of the QBCC Act providing transitional and validation provisions for particular directions to rectify or remedy building work. Section 85 of the new part defines 'validation period' as being in force between the beginning of the day on 11 November 2019 and the end of the day on 9 November 2021. The 'validation period' commences on 11 November 2019, being the day that amendments to section 72(4) of the QBCC Act commenced, which provided that the rectification period stated in a direction must be the period prescribed by regulation. The end of the validation period is 9 November 2021, being the last day before the regulation was made prescribing a rectification or remediation period of 35 days.

Section 86 of the new part provides that the amendment to section 72 of the act made by clause 56B is taken to have applied from 11 November 2019. Section 87 of the new part retrospectively validates directions made by the regulator under section 72 of the act during the validation period. These directions are taken to be valid. It is as if the regulation prescribing the period for the rectification of the defective works, or remedy of the damage, had been made as at 11 November 2019. This validation puts beyond doubt the matter of validity of directions issued on or from 11 November 2019.

Finally, section 88 of the new part extends the timeframe in which the QBCC may issue a direction under section 72A(4) of the QBCC Act. This is to account for a temporary pause by the commission on the issuing of directions from 3 November 2021 until the making of the amendment regulation on 10 November 2021. Where the limitation period in section 72A(4) expired during the period of the pause, an amendment to the act is necessary to provide an extension of the limitation period commensurate with the period from 3 November 2021 to the making of the amendment regulation, being seven days.

These amendments are timely and they will be moved during consideration in detail to remove any doubt and validate directions issued. They also validate actions taken in reliance on those directions. These changes ensure that everybody's rights are preserved and it is business as usual for consumers, builders and renovators. I commend the bill and these amendments to the House.



Mr HARPER (Thuringowa—ALP) (2.53 pm): I rise to support the Justice Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Permanency) Amendment Bill 2021. As we all know, on 29 January 2020 a public health emergency was declared under section 319 of the Public Health Act 2005 in relation to the COVID-19 public health emergency. The COVID-19 public health emergency was declared for all of Queensland. The Queensland government has put in place a range of temporary measures in response to the COVID-19 pandemic with the chief aim of protecting the health, safety and welfare of persons affected by the COVID-19 emergency and to assist Queensland businesses and individuals suffering financial and operational stress caused by COVID-19.

I will take a moment to acknowledge the work of the State Development and Regional Industries Committee who made some really good recommendations—six in total—addressing a number of areas that had those temporary measures put in place to now become permanent. They heard from a range of stakeholders such as the Queensland Law Society, the department, Women's Legal Service, QNMU and AMAQ. I will touch on some of the more interesting parts that I consider are very valuable to this bill. The current and former health committee considered a number of extension provisions for COVID-19 in that time.

As a result of COVID-19 and the advent of lockdowns and restrictions on meeting in person, individuals, businesses and government have been required to adapt—and adapt they did—and engage with digital technology to find new ways of working without being physically present. I will take a moment to talk about the takeaway liquor reforms. The bill proposes to amend the Liquor Act to permanently retain aspects of the current temporary arrangements, in particular to enable restaurateurs to sell a maximum of 1.5 litres, or two bottles, of takeaway wine with a takeaway meal sold during the ordinary trading hours for takeaway liquor up to 10 pm with approval. After a week in parliament when it is our time to go home, I often say to my wife, 'I'll cook tonight. What will it be? Indian, Thai or a meal from any of the great local restaurants we have in Thuringowa?' Many of them applied for and were able to get the COVID adaptation grants and modify their business so they could sell takeaway meals and liquor. Not only can I cook, so to speak, by taking home a meal to the family; I can also get a nice drop along the way. I think that is a practical outcome of the liquor reforms.

The regulation introduces temporary measures to allow documents to be made, signed or witnessed electronically with simplified execution requirements. That has real and practical benefits. The bill permanently implements certain aspects of the temporary arrangements to allow individuals, businesses and government to continue to use digital technology to meet their needs. The purpose of the reforms is to modernise the way in which important legal documents are created in line with contemporary business practice and to improve accessibility. The bill embraces digital technology to provide new and alternative pathways for document execution in addition to the ordinary physical approach. This will allow individuals to choose their preferred method of document execution. That makes it easier for individuals to make and sign important legal documents.

On 22 April 2020 the Legislative Assembly passed the COVID-19 Emergency Response Act 2020 which, among other things, implemented amendments to establish a power to make emergency regulations for the residential tenancy and rooming accommodation sectors to address the impacts of the COVID-19 emergency and facilitate implementation of the national cabinet decision in relation to good faith leasing principles for relevant non-residential leases in Queensland. It also provided for the establishment of a temporary Queensland Small Business Commissioner, or QSBC, to deliver expanded advocacy functions for Queensland small business and administer mediation services in relation to small business tenancy disputes. These are important steps in dealing with the fallout of COVID-19, and I commend the Attorney-General for making some of these arrangements permanent in this bill.

To date, a number of regulations have been made pursuant to the COVID-19 Emergency Response Act. The objectives of the bill are to make legislative amendments to the Justice portfolio to make permanent particular parts of certain temporary measures introduced during COVID-19. I refer to the modified arrangement that allows nurse practitioners, in addition to doctors, to sign a certificate that forms part of an advance health directive, an AHD, stating that the person making the document appears to have capacity to make that important document.

This issue is not new to anyone on the health committee. We have made recommendations around, and certainly applauded nurse practitioners. One of the best moves of this Queensland government was to make available nurse practitioners to navigate many parts of the health system throughout Queensland. Whilst those opposite sacked nurses, we backed nurses by bringing in the nurse practitioner position. We have heard of the great work that they do around Queensland, particularly around end-of-life and palliative care. Certainly we applaud nurse practitioners for the role

they play. I commend the committee for recommending that nurse practitioners can sign the certificate that forms part of an advance health directive. Of course nurses can assess people; they have been doing it for many years. Certainly they are professional and have the ability to assess capacity. Well done to everyone involved in the amendment relating to advance health directives.


The Domestic and Family Violence Protection Rules contain rules to provide for the practices and procedures of courts in relation to domestic violence proceedings. The bill amends the Domestic and Family Violence Protection Rules to provide greater flexibility and accessibility to parties by extending the option to file documents electronically to private parties in domestic violence proceedings with the approval of the principal registrar of the court. I note that the Queensland Law Society and the Women's Legal Service outlined their strong support for that measure in the bill.

To summarise, in responding to COVID-19 everything we have done has been in the best interests of Queenslanders and in support of small businesses as they adapted and found a way to continue to trade. We implemented a number of measures. We all got used to Zoom meetings. We found ways of making life easier through good practical solutions for things such as how we communicate and sign legal documents. These recommendations are to be applauded. Well done, Chair. You have done your job and now it is up to the House to make sure that we continue to navigate our way out of COVID-19 by focussing squarely on vaccinating people. That is our best defence against COVID-19. We have managed to navigate the past two years by putting in all of these temporary measures and now it is time to make them permanent. They are practical and they are safe.

I urge everyone in North Queensland to get vaccinated. The borders will open on 17 December. I do not want anyone in my community to get sick. We have a rivalry with Cairns.

Mr Power: Who is winning?

Mr HARPER: Cairns is just slightly in front, but our advocacy for the vaccine is strong. At least we have the Cowboys team. I know North Queenslanders will do the right thing. They have managed to do the right thing and adapt all the way through COVID-19 over the past two years. My last message is this: get vaccinated.

 **Mr McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (3.03 pm): Our response to the pandemic is working. By working together and following the health advice, Queenslanders have remained safe and our economy is strong. The latest labour force data underscores this, showing that Queensland has created more jobs than any other state or territory—indeed, more jobs than every other state and territory combined. From March 2020 to October this year, New South Wales lost 174,200 jobs and Victoria saw a drop of 126,200 jobs. During that period, in the great state of Queensland, where vaccination rates continue to rise and our economy remains open, 90,000 people found work. That is another 90,000 people who are playing their part in our economic recovery and another 90,000 people who are contributing to our ongoing low unemployment rate. It is our safe and strong recovery and our willingness and determination to adapt that makes these reforms possible. It is clear that a strong health response to the pandemic translates into the best economic response.

Since the COVID-19 public health emergency was declared, the Palaszczuk government acted quickly and put in place a range of temporary measures to support Queensland businesses and the community. As those temporary measures have been so well received by businesses, stakeholders and the community, through this bill the government now proposes to make many of them permanent. My contribution to this debate will focus on the modernisation measures for legal documents, the provisions that relate to domestic and family violence, and, if I have time, the changes in relation to the functions of the Small Business Commissioner.

The COVID-19 emergency propelled government, business and the community into the digital age in a way like never before, forcing us to embrace and use technology in new ways and in all aspects of business, commerce and our personal lives. The Justice Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Documents and Oaths) Regulation enabled technology to be used to properly make important legal documents. This bill makes tangible practical improvements to the making, signing and witnessing of documents that affect people and the legal industry every day.

Not only does the bill enable the use of electronic signatures; it also provides that the signatures of a person and a witness do not need to be on the same singular original document in certain circumstances. That is an important practical change which means that parties do not have to be together physically to sign those documents and do not have to post original documents back and forth, which obviously can be logistically difficult and time consuming. The legal profession advised the Attorney-General that the temporary provisions around the use of electronic signatures has significantly increased efficiencies for them and changed the way that commercial practices run. Normally it can

take up to four weeks for documents to be signed, witnessed and transferred between parties here and overseas using the post. Instead, under these provisions, documents may be fully executed within a matter of days.

The bill allows for electronic signing and witnessing via video link for important documents such as affidavits, statutory declarations, general powers of attorney for business deeds and particular mortgages. Specifically, the bill allows affidavits, statutory declarations and some oaths to be taken over video link by a cohort of special witnesses such as Australian legal practitioners, government legal officers who witness documents in the course of their work, certain justices of the peace or commissioners for declarations approved by the director-general of the Department of Justice and Attorney-General. The bill allows affidavits and statutory declarations that are witnessed over a video link to be physically or electronically signed or made using counterparts if witnessed by a special witness, with procedural requirements to apply to mitigate the risk of any false statements. The bill allows affidavits and statutory declarations that are witnessed in person to be signed electronically and made using counterparts if they are witnessed by a special witness. The bill also allows nurse practitioners, in addition to doctors, to sign a certificate that forms part of an advance health directive, stating that the person making the document appears to have capacity to make the document.

All of these reforms will improve access to justice, reduce the costs of the delivery of legal services, reduce transaction costs, increase efficiency and boost economic productivity. Through these reforms Queenslanders will be able to make these documents from their home or workplace and will no longer have to travel to sign documents in person before a witness. They also contain a number of limitations and, importantly, safeguards to protect against the risks inherent with the use of technology and with the changes to witnessing documents. The safeguards have been developed following extensive consultation with a range of stakeholders. Consultation on the proposed document reforms was undertaken with a wide range of legal, health and community stakeholders. This included the Queensland Law Society, the Bar Association of Queensland, the Property Council of Australia, the Australian College of Nurse Practitioners and the Australian Medical Association of Queensland.

An exposure draft of the bill was released to key stakeholders earlier this year and further consultation was conducted directly with key stakeholders prior to the finalisation of the bill. Overall, stakeholders expressed support for the reforms, with legal stakeholders strongly supporting these reforms. Indeed, the Queensland Law Society submitted that the legal profession and the community derived significant benefits from the temporary reforms, leading to increased access to justice, certainty, reliability and cost savings. A partner from the large commercial law firm Allens outlined support for the reforms, noting that the temporary measures adopted in Queensland were considered a best-practice model of reform. It is clear that these reforms represent a significant step forward for Queensland.


I now turn to the provisions of the bill that relate to domestic violence. The pandemic has tragically exacerbated domestic and family violence, with almost one in 10 women in a relationship experiencing domestic violence during the COVID crisis and two-thirds saying that attacks started or became worse. All Queenslanders have to play their part in preventing domestic and family violence. Domestic and family violence is a shameful mark of our society and should never be tolerated in our homes, workplaces or communities.

This bill modernises and streamlines domestic and family violence proceedings through amendments to the Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012 and the Domestic and Family Violence Protection Rules 2014 to permanently retain the option to use the temporary measures that have been provided under the Domestic and Family Violence Protection (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Regulation. The permanent measures adopted will allow for domestic and family violence matters to be heard via video or audio link, operational alternative verification processes for temporary protection orders and electronic filing where approved by the principal registrar. This will modernise and streamline access to justice by providing victims with greater flexibility to participate in proceedings, including by giving magistrates the discretion to conduct all or part of the proceedings by audiovisual link or audio link. This will allow vulnerable Queenslanders to make documents or give evidence under oath from their home or workplace using technology that will further support victims of what is an extremely stressful situation.

The Women's Legal Service Queensland explained that for many women experiencing domestic violence the thought of seeing a perpetrator face-to-face during a court appearance is overwhelming, extremely unsafe and a deterrent to filing applications for a protection order. These measures in this bill help ensure that vulnerable applicants can seek protection from domestic and family violence without unnecessary delay. These changes were supported by the Queensland Law Society and the Women's Legal Service Queensland.

I place on record my thanks to the State Development and Regional Industries Committee for its consideration of the bill and note that the committee's report, with no statement of reservation, recommended that the bill be passed. There were several other recommendations in the committee report that the government has responded to and to which the Attorney-General has tabled a response. I do not propose to revisit that now.

In conclusion, the measures contained in this bill will improve access to justice to those who need it most. It will mean that people in businesses in Bundamba will have greater access to justice through a much improved and modernised framework. By working together and getting vaccinated, Queenslanders can continue our safe and strong recovery. These reforms are in line with community expectations and accepted methods of supporting our local businesses, protecting the vulnerable, meeting and indeed doing business. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (3.13 pm): It is timely that we are debating this bill this week of all weeks, the week of the Mount Ommaney Small Business Awards. Yes, that is right. I am famous for my ability to make anything and any piece of legislation about my small business awards and I will do it again—strap in! As I said, my awards were this week. Hospitality, which is a key issue in this debate, was one of the biggest categories. Can I say how well the small businesses and hospitality businesses in my electorate came through the COVID pandemic. A number of the businesses that were nominated mentioned to me how grateful they were for the takeaway alcohol provisions during the COVID pandemic, because it gave them the opportunity, as I have said in this House, to add that additional revenue stream to their profit margin at a time when they were obviously going through not just a massive recession in the amount of income that they had coming through their door but of course were also scrambling to come up with ways to keep their doors open and remain viable at a time when their core business of opening their doors and serving customers was simply not possible.

With the indulgence of the House, I will say a big congratulations to Bare Bones Society. Nominees every year since the start of the awards, this year it finally took out the big one in its category. It is a very good provider of fine wine with its takeaway food. Yim Thai, Just Poppy's—who took out the overall big award—

An honourable member: Hurry up and take my money!

Ms PUGH: Yes, Yim Thai is very good. I continue: Icarus Greek, Sol Natural Foods, All Things Tasmanian—it does coffee, so no takeaway alcohol there—Curry n Cask—the giveaway is in the name—White Lies Brewery, which is my very own micro-brewery in the heart of Spine Street, the Pepper Lounge, Pepe's Mexican, Eliza's Place and Pump Nutrition. As I have said, many of these venues benefitted from our COVID response allowing takeaway alcohol to supplement their income. It is not a normal thing to do. Normally if one is getting takeaway one would usually stop in at the bottle shop on the way home. The idea of picking something up from the restaurant, perhaps something matched by the expert skills of the staff there—the sommelier on staff if they have one—is a new way of thinking. Of course we as patrons have had to pivot during the COVID pandemic and, likewise, the venues have had to pivot as well.

To give them the opportunity to continue to selling alcohol during COVID has been absolutely critical to the bottom line of the businesses in my community and, I know, businesses right around Queensland, especially those that depend so heavily on tourism trade for income.

As the explanatory notes of the bill outline, after consultation with different groups there has been a reduction in the volume allowed for takeaway. Essentially, that reduction has been from three bottles of wine to two. It is really important in this House that we always take a really critical and measured approach to the retailing of alcohol, because we know that alcohol abuse and misuse continues to be a real issue in our communities. I will share some statistics with the House from the member for Callide and me when we spoke on a bill a few years ago in Townsville. When it comes to alcohol abuse, particularly in terms of drink-driving, despite 20 years of education programs it is still a significant factor in many road crashes. I quote the member for Callide in *Hansard*—

On average, drink-drivers are still involved in one in five fatalities on Queensland roads.

When we consider the sustained education programs that government after government have undertaken year after year, that is very concerning. As I said, 25 per cent of those drivers often only have a mid-range blood alcohol reading. We have taken steps in this House to ensure that people drink-driving in the mid-range are caught, but it is really important to highlight that we always must be mindful when making access to alcohol easier what unintended consequences that can have.

It is always worth framing these issues in the context of the bigger picture and our national conversation around alcohol. Certainly we have had a number of contributions in that space today. We do need to examine why, despite significant educational programs, we as a country and a state still have such a high level of drink-driving. Why do our emergency rooms continue to be filled with people injured while drinking and driving, while fighting alcohol poisoning and the associated social impacts? It is something that I think we all in this House continue to be concerned about and continue to really think about. That is why after consultation we did impose—and we certainly had groups for and against—provisions where we came down on that in terms of people having a full meal.

The takeaway food that is sold with takeaway alcohol must be a full and proper meal. Unfortunately, the member for Southern Downs' cannoli probably would not have cut the mustard as a full and proper meal. He would have had to order a main course and maybe an entree to ensure the responsible service of alcohol provisions are met. We need to make sure that when people are taking away their two bottles of wine they are also filling their stomachs with good food. The limits on wine have come down from 2.25 litres, which is three bottles of wine, to 1.5 litres. This ensures consistency with existing provisions, which allow the sale of one opened and one unopened bottle of takeaway wine to adults dining on a premise. I think that is important.

It is important to note—and this is something that members of the House will know I am passionate about—that alcohol abuse is not a moral issue; it is an addiction. A significant cohort of our community is impacted by this addiction. Every person who is directly impacted by this issue has family. They might have parents. They might have children. They are equally impacted. Sometimes the impacts on the family blessedly can be relatively mild, but for others they can bear a lifetime of scars from having a family member who suffers from alcohol addiction. I am pleased to see there is support from both sides of the House for ensuring the amount of alcohol is carefully monitored.

Most retailers and certainly most hospitality venues do an exemplary job in making sure that intoxicated people are not served. I also observe that the kind of alcohol that a lot of our small businesses will be retailing is not at the lower end of the unit price scale. We are not talking about cheap bottles of Passion Pop or Fat Little Lamb; we are talking about higher end quality food and beverage products that are matched. I think that is important because we know that a key driver of purchasing large quantities of alcohol for people who struggle with substance addiction is the minimum unit price. Ensuring we keep the price higher and the quality of the product higher is a key deterrent for people considering purchasing alcohol because they are addicted. The bill lands well in that space.

As a fellow hospitality professional, I commend our hospitality industry for the way they turned on a dime during COVID. When I look back over my career in hospitality, our business simply could not have survived without weddings, proposals and special occasion dine-out events. We did so many weddings and proposals at Restaurant Two. It was always planned out. We would have the phone conversation with the very nervous groom. We would get the signal and we would come up with the glass of champagne.

During COVID there was none of that for any restaurant. The fact that they were able to keep their doors open and make their business work is an absolute testament to the hard work, creativity and ingenuity of our hospitality businesses here in Queensland. When I look at the nominees for my small business awards and the fact that they were able to stay open and keep things moving during COVID I am blown away. I am ceaselessly impressed by the dedication and resilience of the retailers, business owners and hardworking staff who pivoted to keep their doors open during what has been a tough time. I certainly commend the bill to the House.



Dr MacMAHON (South Brisbane—Grn) (3.23 pm): I rise to speak to elements of this bill that will directly impact residents of South Brisbane, the hospitality sector that has suffered so much during this pandemic and the broader Queensland community. The COVID period, devastating for so many, gave us insight into what a world would look like where governments actively worked to improve people's lives. People sleeping rough were given housing. JobKeeper and JobSeeker were at adequate levels for people to live with dignity, and businesses and governments invested in online platforms to improve accessibility and connection. The domestic violence measures in this bill allowing remote access to justice processes are welcome and vital.

The bill amends the Liquor Act 1992 to permanently retain aspects of the temporary COVID-19 takeaway liquor arrangements for licensed restaurants. Licensees will have to establish systems and procedures for the responsible service of alcohol. For many small bars and restaurants in South Brisbane, the ability to sell takeaway alcohol has been a lifeline while normal operations have been restricted. Small bar operators have said to me that the capacity to sell takeaway alcohol has been

incredibly important and has saved businesses and protected staff from unemployment. I note that the permanent provisions only extend to venues selling takeaway meals, excluding venues with bar licences and excluding beer, which was a key concern for a number of submitters.

I note the valid concerns from the drug and alcohol support sector around the increased availability of alcohol and the risk of alcohol abuse. The COVID crisis has pressured so many existing fault lines in our society, and none more so than the prevalence of mental ill health and drug and alcohol addiction in our society. I acknowledge the points made in the submission by the Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education in relation to this bill. However, the answers to societal issues of precarious mental health and drug and alcohol addiction do not lie in preventing small retailers from selling craft beer or craft spirits. There are certainly things that parliament can do to support better mental health in the community, including better access to health, housing and education services. I will keep pushing for these.

Rather, these measures restricting small retailers from selling craft beer and craft spirits do nothing more than help maintain the monopoly on alcohol sales held by supermarkets and major chains like Coles, Woolworths, Metcash and Aldi. These huge corporations also have the monopoly on advertising that helps drive alcohol abuse and are able to sell alcohol at cheaper prices. Supermarkets hold 40 per cent of the packaged alcohol market and have been increasing their market share at the expense of independent retailers. The exclusion of beer and premixed alcohol drinks just ensures BWS and Dan Murphy's maintain a market stranglehold for beer, wine and spirits which people can buy with very few restrictions at big retailers without the need for a meal. I would much rather get my Christmas drinks at somewhere like The End in West End—a small, much loved local bar—than a megachain like Dan Murphy's.

We welcome measures to allow nurse practitioners to sign a certificate which forms part of an advance health directive. Nurse practitioners are highly skilled healthcare professionals. I note calls by the Australian College of Nurse Practitioners and the QNMU to further expand the role of nurse practitioners in Queensland. The QNMU suggests that there may be an opportunity to expand the scope of nurse practitioners to enable assessments for other types of documents which the committee has declined to take up. This is particularly disappointing knowing the immense stress that our health system will be facing in a month's time when we open up, the stress already being put on healthcare workers to do more with less and the underfunding of our hospitals.

I also note that the bill extends commercial lease emergency regulations to protect commercial lessees. As stated in the committee report, the initial explanatory notes state—

Overriding landlords ordinary property rights is justified by the need to respond to the financial hardship being experienced by some tenants due to closures and restrictions on movement and social distancing which the COVID-19 emergency has caused (and will continue to cause) and to provide a fair sharing of the burden of the pandemic between landlords and tenants.

It is telling that the government has not defended the property rights of lessors for commercial leases as vigorously and viciously as they did for residential leases. The stakes are so much higher for residential tenants who risk eviction or homelessness if they struggle to pay their rent. The government's priorities are clear. The government have proven themselves to be wholly unwilling to do anything to help Queensland tenants even in the midst of a housing crisis. Queensland renters deserve caps on rent increases. They deserve to make minor modifications and they deserve a real end to no-grounds evictions.



Hon. MT RYAN (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (3.28 pm): I rise to support the bill. Many things have changed during the pandemic. We have had to modify many of the ways we go about our daily lives to support community safety and each other. We have all been resourceful in finding new ways of doing things. For instance, at times we needed to reduce the need for face-to-face contact to keep the community safe. As a result of that, we found new ways to do things—better ways. This bill is really important for embedding permanently those better ways to do things. For example, certain legal and commercial processes were amended so that electronic signatures or electronic communications could replace a physical signature or physical attendance. This bill will make permanent some of those changes.

The reforms will enhance access to justice, reduce transaction costs and increase the efficiency of conducting private and commercial transactions. For instance, regarding the document reforms, as a result of the COVID-19 emergency and the advent of lockdowns and restrictions on meeting in person, individuals, businesses and governments have been required to adapt and engage with digital technology to find new ways of working without being physically present. The Documents and Oaths

Regulation introduced temporary measures to allow certain documents to be signed electronically or witnessed over audiovisual link. The bill permanently implements certain aspects of the temporary arrangements to allow individuals, businesses and government to continue to use digital technology to meet their needs.

The purpose of the reforms is to modernise the way in which important legal documents are created in line with contemporary business practices and to improve accessibility. The bill embraces digital technology to provide new and alternative pathways for document execution in addition to the ordinary physical approach which will allow individuals to choose their preferred method of document execution. The reforms will make it easier for individuals to make and sign important legal documents without the need to be physically present.

Another important factor the pandemic has brought into sharp relief is the critical role our police play in supporting community safety. Police have been on the borders at airports and at hotel quarantine protecting the community and our economy. When it comes to some of the reforms contained in this bill, particularly in relation to domestic violence matters which may be able to be dealt with in certain instances by audiovisual link, that will have an impact on not only the experience that that individual has in the criminal justice system but also the role that our police play in supporting those people. It is an important way for us to use technology to have better outcomes for the community, for individuals and for community safety.

I note a couple of the other amendments contained in this bill, particularly around document creation and witnessing and how those can also be done by electronic means, by using counterparts, by using electronic signatures. I also note that it continues the reform around e-conveyancing. E-conveyancing was not around when I was practising law. It was always a tense moment, when you would turn up at a settlement as a young lawyer being tested by your partner with a tricky matter, when it came to how you might resolve that tricky matter at settlement. Through my conversations with more recently admitted lawyers, the stress and intensity of the tricky matters established by partners have been mitigated to some extent by the advent of e-conveyancing and having everything ready to go sometimes many days before the settlement time. I note that, in particular, this bill continues the progression around using technology in respect of property matters by embedding electronic signing of mortgage documents which can be lodged through e-conveyancing, and that makes a lot of sense.

Also, from a legal point of view, embedding practices around counterparts and electronic signatures and electronic witnessing of documents will be well received not only for individuals who may lead busy lives and find it difficult to meet at the same time and at the same place, particularly in respect of high-volume businesses and transactions that might be conducted, but also from an efficiency point of view, allowing legal practitioners to do things in a more effective, structured way. That will be very well received as well and of course moves with the times.

Law firms and commercial businesses have for many years been adapting around different ways to execute documents—signing documents by counterparts and exchanging documents by email—but to embed a process in law around electronic witnessing and electronic signatures is an important step and of course with appropriate safeguards. The best safeguard is always having two different sides to a transaction because both sides of a transaction will always want to make sure the other side is doing the right thing, so it is very important.


I also wanted to comment briefly on the commercial lease emergency response aspect that has been embedded. As many in our community will recognise, because the vaccination rates have gone up, we are now in a much better position around avoiding future lockdowns and other future restrictions on businesses. To have this aspect in law for a further period of time does allow the government to be agile should a power like this be required. I know that a lot of tenants, particularly those in major shopping centres, look to guidance around these mechanisms. These mechanisms were very helpful in recent times regarding previous lockdowns and allowing commercial tenants and landlords to have a framework for negotiating responses in respect of the impact that COVID restrictions have had on business and the ability of those businesses to trade.

Because we are talking about our government response to COVID, I do need to pay tribute to the workers and volunteers within the portfolio areas that I look after—the police and emergency service workers and volunteers who have done such a great job keeping the community safe, keeping businesses supported and safe as well and of course being at those businesses and entertainment venues and providing communication and compassion around COVID restrictions. We see the Queensland Police Service being on the borders, at businesses and in hotels keeping us all safe.

I want to reinforce the importance of everyone working together. This bill embeds a lot of framework around working together—different parties to a transaction working together, the authorities working with business working together, tenants and landlords working together. One of the key principles which has supported Queensland's response to COVID-19 has been everyone working together and support for our police and emergency service workers and volunteers from the community and, likewise, the support of police and emergency service workers and volunteers for the community that they represent.

A lot has been said about the final amendment contained in this bill which is about takeaway liquor. I know that that has supported a number of hospitality businesses during the pandemic. Some would argue that this bill in every respect establishes new and better ways to do things. By the sounds of things, there is a lot of support for the new and better way of supporting the liquor amendments that are contained in this bill more permanently.

I take this opportunity to thank the committee for its work and to acknowledge the work of the departments responsible for the bill. I know there was a lot of consultation with relevant stakeholders in the development of this bill. Working along with those stakeholders and across government, I think we have landed in a very good position. I commend the bill to the House and I encourage all members to support it.

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (3.38 pm): I too rise to speak on the Justice Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Permanency) Amendment Bill 2021. I was not intending to speak to this bill. As members in the House would know, I am a part owner of a brewery on the Gold Coast, so I did not think it was appropriate to talk about the liquor aspects of this bill—so I will not, but there are some good parts of this bill and, as we know, the LNP will support the bill.

There were a number of recommendations made by the committee I was a part of. Those recommendations include that the minister should expand the electronic signing of documents to deeds from the state. Unfortunately, when the government enacted this bill originally that was not applicable to the states. We heard from a number of presenters to the committee that that was causing an issue in that corporations could electronically sign deeds, but they were then having to wait for a couple of months for the state to actually physically sign it. So I think that suggesting that recommendation is very sensible, and I am glad to hear that the government has accepted that. They will move a number of amendments during consideration in detail.

There are a number of other things in this bill, including changes in relation to domestic violence issues, and those are things that I fully appreciate and support. I was surprised to see there was an amendment around the QBCC that was put in late in the minister's speech, and that is what has prompted me to get up today and talk to this bill. I listened to the Minister for Public Works' contribution to this debate. He said, in part, that this was a minor technical amendment. The explanatory notes that have been sent around with this amendment state—

One of the Queensland Building and Construction Commission's key compliance and enforcement mechanisms is the ability to direct a person to rectify defective or incomplete building works or remedy consequential damage within a prescribed period.

The original act included a time frame in which these directions to rectify were made, but there were changes made by this government in 2017 that came into force in November 2019 which moved the prescribed period to a regulation, but they never did the regulation. The regulation was never put in place. That has put in doubt every notice to rectify that has been issued since November 2019, and there would be thousands of them, which means that a builder or a homeowner who has had one of these directions to rectify issued to them could go to a court and challenge the whole thing based on the fact that the legislation was never actually put in place. This is not a minor technical amendment; far from it. It is the government coming in here once again to rectify one of the mistakes they have made around legislation in this place. We have constantly seen amendments to bills at the last minute to fix the government's incompetence. That is basically what this is all about.

A direction to rectify is a very important issue and, as I said, there are thousands of people who would have had these issued to them. There is a group called the QBCC Action Group which has been very vocal about these sorts of issues. I will table for the information of the House the QBCC Action Group's terms of reference for the inquiry the minister announced yesterday. They would like to widen those terms of reference, as would the LNP, and their mission statement. I will table that for the House.

Tabled paper: QBCC Action Group document, undated, titled 'Terms of Reference: Independent Judicial Commission of Inquiry: Queensland Building and Construction Commission' [[1951](#)].

Tabled paper: QBCC Action Group document, undated, titled 'Mission Statement' [[1952](#)].

The gentleman who runs that action group is Mark Agius, and I have been talking to him quite a bit. He has been writing to the minister trying to get some action on some of his issues in Townsville. He sent an email to the minister yesterday and he has asked me to table that as well.


Tabled paper: Email, dated 17 November 2021, from Mr Mark Agius to the Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement, the Hon. Mick de Brenni, titled '2021 11 17—Ministerial Response—QoN 1255-2021' [1953].

There are a number of attachments to that. Unfortunately, I have not had time to look at those attachments so I do not intend to table them here this afternoon. If the minister would like to have those attachments, I am happy to give them to him, mentioning that they have been emailed to him. A response has been requested pretty quickly because this gentleman is having his action dealt with in the next few days. For the minister to come in here and tell us that these are minor technical amendments is just an absolute insult to this place and the people of Queensland whom we serve. They are not minor technical amendments; they are a complete stuff-up by this government, quite frankly.

We have seen now that the minister has quickly put a hurried inquiry in place, but its terms of reference are very narrow and they need to be expanded greatly. They need to look at the legalities of the things the QBCC is doing and make sure they are operating inside their remit. We also heard of the Groupline case on the Gold Coast, where it was found that the QBCC acted outside their legal powers. They have lost a court case about that. I did an RTI into this, and one of the responses to the RTI was that there is some doubt held inside the QBCC that they may not be able to shut down projects in the future because they do not have the legal right to do that. Yet, that is exactly what they have been doing around the issues we have seen on the Gold Coast lately with cranes. They have been closing down worksites, and possibly those things have been done illegally and outside the remit of the QBCC.

We are hearing as well that the board of the QBCC is interfering in operational matters. So is the minister, for that matter. These things need to be ventilated quite thoroughly as well. I would encourage Jim Varghese, who is looking into this, to look at these things and submit a comprehensive report to the government about this particular inquiry.

No doubt I will have more to say when we get to consideration in detail on these QBCC amendments, but we are getting sick and tired of coming into this place and having to rectify an issue this government has created because of their complete incompetence and their stacking of the QBCC board, their operational interference in what is supposed to be an independent regulator. I will leave my contribution there.

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (3.47 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Justice Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Permanency) Amendment Bill 2021. I think it is pretty clear that the COVID-19 global pandemic has impacted nearly every aspect of our lives, but here in Queensland we have had one of the best health responses in the nation, even across the globe, with only seven COVID deaths throughout the pandemic so far. That is quite an achievement. We have known from day one that the best health response is also the best economic response, when we were the first state in Australia to declare a health emergency in January last year. Queensland's strong borders and health response have saved many Queensland lives and many Queensland jobs. Just ask someone in New South Wales and Victoria, where long lockdowns have had a tremendous economic cost. In Queensland we have been able to continue relatively normally compared to the southern states with the difficulties they have found themselves in.

Whether it is physical distancing, being separated from loved ones or work-from-home arrangements, Queenslanders have been magnificent in adapting to a very challenging and difficult situation. As a government we have had to adjust how we deliver services to thousands of Queenslanders. As a result of the lockdowns and restrictions on meeting in person, individuals, businesses and government have been required to adapt to technology to find new ways of working without being physically present.

The bill will mean that temporary measures to ease and make processes simpler will be made permanent. For example, this bill will mean that documents can be signed and witnessed electronically with simplified execution requirements. This bill modernises arrangements for the making, signing and witnessing of affidavits, statutory declarations, general powers of attorney for businesses, deeds and particular mortgages by allowing these documents to be made in electronic form, signed electronically and witnessed over audiovisual link in certain circumstances.

I think this is a good example of innovation coming out of necessity. We have seen that a lot of things that would have taken a lot longer for people to adapt to and understand have been accelerated due to necessity. While some of that has been difficult, some of that has also been very helpful and I think that is worth noting. These are the small things that become critical and important in keeping our society and our economy rolling during a time of crisis.

The bill will also permanently implement the ability for nurses and doctors to sign a certificate which forms part of an advance health directive stating that the person making the document appears to have capacity to make the document. The purpose of the reforms is to modernise the way in which important legal documents are created, making it easier and more accessible for everyday Queenslanders.

The DFV COVID regulation put in place reduced the need for physical contact between persons to support social distancing, self-quarantine and self-isolation requirements under the Queensland Chief Health Officer's public health directions. The bill modernises, streamlines and increases accessibility to DFV proceedings by providing for alternative verification arrangements for private applications for protection orders and variations of domestic violence orders in urgent situations, allowing DFV proceedings by audiovisual link or audio link and allowing electronic filing of documents in DFV proceedings. Members of the House would very strongly support those proceedings being improved in those ways.

We thank Queenslanders for their resolute efforts in helping us smash the curve. We thank them for their patience as we have sought to work around some of these issues. I would like to say how magnificent it is that Queenslanders have tuned in to the very important issues from early on and have responded very well to working collaboratively with government to be part of this solution. One of the things about this pandemic is that it has been an incredible challenge and the only way out of it is collective action—actually working together in a collective way. I know that challenges some people with very strong ideologies about individual freedom, but the reality is that this is a matter of science and medicine and it discriminates against nobody. It is only through collective action in this regard that we are going to come out of this pandemic.

Queenslanders have understood that on the whole intuitively and have done their own research and have worked with the government. When we look at other governments and other societies around the world, we can see that in the end there has actually been a lot of faith in government here in Queensland and in other states. We are way ahead of a lot of other countries around the world where their vaccination rates have stalled because of some very partisan ways of interpreting things and people taking short-term thinking to what is a profound crisis across the world.

As a state that is very subject to extreme weather events—with cyclones, bushfires and floods—Queenslanders understand what collective action is about when we have got our backs against the wall. That does not say that we do not as a people criticise government and are afraid to stand up—we certainly do—but when the chips are down we understand that working together is absolutely critical. Queenslanders ought to be praised and congratulated for working with us on that. As for the protesters outside, less so, I have to say. The reality is that this pandemic is largely a pandemic on the unvaccinated at this point. Those people who have anti-vaccination views ought to look at the fourth wave in Germany, where it is cutting a swathe through the anti-vax communities. The death rate there is higher in the fourth wave than any previous wave.

You cannot make people do some things, but there have been some incredibly tragic consequences. We are not out of this yet. There is time for people to look at this issue in detail and change their minds because when you are exposed to COVID, especially if you have a health condition, you want to be vaccinated because it is bad news, to state the obvious.

We thank Queenslanders for their resolute efforts in helping us smash the curve. We thank them for their patience as we have sought to work around some of these issues. There will be more; there is still substantial public debate. It is disappointing, to be quite frank, to see the Leader of the Opposition continue to not listen to health advice in public debate. The recent border measures have been put in place because of cautious health advice about minimising risk of people coming into this state. To see it politicised at this late stage in the pandemic but with some way to go is very disappointing to say the least. That is not leadership. It is not understanding the issue. It is putting your own short-term interests ahead of the interests of the health of Queenslanders.


I hope we do not have any more deaths in this pandemic, but I suspect that is a distinct possibility. We all should be working to minimise the risk of that to Queenslanders, and short-term political shots undermining the health advice after nearly two years of this pandemic is disgraceful. That is not leadership, and it would be remiss of me not to point that out in this debate.

I thought wrongly at the beginning of this pandemic that something this challenging and in a lot of ways metaphysical as well as being a physical challenge to people's health would rewrite politics—that there would be a kind of a collaboration and consensus that we had not seen before—but that has not eventuated. That is a sad thing when people's health is at stake. We have now lost more than five million people across the world. The fact that some people have been unable to put away their short-term political interests for the health of people has been disappointing.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr BAILEY: I hear groans from the opposition who clearly have self-identified themselves as being some of the culprits there. They can interject all they like, but the reality is that without the strong leadership from the Premier and the Chief Health Officer this state would look very different, especially if they had taken the advice of the member for Broadwater when he bagged our world-leading response.

That is why it is necessary for governments to be armed with the tools necessary to respond to this changing environment for the benefit of all Queenslanders. This is in recognition of the fact that the bill proposes an extraordinary power to deal with an extraordinary crisis. However, it also bespeaks hope that we might soon be through the worst of this pandemic. I kind of think we are 39 kilometres into a 42-kilometre marathon. We are not out of it yet. It is still taxing, but we are getting close. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms KING** (Pumicestone—ALP) (3.57 pm): I rise to provide some words on the Justice Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Permanency) Amendment Bill 2021. One of the key public policy aspirations that we should always have as a government as we move through our massive COVID-19 response—whether that is here in Queensland, whether it is nationwide or whether it is across the globe—is ensuring that any identified benefits or reforms that come out of those responses are not discarded once the initial threat passes or when we have an opportunity to incorporate them but are indeed incorporated into the permanent policy landscape and are built upon from there. If I was going to get poetic—which is not something I tend to do very often in these speeches—I would say that we need to be collecting the shells that have washed up on the shore following the COVID tsunami and conserving them. That is what this bill is about. Whether we are talking about improvements in policy responses in health, small business or legal practice, we need to bank the benefits and make sure that the effort and cost of our COVID response is not wasted.

Of course, we can only take that time to review and consolidate the policy gains we have made because our COVID-19 health and economic response has been so far so extraordinarily successful here in Queensland. That is not an accident. It is down to the firm and decisive leadership of our Premier, our former and current health ministers, our Treasurer and every member of our leadership team and every member of our government. It has at times, I am sad to say, been in spite of the contributions of those opposite. Unlike other states and other countries, at this moment in time cases are low, we have almost nobody in hospital or in ICU with COVID-19 and we can encourage our communities to get vaccinated before we know COVID cases will arrive into our communities following our reopening as we reunite families ahead of Christmas.

This bill looks at conserving those successful COVID-19 changes as permanent reforms in four areas—document signing, management and witnessing; domestic and family violence reforms; liquor reforms; and matters to do with leasing.

I turn now to those matters of document management, witnessing and execution. Reforms around document management change longstanding accepted practices in courts and commerce, regarding making, signing and witnessing of important legal and commercial documents, the making of oaths and the execution of deeds; although if you are old-school and someone who likes to keep things on paper, you can stick with that. Many of the legal processes we are currently required to follow, or prior to COVID, are deeply anachronistic. They emerge from the fog of 18th and 19th centuries Inns of Court in the UK when no other options existed. This was a time when a large proportion of people could not read or write and needed to sign by making their mark, and an army of low-paid copy clerks made up the engine room of the legal and commercial sectors.

These changes bring the status of paper documents into line with electronic documents. They simplify execution requirements and allow for electronic signing and signing of counterpart documents. These changes and reforms represent the modernisation of what is a fairly archaic aspect of legal practice. I note the member for Bancroft's remarks about the use of parchment, vellum and the traditional requirements for signing and sealing of documents. More importantly, these changes increase Queenslanders' access to justice and all the more so when that access is at risk of being impeded, whether that is by ill health, advancing age—as in my electorate of Pumicestone—or

geographic isolation. Preparing, signing and filing affidavits and documents under onerous pre-COVID requirements was time-consuming and costly, so these changes represent huge reductions in costs for everyday Queenslanders who may find themselves involved with legal process in any capacity from giving a stat dec following a traffic accident to conveyancing and beyond.

This legislation enables reform that will quickly spread across our state. The changes will have their most value in our regional and remote communities where attending a solicitor's office, finding a JP or even, for some Queenslanders, potentially a printer could be challenging or could require hours of travel.

I note that the bill will enable nurse practitioners to sign certificates of capacity assessment for the purposes of advance health directives. I agree with the remarks made by the member for Greenslopes about the importance of maximising scope of practice for healthcare workers right across our sector. Speaking from my former involvement in health policy, I know how maximising scope of practice is absolutely essential to ensure that the Queensland health system can meet the challenges of the future as our population ages, as people develop more complex healthcare needs and as our population grows, so I very much welcome those changes on that basis.

In terms of the domestic and family violence reforms included in this bill, we know that these changes will reduce the amount of physical contact required between a victim or person seeking protection and other parties. They will allow matters to be heard by video and audio, and they will provide for electronic filing where approved by a principal registrar.

I welcome that magistrates will retain a discretion to decide that complainant victims either may or may not give their evidence remotely, as it is magistrates who are most familiar with the individual facts of each matter before them and they, as a result, are in the best position to make that determination.

The reforms in the bill will help minimise re-traumatisation of victims by not requiring them in every case to give their evidence in the physical presence of their alleged perpetrator, yet this legislation balances that against the need in certain cases for evidence to be tested by it being given and heard in person. These are complex and difficult issues in a complex and difficult space. I want to acknowledge the work of CADA, the Centre Against Domestic Abuse, and its staff and dedicated workers in and around my electorate, specifically in Caboolture.


Broadly, and again in the frame of consolidating policy gains that have emerged from the pandemic, this bill recognises that if a person, most commonly a woman, is experiencing domestic and family violence, she is highly likely to also be experiencing coercive control. Given that, any opportunity to reduce the chance that alleged perpetrators have to control, influence and frighten their victims will be a positive change. Important to me is that these changes are supported by the Women's Legal Service.

Domestic and family violence is an enormous burden on people in our communities. Anything that we can do to reduce that burden and make their experience of the court process even a tiny bit easier at one of the most vulnerable times in their life is valuable. By incorporating these quite minor, in some respects, COVID-19 reforms permanently, that becomes part of our much broader work in the domestic and family violence sector and overall we are continuing to create and confirm for the future real change in that space.

I will speak very briefly about the liquor changes that will authorise the sale of up to 1.5 litres of takeaway wine for sale with a takeaway meal. We have heard from other members that the previously existing takeaway framework allowed for the sale of one opened and one unopened bottle of takeaway wine to people dining on premises, so these new changes are consistent with the existing framework. Takeaway beer, wine, cider and other premixed drinks have not initially been included, as the government wanted to take a cautious and conservative approach by mirroring the existing measures. However, I welcome that the government is watching closely and working with craft brewers to maximise their opportunities to reach into new sectors in the future. It will be good to see that work go forward. Our small businesses in the hospitality sector have suffered so much during COVID and, given the increased margin available to them via the sale of alcoholic beverages, compared to many of their food products, I know that they will welcome this opportunity to provide takeaway wine in a setting where the harm-minimisation is strongly incorporated into the legislation and also the potential harm of those sales is very low because they are being consumed as part of a meal in a takeaway setting.

Once more, we are working to imbed positive reforms for small businesses that have emerged from the very testing times of the COVID-19 pandemic, as we should. In the context of the enormous policy efforts and challenges of the COVID-19 crisis response, making permanent the best of those

changes will bring real benefits and efficiencies to the lives of ordinary Queenslanders as we emerge from the health and economic challenges of COVID-19. Of course, there is a long way to go before we get to that point, but it speaks to the successful management of the pandemic so far that we are in a position right now to begin to consolidate even some of those reforms. I acknowledge the Attorney-General and the committee. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Hon. ML FURNER** (Ferry Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities) (4.07 pm): I rise to speak on the Justice Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Permanency) Amendment Bill. I would firstly like to thank the committee, particularly the committee chair, the member for Bancroft, and all the other members of the State Development and Regional Industries Committee for their work on this piece of legislation. This bill will firstly make commonsense improvements to the way aspects of our legal system operate.

One thing the COVID pandemic has taught us is the way we make changes in our day-to-day lives in how we go about things and how we engage with others, whether it be stakeholders or people in general. It has taught us that there are other ways of embracing technology. As a state, we have truly embraced the digital age. More meetings are held via teleconference or Teams virtually, rather than face to face. Certainly in my portfolio of agriculture, we were conducting regular meetings during those difficult days via teleconference or Teams with our stakeholders through the agricultural coordination group meetings, connecting with the whole food supply chain to make sure they understood the challenges ahead of them. The Palaszczuk government worked hand in hand with them, as we do with all our stakeholders, to make sure it was a seamless exercise of getting through those times of lockdown.

In September 2020, as an example, I hosted the first Queensland virtual trade mission with one of our biggest trading partners—Japan. We export the majority of our beef to Japan. That country is one of our largest, if not the largest, importers of our beautiful beef. It involved meeting with Queensland agribusinesses here in Brisbane and virtually with major buyers in Japan.

I want to commend also the previous Consul-General Tanaka for his involvement in making sure that engagement with Japanese businesses and his people in Japan worked very well. We saw from those engagements further opportunities for growth in produce, not only in beef but also vegetables. Kabocha pumpkin is one of those examples: we see for the first time the Japanese pumpkin grown in the Lockyer Valley and exported to Japan. There are plenty of examples around of what we have been able to achieve through this pandemic, not only furthering our interests and opportunities for agriculture but also the continual engagement with strong trading partners. I am looking forward to hosting the next virtual trade mission with some of our other important agriculture trading partners as well.

Last year the Palaszczuk government introduced temporary measures to make it easier to make, sign and witness legal documents. This made it easy for people to have affidavits, statutory declarations and other documents to be witnessed certified over video link or electronically. There was broad support from the legal community. In its submission to the committee the Queensland Law Society noted—

There are significant savings in cost and environmental impact. Electronic processes are more convenient, more efficient and ... more accessible. Regional Queensland is not as burdened by the tyranny of distance, or the paucity of services. Records are often more accessible, secure and reliable, as it is easier to store and locate documents executed electronically.

The last 18 months have shown that these measures can work. That is clearly the finding of the committee and those who provided evidence to the committee.

Queenslanders lead incredibly busy lives. Enabling them to witness or sign certain legal documents electronically or via video link can also improve efficiencies in our legal system. As the Minister for Rural Communities, I can only see benefits for the rural areas across our very diverse and large state. It reduces the need for people in rural areas, for instance, to travel large distances to make those legal documents.

Similarly, the bill's provision to allow nurse practitioners to sign certificates which form part of advance health directives reflects the important role they play in our health system, especially in rural and remote areas. In its submission to the committee inquiry, the Australian Medical Association Queensland said—

... having a nurse practitioner complete this certificate is useful in rural and remote Queensland where it may not be possible for patients to access a doctor in a timely manner to complete this task.

The AMAQ raised concerns whether nurse practitioners have the necessary training to sign these certificates, but the Department of Justice and Attorney-General has pointed out that nurse practitioners are nurses who have completed a masters level program and have the equivalent of three years

full-time experience at a clinically advanced nursing level. I think that satisfies the concerns the AMAQ raised. The Queensland system for making advance health directives has more safeguards than any other jurisdiction in Australia. The Palaszczuk government simply wants to make the lives of Queenslanders easier. These measures will do that.


This bill further enshrines protections for victims of domestic and family violence. Temporary changes introduced last year allowed for applications for emergency temporary protection orders or changes to domestic violence orders to be verified by a magistrate rather than through a statutory declaration. It also gives magistrates discretion to conduct all or part of proceedings via video or audio link. The bill will seek to make these changes permanent. That has my full support as a White Ribbon ambassador. For victims of domestic and family violence, having to confront their perpetrators in court can be extremely distressing and overwhelming. Giving magistrates the ability to use audio or video links for proceedings eases that burden on applicants seeking temporary protection or domestic violence orders.

The Women's Legal Service Queensland in its submission to the committee inquiry on this bill noted that this measure 'will facilitate increased accessibility to court services and make the court process safer and more convenient for women experiencing domestic violence'. That is a very positive step forward in this respect. This is especially pertinent to the rural communities of Queensland. In small regional communities, domestic violence victims often do not have the same access to privacy. They may not speak out because of what others in their town may think about their accusations against a perpetrator. The ability to attend court proceedings remotely can go some way to easing these concerns, allowing victims to apply for temporary protection orders or domestic violence orders in a more efficient and dignified way.

Domestic and family violence is definitely a scourge across our nation. As I mentioned earlier, as a White Ribbon ambassador I have sworn to speak out for victims of domestic and family violence and I always will. As a way of doing that and supporting domestic violence victims, on 3 December a team of people from my department and my office will be having our heads shaved. We have raised more than \$37,000 to date. We intend to raise a hell of a lot more. Every member in this chamber can contribute and support the Save the Children Refuge in South West Queensland to make sure they have appropriate funding to provide support to victims and their children who attend that shelter. Prior to 3 December we will be sharpening the clippers and doing a trial run. I am not suggesting it will be me; I am leaving myself for the 3rd. It will be an opportunity to see how it goes. The member for Logan can shave his beard at the same time, if he wishes. I encourage him to join us.

While I am talking about that event, I want to put on the record my appreciation of some of the team. I put on the record my appreciation for my director-general, Bob Gee, along with Wayne Hall, Stephen Smith and Annette from the department. I also acknowledge my team: Ron, a fellow who calls himself Regis, and Michelle. They will all be participating in raising funds to support victims of domestic and family violence. The provisions we see in this bill will make life easier for them in terms of how they deal with and raise concerns about matters with regard to perpetrators who violate them.

Another key measure is the temporary arrangements for licensed hospitality venues to sell up to 2.5 litres of alcohol with takeaway meals. This positive measure was well received in my area of Ferny Grove. I know that other members in this chamber have spoken about the benefits of that. There has been a sensible approach of reducing the quantity. Ultimately, the Commissioner of Liquor and Gaming will be able to vary permits with respect to that. I commend the bill to the House.


 **Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (4.17 pm): In speaking to the Justice Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Permanency) Amendment Bill 2021, I note that the bill will make permanent particular parts of the COVID-19 Emergency Response Act 2020, which is due to expire on 30 April 2022. I have no issues with making permanent the reforms in the bill that are related to domestic and family violence.

We were concerned when the initial temporary measures taken during COVID were proposed to be adopted as a permanent change to the Liquor Act. This would have allowed licensed restaurant operators to apply for a permanent condition of licence. I also noted at the time that the Queensland Hotels Association, the QHA, were against making this change to the Liquor Act permanent. This would have increased the number of liquor outlets in Queensland by 8,000 and placed restaurants in direct competition with the already established liquor outlets that have followed strict licensing laws and pay substantial licensing fees in the service and sale of liquor. We acknowledge that the government has significantly watered down these changes to the Liquor Act and note that the changes are now acceptable to the QHA.

The government has to be very careful that it does not use the COVID-19 emergency to push through unnecessary legislative changes that were only designed to be temporary in order to get business through the pandemic period. The government is, however, using the pandemic to wind back the clock to 1973, when our last segregation policy was renounced in Australia. Now we have another segregation policy, which is mandatory vaccination. Those were terrible days in history when certain members of our society were ostracised and not provided with the same rights and freedoms that others enjoyed.

Make no mistake about it: when the government uses the pandemic to marginalise certain members of our society—taking away their rights, threatening them with the loss of freedoms and the loss of employment—it is implementing another form of segregation. All the government has done is anger people to the point where those who are fully vaccinated are now united with those who are unvaccinated against these draconian measures.

I note that this is the 'Justice Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Forced Vaccination) Bill'. All this is doing is creating an angry response from business owners who are now in the position that they have to sack valued employees because of permanent health reasons or personal reasons not to get vaccinated. In my region the tourism industry, cafes, pubs and clubs have already suffered enough and are now feeling pressured to enforce and police patrons visiting their premises, which is impossible. It is a ridiculous policy which is made on the run without any thought to the long-term massive impact this will have on people's everyday lives and small business throughout the state.

 **Ms LUI** (Cook—ALP) (4.20 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Justice Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Permanency) Amendment Bill. The objectives of the bill are to make amendments to legislation in the justice portfolio to make permanent particular parts of the following temporary measures introduced during the COVID-19 emergency: the Justice Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Documents and Oaths) Regulation 2020, referred to as the documents reforms, and the Domestic and Family Violence Protection (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Regulation 2020, referred to as the domestic and family violence reforms. The bill will also amend the Liquor Act to allow licensed restaurant operators to apply for a permanent condition of licence authorising the sale of 1.5 litres of wine with a takeaway meal up to 10 pm. The bill also extends the expiry of the retail shop leases and other commercial leases regulation 2020.

COVID gave us more than we bargained for with a suite of challenges—challenges that prompted some positive changes in the way we do things and everything that this bill represents. When the Queensland government declared a public health emergency early in 2020, a string of temporary measures was implemented to prevent the risk of COVID-19 spreading across the state—measures that rightly kept Queenslanders safe since the start of the pandemic. I acknowledge the lockdowns and restrictions which inevitably restricted our ability to interact in the way we normally would as the risk of COVID spreading throughout our community was too high. No doubt these measures tested all of us and, whether personally or professionally, we all had to adapt our behaviours slightly to find new ways of doing things. Adapting our behaviours to the new norm allowed us to work smarter so that we could manage the risks of COVID and still get on with business as usual.

Looking back over the past two years, meeting in person, individuals, businesses and government have been required to adapt and engage with digital technology to find new ways of working without being physically present. The Justice Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Documents and Oaths) Regulation 2020 certainly gave people greater capacity to carry out important business during these COVID times by enabling technology to be used to make important legal documents. Having gone through the process of buying a house at the start of COVID, the anxiety surrounding COVID and wanting to do the right thing by my community and the stress associated with meeting deadlines and expectations was overwhelming at the best of times. This option certainly allows greater flexibility to manage business efficiently with the back and forth of legal documents to meet specific time frames. What is most important about these reforms is that we are moving away from the old and modernising the way for how important legal documents are created, in line with contemporary business practice and to improve accessibility.

The bill embraces digital technology to provide new and alternative pathways for document execution in addition to the ordinary physical approach which will allow individuals to choose their preferred method of document execution. The reforms will make it easier for individuals to make and sign important legal documents without the need to be physically present. According to the explanatory notes, government consultation on the proposed documents reforms was undertaken with a wide range of legal, health and community stakeholders, including the Queensland Law Society, the Bar

Association of Queensland, the Property Council of Australia, the Australian College of Nurse Practitioners and the Australian Medical Association of Queensland. I note that the legal stakeholders strongly supported the reforms to modernise the way certain documents were made, brought many efficiencies, reduced transaction costs and aligned with contemporary business practice.

These changes would most certainly go a long way and I can see many benefits for those who are severely disadvantaged—people with disability, our elderly, people where transport is an issue or ones who live in regional and remote settings where their capacity to be physically present to manage their affairs is limited. This legislative reform is welcomed and the beginning of a brand new chapter that will allow us to fully embrace technology to work for us against age-old traditions, making tangible, practical improvements to the making, signing and witnessing of documents easier for people to carry on with their daily business. Whether or not it is under the pressures of COVID, these new changes would remove the barriers and limitations that require a person to be physically present.


The same applies for the Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act that sits on the foundations of outdated practices which set out the legislative framework for providing civil protection from domestic and family violence through domestic violence orders and police protection notices. Applications for DVOs are made to a Magistrates Court and can be made by the aggrieved, a police officer or an authorised person or another person acting for an aggrieved. Ordinarily, private applicants—an applicant who is not a police officer—must verify an application for a DVO by way of a signed and witnessed statutory declaration before a lawyer, JP, Cdec or other persons authorised by the Oaths Act 1867. A private applicant may then file the application with the court by delivering the application personally, or by post, to the registry. A party to a proceeding under the DFVP Act may appear before a magistrate in person or be represented by a lawyer.

The DFV COVID regulation put in place modified arrangements to reduce physical contact between persons to support social distancing, self-quarantine and self-isolation requirements under the Queensland Chief Health Officer's public health directives. The bill amends the DFVP Act and DFVP Rules to increase the accessibility of the court for applicants in urgent situations by providing the option for private applications for protection orders and variations of DVOs to be verified between an applicant and a magistrate as an alternative to verifying the application by statutory declaration for the purpose of the court making a temporary protection order before the respondent is served the application. This has certainly been a long time coming for victims of domestic and family violence and these changes are absolutely necessary to alleviate the extra pressure and stress for victims applying for domestic violence orders.

The bill also amends the Liquor Act to provide a permanent ability for licensees holding a subsidiary on-premises licence to be authorised to sell a limited amount of wine for takeaway or delivery with a takeaway meal. The reforms differ from the current COVID-19 temporary takeaway liquor authorities. However, the changes resulting from stakeholder consultation will reduce the potential for harm and provide greater regulatory control. To reduce the financial burden and assist restaurant operators transition from the temporary arrangements, the bill proposes to waive the application fee for eligible licensees who apply for the permanent takeaway liquor condition on or before 30 June 2022. The fee waiver will only apply if the licensee was subject to a COVID-19 takeaway liquor authority under part 10A of the Liquor Act before commencement of the provisions.

This bill is a good and positive bill. It is absolutely needed. These issues were put in place as temporary measures to deal with the high risk of COVID in this state, but we have all seen that these measures worked effectively in keeping Queenslanders safe. I commend this government for doing such an absolutely fantastic job in working with communities right throughout the state. This is just another example of the types of measures that were positive and that kept Queenslanders' health and wellbeing safe whilst also looking after and addressing some of the limitations that COVID posed to many communities.

Given that the temporary measures were well received by businesses, stakeholders and the community, I commend the Attorney-General for her work in making these reforms permanent. I also acknowledge the work of the committee to bring this bill to the House. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr KATTER** (Traeger—KAP) (4.29 pm): I rise to make a relatively brief contribution to the Justice Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Permanency) Amendment Bill. My contribution will be focused around amendments to the Liquor Act. I took particular interest in the submissions of the QHA. I have a particular interest in that regulated space for pubs. I think there is an ongoing potential threat with disruptive technologies and new innovations to encroach on that space. I want to focus on the fact

that many of these policies and ideas that come out of George Street and permeate out through the regions have inadvertent negative consequences. They are quite often unintended but have a different application.

The regions do not enjoy the fluidity of labour and capital as is enjoyed in the city. I listened with interest to the contribution of the member for Clayfield, which was fairly comprehensive. The member went through a number of the new innovative ideas, such as Deliveroo, which delivers food, but I am not sure anyone has touched on the fact that Pizza Hut has been identified as a place where you can get a pizza pie with a six-pack delivered. That is nothing to do with this legislation, but it is an unintended consequence of when this type of innovation is rolled out. I am pretty sure we could rely on the fact that not all those delivery persons for Pizza Hut are going to have an RSA. I know the Attorney-General is aware of this and is trying to remedy it.

I am appreciative of the fact that the Attorney-General took the extension of the wine—the beer, cider, craft beers and premixed drinks—out of the takeaway meals. I still labour the point that out in the regions it could be an expectation that you are creating a different experience at a cafe in a city by making these permanent changes where the winery from down south supplies wine to a cafe and they say, ‘Did you enjoy your meal? We have another couple of bottles of wine here. We can supply you with that,’ therefore bypassing the hotels. I do acknowledge the point that was made that in a lot of these areas they buy from the hotels, but I think it is pretty safe to assume that when we are talking about innovation there is an expectation that people will move more towards that space where you are dealing direct with those suppliers of wines and therefore you are cutting out the hotels.

In the city it is reasonable to assume you create more market because there is a massive tourism market to tap into, but if you are in Julia Creek or Hughenden you are really just robbing Peter to pay Paul. If there is a cafe across the road from the pub, you are not magically creating a different market or drawing on different clientele; it is the same people, the same town. You have just set the local cafe against the pub. I do not think most cafes in regional areas were geared up and thinking, ‘You beauty, this is coming in. It will be a huge advantage to us.’ I think it is much more likely to be in the metropolitan areas where they would see a direct and immediate benefit. It was an idea that was made with the city in mind and not initially considering the unintended consequences that would be more acute in rural and remote areas.

I am still unsure, and I would ask for some clarity around this in the minister’s response, about the fee structure. Again there are unintended consequences. It has been said, ‘It is just selling a bit more booze,’ but built into the fee structure for pubs is the fact that we have to monitor, police and regulate these things. That all costs money and we are going to pass it back on to you. Now we have another 8,000 potential outlets that will move into this space that are not contributing to that. The proposal was that they pay \$220. Are they paying their fair share of the contribution that the pubs do in their fee structure? I am also unsure whether they still have the same requirements on the managers that oversee the RSA. They need special certification for the on-site duty manager.

In closing, I do not like the fact that we are expanding this. I think it is safe to assume that there will be more effort in the future some time to expand on this. It does represent a direct threat. I do not accept the conclusion that the member for Clayfield drew that liquor sales have gone up and therefore it should not be a problem, because that is just a bump. I think the liquor sales will level out in those regions. We should be thinking about the impact of this policy in the long term not just as it applies now. Having a good stimulus of alcohol sales in the last year or two does not negate the fact that it will diminish the trade that these places have, and it must in these regional areas where they directly compete. I do not see where there is benefit. Talking about Deliveroo is irrelevant in Julia Creek, Hughenden, Mirani and the areas of Hill and Hinchinbrook. That is not reality. It has a different application. Cafes are geared for selling food and pubs are geared for the security around the selling of alcohol.

The last point I would like to make is that in Mount Isa we are acutely aware of alcohol consumption. We successfully knocked out the building of a new bottle shop in the middle of town. We are trying to restrict the access to alcohol, particularly for people coming out of the riverbed in Mount Isa. It is a bit uncomfortable to talk about actions that are going to create more access to alcohol. I know that is drawing a long bow as we are only talking about wine at cafes and restaurants, but it is another consideration for the future when these issues come up.



Hon. DE FARMER (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development) (4.37 pm): I am very pleased to speak in support of the Justice Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Permanency) Amendment Bill 2021 which, as we know,

is to make permanent certain temporary regulatory measures in the justice portfolio introduced during the COVID-19 pandemic. I note that the State Development and Regional Industries Committee has recommended that the bill be passed. I thank that committee for its ongoing work on this important legislation. I also thank the Attorney-General, who has had stewardship over the progress of this legislation for the last year as we have navigated through COVID.

This bill will complement the significant work the Palaszczuk government has done to support small businesses through the COVID-19 pandemic. I will speak to a number of issues that are relevant to small business and then several of the other measures as well, one of which is very dear to my heart. The bill contains several relevant small business provisions. Clauses 3 and 4 will extend the expiry date of regulations made under section 23 of the COVID-19 Emergency Response Act until two years after the COVID-19 legislation expiry date—that is, until 30 April 2024—and these clauses will result in the Retail Shop Leases and Other Commercial Leases (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Regulation 2020 (Leases Regulation) having its expiry extended by two years.

Supporting small business is a key part of Queensland's plan for economic recovery. We have committed more than \$14.5 billion towards supporting the health and economic response to COVID-19, which has helped to protect the health and wellbeing of Queenslanders and it has assisted small businesses to remain open.

In 2019-20, small business accounted for 97 per cent of Queensland's business sector, employing almost one million people and contributing \$117.3 billion to the economy. We know that if we do not back small business then we will not make the economic recovery that we need, and that has guided our decisions in this space. Over the past two years small businesses have been challenged as never before due to the far-reaching economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, but across the state businesses have shown incredible resilience in responding, adapting and innovating to drive our economic recovery.

It has been a huge privilege to travel across the state and speak to businesspeople, many of whom are going gangbusters, I have to say. It is fantastic to meet businesspeople who are seeing a whole raft of new opportunities to grow and succeed. However, at the same time we recognise that many businesses are struggling to survive, and I acknowledge the Minister for Tourism. We know that particular sectors are struggling. Our government has worked very hard to help those small businesses remain competitive in these uncertain times while protecting Queensland from the effects of COVID-19. Our efforts have meant that Queensland has been able to focus on coming out of restrictions as quickly as possible so that communities can reconnect to their normal social activities and keep our economy moving by supporting Queensland's industries, businesses and jobs. Of course, the biggest challenge that now faces us is making sure that all Queenslanders get vaccinated. That is what will most protect small businesses. It will ensure that they can stay open and keep trading.

In addition to the stories that we are hearing, from the figures we can see that the Queensland economy is very strong. Monthly consumer and business sentiment data shows positive signs and that is supported by the backing we have provided to business, particularly small business. As at October 2021, the number of employed people in Queensland has increased by 90,000 since prior to COVID-19. Real retail trade continues to rise with a 0.2 per cent increase in the September quarter to be almost nine per cent higher than pre-virus levels. On state final demand measures, in the June quarter 2021 the Queensland economy grew by two per cent to be 11.5 per cent annually and overall the Queensland economy is up 4.6 per cent from pre-COVID levels.

I am also very pleased to see that the proposed reforms in this bill include amendments to the Liquor Act 1992 to reduce regulatory barriers for licensed restaurant and cafe operators while maintaining a safe environment in which liquor is sold responsibly with a meal or prepared food. Licensed restaurants will be able to apply for a permanent licence condition to sell 1.5 litres of wine with takeaway meals until 10 pm. The introduction of these permanent licensing conditions will be welcomed by eligible licensees. Of course, this support for small licensed businesses also means support for Queensland's wine, brewing and artisan liquor producers, building on the introduction of the artisan liquor licence that was debated and passed by this House earlier this year.

The temporary Office of the Queensland Small Business Commissioner was established under the COVID-19 Emergency Response Act 2020. The temporary Small Business Commissioner has played a critical role in supporting businesses to avoid lengthy and costly commercial leasing disputes during the COVID-19 pandemic with early information, advice and mediation services. The establishment of a permanent commission office will mean that small businesses will have a clearly


identifiable single point of contact for advice and assistance. Of course, legislation regarding the Small Business Commissioner is before the House and will be debated at a later sitting date so I will avoid further anticipation of that debate.

The extension of the Retail Shop Leases and Other Commercial Leases (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Regulation 2020, the leases regulation, will play a crucial role in helping small businesses affected by the pandemic. The leases regulation puts into practice the national code principles that set out the obligations that both lessees and lessors to affected lease disputes must have complied with during March to December 2020. These principles prevented many small businesses from being evicted due to a failure to pay rent during the crucial early stages of the pandemic. The leases regulation also contains the mediation process that parties to those affected lease disputes can undertake to resolve their disputes through the QSBC. This process has helped resolve many affected lease disputes and saved those small businesses the time, stress and money involved in pursuing formal legal proceedings.

We know that not all disputes that arose during 2020 as a result of the pandemic have been resolved. That is why it is vital that the leases regulation continues to operate beyond its expiry date and into 2024 to make sure that businesses have a mechanism to resolve their disputes. The leases regulation has played a very important role to date. It is vital that it continues to operate so that small businesses in this state have the support that they need.

The bill contains domestic and family violence reforms. It makes permanent certain measures that were introduced by the Domestic and Family Violence Protection (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Regulation 2020, which includes the provision in certain circumstances of alternative options to the traditional methods of verifying and filling out applications and appearing at domestic and family violence proceedings. As the former domestic and family violence prevention minister, I know how welcomed these reforms were when they were initially introduced after COVID. Since COVID hit us, on a number of occasions the Attorney-General has advised the House of the increase in reports of domestic and family violence. In the first three or four months of that time, lockdown was extremely stressful for victims of domestic and family violence and the service providers who were trying to assist them.

I will always remember hearing the story of a victim who had to hide in the toilet in order to talk to a magistrate to get a DVO. The magistrate knew that she could only make 'yes' or 'no' responses because the perpetrator could walk through the door at any moment. There are so many stories of what was happening to victims at that time and it is fantastic to see that we have such practical solutions. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms BOLTON** (Noosa—Ind) (4.46 pm): Since COVID-19 entered our world nearly two years ago, we have had to deal with, decipher and debate so much. Its virulence, transmission, symptoms and magnitude—not only in its direct health impacts but also through the consequences of responses and directives—have disrupted lives; traumatised through loss of businesses, homes and jobs; and impacted mental health through uncertainty, conflict of information and misinformation. Isolation, fatigue and the sheer duration of the pandemic have been horrendous.

However, as can happen in the hardest of times, there are surprising positives including real-time innovations and revelations. Examples include telehealth, the collaboration between scientists and clinicians, the rise of parents engaging as educators through home schooling, the decrease in the need for physical attendance at meetings—reducing emissions at the same time—and community initiatives that have seen greater connectivity between and support for neighbours. During this time technology has ensured that patients continue to be treated, children continue to be taught, government and community services continue to be offered and many businesses continue to transact as well as expand when needing to pivot. It has also meant that, through technology, we have had to find new ways of working without being physically present.

The measures outlined in the Justice Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Permanency) Amendment Bill 2021 make temporary adaptations permanent through amending particular parts of legislation and regulation utilised during this time to allow individuals, businesses and government to continue to use digital technology to meet their needs. For example, the bill amends the Justice Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Documents and Oaths) Regulation 2020 to allow certain legal documents to be signed electronically or witnessed over audiovisual link that normally must be signed on paper in the physical presence of signatories and witnesses.

The bill also allows powers of attorney for businesses but not sole traders to be signed electronically. As well, electronic conveyancing will allow instruments and documents needed for property transactions to be digitally prepared, signed, settled and lodged. In addition, it permanently

implements the arrangement under the DO regulation to allow nurse practitioners in addition to doctors to sign a certificate which forms part of an assisted health directive. A number of submitters outlined broad support for the document reforms, including the Queensland Law Society, that both the legal profession and community derive significant benefits from increased access to justice, certainty, reliability and cost savings.

During COVID-19, the Domestic and Family Violence Protection (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Regulation 2020 put in place arrangements to necessarily reduce physical contact between persons seeking protection under the DFVP Act or responding to an application for a domestic violence order. This is now a permanent provision limited to urgent situations for the purpose of seeking a temporary protection order where an applicant is unable to access a justice of the peace, commissioner for declarations or a solicitor and before the respondent is served the application.

The bill also amends the Liquor Act 1992 to provide a permanent ability for certain licensed restaurants to be authorised to sell a limited amount of wine for takeaway or delivery with a takeaway meal. This was an absolute bonus during the times we were locked down. Many submitters indicated support for the benefits as well as there being no evidence of alcohol related harm; however, some did not support the proposal, raising concerns about the lack of community need or justification for continuing arrangements on a permanent basis because of risks associated with the irresponsible supply of liquor and adverse intoxication outcomes. Within my community there have not been any concerns. Of course, a number of amendments have been foreshadowed during the course of the day. As we go along, I will support these.

In supporting this bill we need to be mindful of creeping authoritarianism, which is being strongly opposed in my community and elsewhere. Governments have a responsibility to enact limitations proportionate to a threat. We must make sure that we do not accept restrictions that pose a greater threat than are needed to keep us safe. I thank the committee, submitters, the minister, departmental representatives and attendees to the public hearing and public briefing for their work. I commend the bill to the House.



Mr MICKELBERG (Buderim—LNP) (4.51 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate in relation to the Justice Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Permanency) Amendment Bill, a bill which seeks to make permanent some regulatory changes in areas such as the execution of documents, domestic and family violence reforms, changes to the Liquor Act and in relation to retail and commercial leases, all of which have been temporary up to this point but are to be made permanent.

In my contribution today I would like to address the effect that the provisions contained in this bill will have on Queensland's small and family businesses. I think all members would accept that the regulatory burden that Queensland businesses have had to deal with is significant and has increased over the passage of time. Many of those regulations perform important functions and protect Queenslanders from adverse outcomes; however, many do not. Additionally, many regulations are excessively onerous and have not kept pace with changes in technology and best practice. I acknowledge that all levels of government have imposed—and continue to impose—more and more regulation that small businesses must comply with, each piece of which means they spend less time delivering the products and services their business exists to deliver to the Queensland community. With all that said, it is good to see a bill that seeks to streamline a small number of regulations that will make life a bit easier for Queensland's small and family businesses.

The reforms contained in this bill in relation to the execution of documents make sense and will make the process less complex than has traditionally been the case. Provisions to facilitate documents being signed electronically or witnessed over audiovisual link are well overdue. As the Queensland Law Society stated in its submission, these initiatives will result in 'increased access to justice, increased certainty and reliability as well as time and cost savings'. Having tried to complete a house purchase when deployed for an extended period overseas, I have experienced firsthand some of the challenges that exist when Queenslanders do not have access to the public infrastructure that many of us take for granted. Had the document execution reforms contained in this bill existed in 2013, my life would have been a lot easier. I want to lend my support to these changes so that others do not have the same experience unnecessarily in the future.

The reforms in relation to retail shop leases and other commercial leases have also facilitated better outcomes for Queensland's small and family businesses. In establishing good-faith principles under which lessees and lessors are required to negotiate, these changes have supported the work of the Small Business Commissioner in mediating tenancy disputes for businesses across the state, so we support these provisions.

The amendments to the Liquor Act seek to provide a permanent ability for licensed restaurants which hold a subsidiary on-premises licence to be authorised to sell 1½ litres of wine with a takeaway meal or as a part of the delivery of a takeaway meal. I note that there was a number of submitters to the bill who were concerned with this provision. I acknowledge the legitimate concerns expressed by hoteliers and members in this place, including the members for Southern Downs, Traeger and others. More generous provisions have existed for many months and they have not resulted in marked adverse outcomes for Queensland pubs and bottle shops. The committee heard evidence that the majority of restaurants purchase their liquor from local hotels and bottle shops, which is not unexpected given the volumes that most restaurants and cafes sell. It is my view that providing consumers the choice to purchase wine from a licensed premises with a takeaway meal is reasonable and in line with community expectation. In its evidence the CCIQ stated in relation to the bill—

... we support the intent behind making the liquor licence reforms permanent. To re-emphasise, we believe that is business friendly because it reduces the cost and complexity of doing business for sectors affected by COVID-19. Permanency adds certainty and adds clarity for future reference.

I support recommendation 5 contained in the committee report of the Labor controlled State Development and Regional Industries Committee which suggested that the Attorney-General amend the bill to extend the provision to wine, beer, cider or premixed drinks rather than just be limited to wine as contained in the bill. I acknowledge that the Attorney-General has said that the suggestion will be considered in the future, but for me it is a nonsense to limit the provision only to wine, as many speakers already observed. The fact that committee members from both the LNP and Labor came to this conclusion lends weight to the fact that there is little basis for these changes to apply only to the sale of takeaway wine.

Many submitters to the bill expressed reservations with the fact that the bill reduces the amount of liquor that can be sold from 2.25 litres to 1.5 litres, effectively reducing the amount of wine that can be sold from three bottles to two. I note that independent brewers, Restaurant & Catering Australia and the CCIQ, amongst others, were all opposed to this reduction, while the QHA and Clubs Queensland supported the change. Presumably the rationale behind this change is to reduce the potential impact on sales of wine from bottle shops and pubs, because I would suggest that any public health benefit from such a reduction is tenuous at best. The CCIQ addressed this issue in testimony to the committee when a representative stated—

... we must also ensure this amendment bill does not unintentionally stifle competition. We would not want to have a sector protected at the expense of a different sector that wants to sell liquor under what are clearly pretty rigorous conditions. Let us not stifle competition. I think that is one unintended consequence we would like to bring to the table.

While the past 18 months have been particularly challenging for small and family businesses across the state, one of the positive outcomes is that there has been a greater focus on reducing the complexity of doing business. This has partly been a response to the fact that businesses have needed all the help they could get, partly because consumer behaviour has changed and partly because, since such temporary regulatory changes have been made, it has quickly become obvious that adverse outcomes have not resulted.

Governments at all levels need to do more to reduce the burden of regulation, which stifles productivity and unnecessarily limits the efficient allocation of resources. In conclusion, I will be supporting these changes because they are a small first step towards achieving that objective.

Debate, on motion of Mr Mickelberg, adjourned.

MOTION

Caloundra, Youth Remand Centre



Mr BLEIJIE (Kawana—LNP) (4.58 pm): I move—

That this House notes:

1. the Palaszczuk Labor government's plan to build a youth remand centre in Gregson Place, Caloundra;
2. the proposed youth remand centre will be close to a school, a retirement village, an RSL, an early learning centre, a hospital and an ambulance station.

and calls on:

1. the member for Caloundra to stand with the over 6,000 residents who signed a petition against this youth remand centre and strongly oppose it; and
2. the Palaszczuk Labor government to listen to the people of Caloundra and abandon its plans for a youth remand centre in Caloundra.

I can categorically tell this House that the LNP does not support a youth justice jail facility in Caloundra. We never wanted it. No-one in Caloundra wants it—other than the new member for Caloundra. Caloundra residents have been absolutely sold a pup. In all the brochures and glossy flyers about why he should be elected member for Caloundra, the member never said that in the first 12 months he would be bringing a youth jail to the beautiful Caloundra on the Sunshine Coast, an area I have called home for most of my life.

People who have lived on the coast most of their lives know that where they are planning this youth jail—Gregson Place—is next to an RSL, a hospital, an ambulance station, a school and a funeral parlour. That is where they are placing this jail. Do not be bought off by the fact that the Labor government are now saying it is going to be different to other youth detention centres. The minister, the government and the member for Caloundra say that when there are capacity issues at the other youth detention centres the Caloundra youth jail will be used. It is the same type of prisoners going there.

Here is the question: if they are transferring people from the Cleveland Youth Detention Centre and the Brisbane Youth Detention Centre, which are maximum security youth detention centres, to the Caloundra facility and the Caloundra facility is not a maximum security facility, does that mean community safety is worse? I suspect it is worse. We only have to look at the articles in the *Sunshine Coast Daily* to understand this—‘Caloundra no place for a youth jail’. The Sunshine Coast Council unanimously moved a motion opposing the youth jail in Caloundra. We have lawyers opposed to the youth jail in Caloundra. A lawyer in Caloundra went so far as to say that they should go to the expanded facility at Woodford.

We have LNP members opposed to a youth jail. We have over 6,000 residents who signed a petition opposed to a youth jail. The Sunshine Coast Council is opposed to a youth jail. The school principal of Caloundra Christian College, which is next door, is opposed to it. An article reads, ‘Caloundra Christian College principal concerned for student safety amid youth jail plans.’

The only person who seems determined to ensure that this youth jail is built in the heart of Caloundra is the member for Caloundra. In every media article we read about the youth jail everyone is opposed to the youth jail other than one media article which says, ‘Caloundra MP defends proposed youth remand centre in leaflet drop.’ He went so far as to send out to his constituents a leaflet explaining how great this youth jail facility will be and the benefits it will bring to the people of Caloundra. I suspect it has more to do with succession planning for the member for Caloundra so he has a job to go to in 2024. Then he does not have to drive back to Woodford. He will be closer to home.

The LNP will do everything we can to ensure this youth justice facility never happens. I see that next on the speaking list is the Minister for Police—the big, tough police minister he was this morning, peacocking in the aisle this morning as he was trying to convince this parliament that he is tough on crime. He said, ‘If you are tough on COVID, you are tough on the borders.’ This police minister is nothing but a pipsqueak. He is all tough—


Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Pause the clock. I would ask you to withdraw that unparliamentary language.

Mr BLEIJIE: I withdraw. The police minister came in here this morning beating his chest, but we all know what the police talk about and what they say about this police minister—absolutely weak. If the Minister for Police wants to talk about being tough on borders then say that to my constituent Grant who is over the border and is suicidal. Tell Grant that the government is keeping him across the border because it is being tough. What a joke. What a weird performance from the police minister this morning.

The LNP protect community safety. We would have never ensured that Caloundra had a youth jail. Caloundra was promised a new police station. All they are getting is a youth jail. The community will be less safe because of this youth justice facility. If only Caloundra had a member of parliament who would stand up for them and against this government and oppose the youth jail. That is what a real member for Caloundra with the best interests for his constituents would do. They have not got it.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Before I call the next member, member for Kawana, I would ask you to withdraw that further unparliamentary language.

Mr BLEIJIE: I withdraw.

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (5.04 pm): I move the following amendment—

That all words after ‘House’ be omitted and the following inserted:

‘endorses the Palaszczuk Labor government’s strong youth justice reforms, which include the toughest youth bail laws in the country.’

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Order! The member on his feet is moving an amendment. I would like to be able to hear that amendment.

Mr RYAN: I continue—

endorses the Palaszczuk Labor Government's strong youth justice reforms, which include the toughest youth bail laws in the country.

Let us firstly talk about the Caloundra watch house. Ever since that building was built it has been a place of detention. Ever since it has been built that place has had the capability and capacity to hold people who break the law. It is used to hold people who do bad things against our community. It is a place of detention.

While we consult with the community about the use of that facility, it is important—the member for Kawana is very good at rewriting history; the member for Kawana is very good at not being clear and up-front with the community, including his own community and also his own party, I think—to refer to a document entitled the *Draft youth detention centre demand management strategy: 2013-2023* produced by the Department of Justice and Attorney-General. Who was the boss of that department at that time? It was the member for Kawana. I bet he has not even squared this away with his colleagues. Let us have a look at this. It had to be RTIed. The member for Kawana did not want the public to know about this. Part 4, 'Proposed management strategies—medium term options', states—

Potential use of the Caloundra police watch house—

wait for it!

for detaining young offenders on short-term remand.

It was his department that proposed it in the first place. Let us have a look at it a bit further. They talk about medium-term strategies. It states—

One key medium-term solution has been identified for further detailed consideration to manage the youth detention population until new capacity comes on stream. This includes potential use of the Caloundra police watch house.

They did not just consider it; they actually investigated its use. They go on—

An initial investigation into the Caloundra police watch house occurred to determine the viability for use as a youth detention.

Then they went on to talk about the benefits of using it. This is a cracker. They did not just think about it, they did not just consider it, they did not just investigate it, they actually recommended a suitability assessment. It says, 'The option is suitable.'

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Minister, resume your seat.

Mr LANGBROEK: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I draw your attention to standing order 244(5), which reads—

Once members have entered the Chamber they must take their seats and not stand in any of the passages or gangways.

I ask you to so rule about the member who is speaking from the gangway or the aisle.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The level of interjection generally in this debate has become very disruptive and unruly and I will not be tolerating it as we move forward. Member for Surfers Paradise, there is no point of order and your point of order borders on frivolous.

Mr RYAN: The question for the member for Kawana is: when he was the boss of the department that found the Caloundra police watch house suitable, did he square this with his community?

Mr Krause interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock.

Mr RYAN: Did he square this with his colleagues?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Minister, resume your seat. Member for Scenic Rim, I am placing you on a warning.

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Leader of the Opposition, you are warned.

Mr RYAN: When he was the boss of this department, did he square with his colleagues—

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Kawana, you are warned.

Mr RYAN:—that his agency found it suitable? This government is taking strong action when it comes to keeping the community safe. We have taken strong action on youth justice. It has been confirmed—

Mr Lister interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Southern Downs, that interjection is completely unnecessary. You can leave the chamber for one hour.

Mr STEVENS: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Under standing order 253, I understood the member had to be warned before he had to leave the parliament.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I was attempting to give him a warning. He would have heard it if he were not yelling at the top of his lungs. The member can leave the chamber for one hour.

Whereupon the honourable member for Southern Downs withdrew from the chamber at 5.09 pm.

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I draw to the attention of the House that the minister four minutes ago moved an amendment. No member has had an amendment circulated to them. We are in a debate and members should have the courtesy of knowing what we are debating with the amendment that has been so moved. I ask the minister to tell us where the amendment is.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I wish to advise members that the amendment is being copied and will be circulated as soon as the attendants can reasonably achieve that.

Mr RYAN: It has been confirmed by experts and practitioners in this space, including representatives of the Youth Crime Taskforce, Assistant Commissioner Scanlon and Senior Executive Director Michael Drane from the department, that the laws that we have in Queensland are the strongest youth justice bail laws in the nation and they are achieving their intended purpose. They are ensuring that more of those serious, recidivist, hard-core offenders are in custody longer and more often. In fact, there are 100 more of these offenders in custody today than prior to our reforms.

Our government has taken strong action. Those offenders are being held to account. We are not just backing it in with strong laws. We are backing it in with additional resources for youth justice and the Queensland Police Service which is making a difference on the ground. That is what we are hearing from practitioners and from police officers: it is making a difference on the ground. We are also backing it in with additional resources for our police statewide, with extra police personnel and youth justice co-responders being established, doing that front-end work so that we can intervene and prevent crime. I commend the amendment to the House.


Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I draw your attention to standing order 94 on relevance of amendments, which says, 'Every amendment must be relevant to the question which it is proposed to amend.' I put to you, Mr Deputy Speaker, that the amendment proposed by the minister has nothing to do with the original intention of the motion, which talked about a Caloundra youth remand centre. I ask that you rule the amendment out of order.

Deputy Speaker's Ruling, Amendment Out of Order

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Thank you for your point of order, Manager of Opposition Business. I am going to rule the amendment out of order under that standing order.

Mr RYAN: Deputy Speaker—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I would like you to wait until I finish my ruling before you rise to your feet, Minister. The original motion relates very specifically to a particular facility in a geographical area. The amendment relates to broad policy directions of the government. Therefore, under that standing order, the amendment is not relevant to the motion that has been put.

 **Mr PURDIE** (Ninderry—LNP) (5.14 pm): I rise to support the original motion moved by the member for Kawana. It is interesting to follow the police minister. He had five minutes on his feet to justify to all of us here and to all of the people of Caloundra and the Sunshine Coast why this is a good decision by the government. The minister likes to come in here and talk tough, like he did just then and like he did this morning, but we in this House know and the people of Caloundra know and the people of Queensland know that actions speak louder than words. This government has moved a litany of dire amendments to water down the Youth Justice Act in this state which has ended in tears.

Mr RYAN: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. You have just made a very specific ruling about relevance and the member has been going for almost a minute now and has not spoken at all about a specific facility nor has he kept to the motion before the House. He is talking about everything else.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Members to my left, I do not appreciate interjections while I am trying to take and consider a relevant point of order. I will start to warn members if that occurs again. I have been listening to the contribution of the member. I am giving some latitude to see whether we are getting back to the tenet of the motion, as we generally tend to do in presiding over this House. I will continue to listen, but I ask the member to stay relevant to the motion.

Mr PURDIE: I return to the Youth Justice Act, which is an overarching act which police use every day when they detain offenders and put them in a youth justice facility. That takes me directly to the point we are going to be talking about today—the youth jail in Caloundra.

When talking about actions speaking louder than words, we saw in 2015 one of the first bills tabled in this parliament by this government was a youth justice amendment bill that blatantly watered down powers available to our police to protect the community from repeat violent young offenders. The objectives of that bill were (1) to scrap the youth bail offence; (2) to reinstate detention as a last resort as the overarching No. 1 principle in the Youth Justice Act. I do not know whether I have told members of the parliament before, but I used to be a police officer. I like to keep it on the down low.

Mr RYAN: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I know that you were seeking some advice. If the amendment were relevant then the member's contribution would be relevant. The member has not discussed anything about the facility.

Mr Janetzki interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Resume your seat, please. Member for Toowoomba South, you are warned. I had previously instructed the House that I do not appreciate members interjecting while I am trying to deal with and take a point of order.

Mr RYAN: Deputy Speaker, it is about relevance and consistency with your previous ruling about the amendment. If the amendment was still in order, what the member for Ninderry would be saying would be entirely relevant but, given your ruling and what the member for Ninderry is saying now, it is entirely irrelevant.

Mr KRAUSE: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member for Morayfield is clearly reflecting on the chair. I ask you to rule his point of order out of order.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The amendment that you have ruled out of order had never been put to the House anyway, but that does not stop members from rebutting points made by other members in this debate—which has happened since the day this parliament opened. Members contribute to the debate and then it is open and there is opportunity for other members to rebut certain points. Whether or not an amendment has been ruled out of order does not change what the minister said in his contribution. I put to you, Mr Deputy Speaker, in response to the minister's point of order that the members are entitled in this House to rebut the points made by the minister.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: In response to both your points of order, I will listen to what the member has to say and make an appropriate ruling. I was taking some advice while that was going on. I will take some advice from the Clerk. The amendment was ruled out of order, as you correctly pointed out. The minister's contribution was specifically to the amendment. Therefore, it is not available for rebuttal. I call the member for Ninderry to make your contribution relevant to the motion.

Mr PURDIE: I like to keep it on the down low, but I was a detective in Caloundra where this proposed youth jail is planned. The minister just had five minutes to explain to us why it is a good idea but he could not. He spent four minutes going through a document from 2013 in which a department

person recommended that the watch house be converted to a youth jail. Do members know what the difference was? Leadership! The boss at that time, the member for Kawana, said no. That is why until recently the police still had a watch house at their disposal at Caloundra.

I am talking directly about the failures of this government that have led to the requirement for a youth jail in Caloundra. When you go back and look at the next step in their litany of failures it is like watching an episode of *Seconds from Disaster*. In 2016 another youth justice amendment act moved 17-year-olds into the Youth Justice Act, essentially moving all 17-year-olds held in prison into youth detention facilities. At that time I can say that youth detention facilities were already at capacity. I was on the front line at the time and we questioned that decision. I believe that the president of the police union, Ian Leavers, came out at that time and said, 'More planning goes into building a local McDonald's than went into that decision.' Fast-forward a couple of years. In May 2019 there was expose on *Four Corners* that revealed 90 kids were being held in police watch houses predominantly here in Brisbane.

An opposition member interjected.

Mr PURDIE: Exactly right. Fast-forward a couple of months. In August that year—still talking about kids in detention—there was another bill tabled in this parliament to water down the Youth Justice Act. The objective of the bill was to remove further barriers from young offenders getting bail. All of my colleagues at the time warned the government that all this was doing was transferring the problem from youth justice back out onto the street. We warned the government it would end in tears, and it gives me no pleasure to say that it did on a number of occasions: it did on Australia Day, it did at Toutai Kefu's house, and heaven forbid the list goes on.

Now this minister turns up talking tough on crime, but it is a charade because the actions of this government, their overt soft-on-crime agenda, is louder than the words this minister is jumping up and down about. Which takes me to the point that the highest priority of any government is the safety and security of its citizens. This government is failing in its highest priority, and this youth jail in Caloundra is an example of that. Not only that, it is a case study of how this government does business. Prior to the election this minister stood up at Caloundra and promised the people of Caloundra and the Caloundra police a new police station, more police and more resources. We now know from estimates that at the time he was talking to our police and the local community he knew that a deal had been done to deprive our local police of their watch house. It was funny when the announcement came out—

Mr RYAN: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The statements are personally offensive and misleading and incorrect, and I ask for them to be withdrawn.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member has taken personal offence and asks that you withdraw.


Mr PURDIE: I withdraw. But it was deceptive. The government stood up, promised a new police station—

Mr RYAN: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The statement is personally offensive and misleading and incorrect, and I ask for it to be withdrawn.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister, statements can be personally offensive. If you find them misleading, there are other processes to follow in relation to that matter.

Member for Ninderry, the member has found the statements personally offensive and asks you to withdraw.

Mr PURDIE: I withdraw. In summing up, I call for this police minister to show some leadership like the former AG, the member for Kawana, did. Say no to this youth jail in Caloundra and give the police back their watch house!

 **Mr HUNT** (Caloundra—ALP) (5.24 pm): I would like to move an amendment to the member for Kawana's motion.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Members on my left, I want to hear the proposed amendment so I would ask for silence while the member is moving the amendment.

Mr HUNT: I move the following amendment—

That all words after 'notes' be omitted and the following inserted:

'the consultation regarding the proposed use of the Caloundra Watch House and a new youth remand centre; and endorses the Palaszczuk Labor government's strong youth justice reforms, which includes the toughest youth bail laws in the country.'

Mr WATTS: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I wonder if the amendment has been circulated to the chamber for us to review.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: It has just been signed. It will be circulated as soon as the attendants are able.

Mr HUNT: I know how I am expected to respond to this issue. As a former soldier and former custodial officer, community safety has been the underpinning factor of my working life. If I am to be nearer the tone thus far I am supposed to utilise volume, hyperbole, theatre and shrieks of hysterical exaggeration, but I will instead fall back on my 21 years of service as an officer in Queensland's largest high-security jail. While the LNP lost track of 1,700 child sex offenders when last they were in government, I was actually pulling 12-hour shifts in the facility where that occurred. I was working with the same monsters the LNP deliberately lost track of. Let's reflect on that for a law and order issue. A potential youth justice facility of up to 20 young people is apparently the end of civilisation as we know it.

Mr Crandon interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, member for Coomera!

Mr HUNT: Deliberately losing track of 1,700 child rapists is apparently no big deal.

Mr Krause interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Pause the clock. Member for Scenic Rim, you can leave the chamber for one hour.

Whereupon the honourable member for Scenic Rim withdrew from the chamber at 5.26 pm.

Mr HUNT: The proposal talks about the location of the potential facility, and in that respect it is not unlike other watch houses and custodial facilities. The Helana Jones Centre, which is a similar size, is in the middle of Albion. The Woodford Correctional Centre is 2,500 metres from the CBD of Woodford. Nearly 1,500 of the state's most deadly high-security prisoners are also near a school, a retirement village and a residential housing complex with zero net effect—

Mr Crandon interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Coomera, your interjections are not being taken. You are warned.

Mr HUNT: I have also lived the experience of the LNP's commitment to custodial operations. The member for Kawana told the *Courier-Mail* in 2014 that he had information that prison staff were not facing any more danger as a result of overcrowding. It is almost as tragic as the member for Kawana suggesting that the families of young offenders would move to the region while an offender is on remand. So a hypothetical family from Rockhampton will apparently break their lease, uproot their entire life, find a rental on the Sunshine Coast, live there for less than 38 days, break their lease again and move back to their community. What complete nonsense! Let's also examine an issue from the member for Kawana's own document while attorney-general. The LNP and the member for Kawana's own draft youth detention centre demand strategy 2013-2023 said—

Mr Crandon interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Coomera, you can leave the chamber for one hour.

Whereupon the honourable member for Coomera withdrew from the chamber at 5.28 pm.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member, were you reflecting on the chair?

Mr CRANDON: Absolutely not.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I would ask you to leave the chamber in silence.

Mr HUNT: From their own document we hear that the facility could be operated to a safe and secure standard. The site is close to police and ambulance services and the site is situated under the Caloundra courthouse for bail applications hearings. Most importantly, the site could be used as a short-term weekend remand facility, which is strikingly familiar.

It would be remiss of me to ignore the petition from the member for Kawana, and I will shortly table some of its edited highlights. We are all aware that sometimes signatures can be very suspicious. Indeed, at times and across all manner of documents, signatures can be investigated. For example, I would like to reach out—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Members, the level of noise and interjection is far too high. The member is making a meaningful contribution. He is not yelling and screaming, as some other folks choose to do during this particular debate. I would like to hear what the member has to say and I am sure many in the House would like to hear as well. Those who are speaking after the member would like the opportunity to rebut what the member is saying if they do not agree with him. I ask members to remain silent while we hear the remainder of the member's contribution.

Mr HUNT: One of the petitioners is 'John'—nothing else, just 'John'. He apparently lives in Caloundra although there are no actual details for 'John'. 'John', however, is in better shape than 'S'—no names, no details, no address, simply the letter 'S'.

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Members, that ruling goes for both sides of the House.

Mr HUNT: Apparently, this mystery letter of the alphabet also lives in Caloundra and, like Zorro, simply identifies themselves by a single consonant. This government will not engage in this high farce around this serious issue but will continue to consult and deal in the facts while putting the safety of the community first. I table the petition.

Tabled paper: Extract from a nonconforming petition, tabled by the member for Kawana, Mr Jarrod Bleijie MP, titled 'Say no to Labor's youth jail in Caloundra' [1954].

(Time expired)



Ms CAMM (Whitsunday—LNP) (5.31 pm): I am very pleased to speak against this amendment and to support my colleagues the members for Kawana and Ninderry. It is a very sad day when a member from North Queensland has to stand up on behalf of the constituents of Caloundra because their own member will not stand up for them. While he does share his experience as a corrections officer, what he does not share is his experience and his ability to engage and listen to his local community. In particular, when you are criticising and questioning the 6,000 petitioners who took the time—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Order! Pause the clock. Member for McConnel, you are on a warning.

Ms CAMM: When the member for Caloundra is questioning the credibility of some 5,000 petitioners from his own electorate—6,000 in total—you can assure the member for Caloundra that the LNP's next candidate for the seat of Caloundra will know exactly who they are.

This parliament and this government has one thing to do, and that is focus on community safety and community consultation in the public interest. I am very pleased to stand up to support my colleagues and to call out when a poor decision has been made on the run. The Minister for Police talks about the toughest bail laws in Australia. The lack of toughness has created a revolving door of recidivism in this state and we feel it on the Sunshine Coast, in Brisbane, on the Gold Coast and all the way through to North Queensland. I remind members from Townsville about how rife and how tough their bail laws are and what they are doing up there in Townsville.


I also draw the House's attention to the population growth on the Sunshine Coast. We in the opposition are fighting for infrastructure, for upgrades, for livability and for more police on the Sunshine Coast. When 500,000 people are expected to be living on the Sunshine Coast in 2040, one would think that an enhanced watch house, enhanced police resources and enhanced police services would be needed. When the Sunshine Coast is one of our biggest tourist destinations, one would think an investment in policing would be valued.

I recognise the member for Ninderry as a former detective on the Sunshine Coast. It is incredible that he might actually know something about crime on the Sunshine Coast and that he might actually know something about police resourcing on the Sunshine Coast! Heaven forbid that anyone in this House would take any notice of a former police officer who has served our great state and who understands his community!

I would also like to draw the House's attention to an issue that flies in the face of what the police minister has said here this evening about the toughest bail laws and some of the other loopholes that actually exist across our state and in the government's youth crime policy. The Mackay magistrate has

exposed safety gaps at state residential care facilities in our local community in Mackay in North Queensland. Youth justice representatives were informed by Child Safety that residential workers actually undertake 16-hour awake shifts and eight-hour asleep shifts. From 10 pm to 6 am, there is no direct supervision. When questioned by the magistrate, the department confirmed that, yes, when youth are in the care of the state, those who are supervising them are asleep.

We talk about youth crime and when youth crime occurs. The last time I checked it did not stop between the hours of 10 pm and 6 am. Across my region and the 17 residential care homes, the resourcing and policy loophole that exists is not helping the recidivism, it is not helping young people and it is certainly not keeping young people out of trouble. We see this government make decisions about a residential care facility for repeat youth offenders on the Sunshine Coast because of poor planning and a lack of community consultation, and now we see the minister clutching at straws with an amendment.

 **Mrs McMAHON** (Macalister—ALP) (5.36 pm): I rise to speak against the member for Kawana's motion and in support of the amendment moved by the member for Caloundra. I get to stand here and speak after the member for Whitsunday, who raved about the value of former police officers who serve in this House. As a former police officer who actually worked in watch houses throughout South-East Queensland and worked as a watch house keeper, I would like to turn the House's attention to the petition that the member for Kawana presented to this parliament.

I draw the House's attention to the motion before the House—which refers to the 6,000 residents who signed a petition against a youth remand centre—but if we look at the actual petition it calls on residents to say no to Labor's youth jail in Caloundra. I know the member for Kawana held the position of first law officer in this state, if not the gravitas that went with it, but surely he knows the difference between a jail and a remand centre. Please tell me that those opposite know the difference between a jail and a remand centre—the difference in staffing levels, the difference in access, the difference in programs and the difference in release conditions. Please tell me that those opposite will not follow the member for Kawana off the cliff of hypocrisy like lemmings if they continue to run this line.

The alternative is that, if the member for Kawana does know the difference, he has misled his local community. Imagine that—all in the name of fearmongering amongst his own community. I can understand that the layperson does not know the difference between a jail—because that is all I have heard the members opposite refer to it as today—and a remand centre, but if a former attorney-general did not know, well, that would be embarrassing. But, then again, the former attorney-general was labelled as an inexperienced, uneducated and incompetent attorney-general by a former Bar Association president, so I am not really surprised.

The member for Kawana's petition aside, let us have a look at this site in Caloundra. It has been assessed before. The previous assessment of the site found that the facility could be operated to safe and secure standards, that the site is close to police and ambulance services, that the site is situated near the Caloundra courthouse for bail applications and hearings and, most importantly, that the site could be used for a short-term weekend remand facility. Whose site assessment was this? That would be the former attorney-general's site assessment under his Youth Detention Centre Demand Management Strategy 2013-2023. The member for Kawana's own strategy identified the Caloundra watch house to be used as a remand facility.

We know that those opposite cannot be trusted to keep a single position on youth crime. Last term it started out with the usual cries: 'Lock 'em up! Lock 'em up!' They then found out that juveniles were being kept in watch houses. Then suddenly it was, 'Release them! We can't have them in custody!' Then by the time we come to the election it is, 'Lock 'em up! Lock 'em up! Lock 'em up!'

I will back this government's Youth Justice Strategy any day over the proposals and positions put forward by the LNP's incompetent former attorney-general. Who can forget pink jumpsuits? Who can forget the failed boot camp in Kuranda? I remember it. My family members who live in Kuranda remember it. How much consultation happened with the people who lived in Kuranda? I will back a youth strategy that has been drafted in consultation with former QPS Commissioner Bob Atkinson. I will back his understanding of youth justice and youth justice reform.

It is not just about jails and remand centres. The four pillars we need are around identification, prevention, early intervention and bringing the family along for the ride to make sure that when youth offenders are released they have a support network. That is what will prevent further offences. It is not just, 'Lock 'em up! Lock 'em up! Lock 'em up!' A remand centre has a valuable place in our Youth Justice Strategy, and I support the member for Caloundra's amendment.



Mr MICKELBERG (Buderim—LNP) (5.41 pm): What a rock show! What a display of abject ministerial incompetence by the Minister for Police—

Mrs D'ATH: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. You have made a ruling for the member for Southern Downs to be removed from the chamber for an hour. I understand that he is sitting in the advisers area and that is not removing himself from the chamber in accordance with the ruling of the Deputy Speaker.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): I will have to take some advice in relation to that.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I will take advice in silence.

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

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will just finish taking advice and then I will take your point of order. What is your point of order?

Mr BLEIJIE: In response to the point of order, if I can assist, Mr Deputy Speaker, when a division is called, a member cannot stand in the advisers box and claim to be in the chamber and have their vote counted. I suspect that when the standing orders were drafted 'the chamber' refers to the line of where the bar goes up in a division. Otherwise, if we accept the Attorney's point, you would be voting from out the back.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will stop you there. I appreciate the efforts of attempting to assist, but I will take the advice of the Clerk. I cannot see whether the member is in the chamber in the area that has been indicated by the Leader of the House, but if the member is in the chamber in that area he needs to leave the entire area that is considered to be the chamber. That has been the convention of the parliament. I would ask the member to remove himself completely from the chamber.

Mr MICKELBERG: Well, it is all the big issues from those opposite! We have seen a Minister for Police who cannot even get the basics right, who cannot even move an amendment to the motion we are debating here tonight. When they do finally sort out an amendment, through the member for Waterford riding him to safety, they cannot even get that right. The amendment we are debating proposes that we 'note the consultation regarding the proposed use of the Caloundra watch house and a new youth remand centre'. Are we getting both? Are we getting a watch house and a youth remand centre in Caloundra? The watch house is not there anymore; it has been relocated to Maroochydore. Which is it? The member for Caloundra should know, but he does not know because he does not listen to his community.

Labor must scrap their plans for a youth jail in the heart of Caloundra. It is hard to believe that something so detrimental to a vibrant community like Caloundra would even be considered. At a time when business and community groups have been working to make the heart of Caloundra more attractive to visitors, this out-of-touch Labor state government wants to build a jail smack bang in the middle of it.

Labor know very well that the Sunshine Coast community does not support a jail being built and that is why they made no mention of it in their plans before the last election. The member for Caloundra campaigned for a new police station, but he conveniently forgot to tell his constituents about his government's plan to instead close the police watch house and pile young and often violent criminals into a youth jail. Make no mistake: this was a sneaky tactic by Labor to pull the wool over the eyes of Sunshine Coast residents. There was no consultation with locals and even when it was carried out, after plans were already in place and funding was allocated, it was superficial.

The member for Caloundra has been in hiding since the member for Kawana and the member for Ninderry aired his secret plans earlier this year. If the member for Caloundra is fair dinkum about standing up for his community he will start listening to his constituents, 5,000 of whom have signed a petition to stop this jail.

Those on the other side, like the member for Macalister, are trying to convince the Sunshine Coast community that it is not a jail but, as the opposition leader said, if it looks like a jail and it locks like a jail, it is a jail! This youth remand centre does not affect just Caloundra. Its repercussions will be felt right across the Sunshine Coast and will impact residents who have chosen the Sunshine Coast to create their home.

Crime is already rapidly increasing across the coast, thanks to Labor's weak laws and inadequate police resources. In the suburb of Sippy Downs in my electorate, crime has jumped 46 per cent since Labor came to power in 2015. Property damage is up 192 per cent, assaults are up 185 per cent, theft

is up 103 per cent and unlawful entry is up by 67 per cent under this Labor government. Imagine having some young thug creep into your home while your family sleeps. Every week I hear from Sunshine Coast locals who have been violated by criminals breaking into their homes, into their safe place, and stealing their cars. We have seen home invasions, armed robberies and vicious assaults, many of which are still not resolved. Daily we hear reports of young thieves targeting families in suburbs like Sippy Downs, Mountain Creek and Pelican Waters. Their despicable acts traumatise families and they leave a lasting effect on people who spend their lives trying to do the right thing. We do not need a youth jail in the middle of Caloundra; we need more police.


The population on the Sunshine Coast is exploding. Instead of creating a bigger problem for our local police, the police should be resourced adequately. Give our local police stations like Sippy Downs the resources they need to get on top of the young offenders who are holding the Sunshine Coast to ransom. Putting a jail in the middle of Caloundra will only increase the presence of criminals on the Sunshine Coast.

The member for Caloundra knows that tonight the eyes of his community are on him. They are watching to see if the member for Caloundra is here to fight for Caloundra or if he is just here to serve his Labor masters. He has shown through his actions tonight—

An opposition member: Missing in action.

Mr MICKELBERG: He has gone missing in action; I take that interjection. He is here to serve his Labor masters and has abandoned his community. I call on everyone to support this motion and reject the government's amendment. Most particularly, I call on the member for Caloundra to serve his community.

(Time expired)

 **Hon. LM LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (5.48 pm): I rise to speak in support of the amendment moved by my colleague the member for Caloundra. I will start how I intend to finish, and that is by acknowledging the voices of Queenslanders, who have the right to feel safe in their homes and communities. The community were very clear in February when they called for tougher measures to address serious repeat youth offenders, and we responded. In February, we introduced the toughest show cause provisions in the country. Those measures have had an impact. Approximately 100 more young people are in detention now than a year ago and they are being remanded for longer. We heard the voices of Queenslanders and we responded.


Since coming to government, we have invested more than half a billion dollars in our youth justice system. We have invested in more youth detention beds—a 33 per cent increase—we are holding more young people to account and we are investing in programs to give young people the opportunity to turn their lives around. In the budget this year we announced funding to complete a detailed business case for long-term additional bed capacity and funding to repurpose the Caloundra watch house to a short-term temporary remand facility. The Caloundra watch house has been used by the Queensland Police Service as a secure facility to detain adults and young people since 2005. It is located between a police station and a watch house. It has capacity. It is for these reasons that it is being considered.

It is also for these reasons that it was considered by those opposite in their report in 2013—a report that stated the safe and secure nature of the facility as one of its benefits. This is a fact that the member for Kawana has conveniently left out, along with all other relevant facts in his recent political campaign. I say 'political campaign' because it has been about politics and nothing else—not the community, not community safety, just politics. While the member for Kawana, the member for Ninderry and the opposition leader at times have played politics with this proposal, the member for Caloundra has been engaging with his community, he has been listening to his community and he has been meeting with his community. While the member for Kawana has been grandstanding in front of a camera, the member for Caloundra has been engaging with his local community. I know who I would want as my local member if I lived on the Sunshine Coast—the member for Caloundra, hands down.

The member for Caloundra invited me up, organised a meeting with local stakeholders, listened to their concerns and has throughout our two public engagement periods faithfully passed on their feedback while the member for Kawana has this week tabled a petition listing first names and in many cases just an initial and a suburb as far away as Mount Isa—no last name, no contact details. That is a nonconforming petition. Table a conforming petition. If he were serious about meaningful consultation, he would have given me those contact details so that I could respond. But, no, the member for Kawana knows that I would respond with factual information and not misleading political lies.

The comparison between the politicking of the member for Kawana and the advocacy of the member for Caloundra could not be starker and the comparison between those opposite who have no plan regarding youth justice—no plan, no policies, no idea—is abundantly clear. That is why they shout loudly in here. That is why they shout down the barrel of a camera every chance they get, but they had no plan when in government for youth justice, and they still have no plan. We have a plan.

We have introduced the toughest youth justice laws in the country to target high-risk offenders. We are putting more police on the beat, partnering our youth justice workers with police and diverting young people from offending and into safe places. We are investing more into intensive case management of repeat offenders, more into intensive evidence based interventions and we are partnering with the Noffs Foundation to establish a dedicated youth drug and alcohol residential program. We know there are no silver bullets to solve youth crime, but while those opposite continue to play politics with this issue—the politics of fear—we will listen to Queenslanders and act.

 **Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (5.53 pm): If this Labor government were serious about consulting with the people of Caloundra, it would have told them before the election. It would have taken the resources that it threw into the electorate of Caloundra and written to people and said, 'We're going to give you a youth jail,' but it did not. It did not want to come clean with people before the election and in this debate it still does not want to come clean. It wants to get over the fact it is forcing the Caloundra community to have a youth jail, and that is just not on.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr WALKER: Mr Deputy Speaker Kelly, I rise to a point of order. I find that to be a personally offensive comment from the member there with the microphone up—Buderim.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr WALKER: Yes, that is him. That is the one!

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Order!

Mr MICKELBERG: Mr Deputy Speaker, it was me. I withdraw.

Ms SIMPSON: What a sell-out we have seen from Labor. What a sell-out we have seen from the member for Caloundra not standing up for the people of Caloundra and for the people of the Sunshine Coast with this youth jail, because this is not the answer to the issues in the area. How dare the government mislead the people of Caloundra by stealth, by sneakily not revealing its plans? Seven or eight years ago my colleague the member for Kawana rejected this proposal, but I am sure this Labor police minister saw it and said, 'Wow! We can do this because we can get away with it in Caloundra. We won't tell the people of Caloundra before the election. We're going to force them to cop it.' That is mean and tricky. That is not in the interests of the Sunshine Coast community or the Caloundra community. I want to commend the member for Kawana and my colleague the member for Ninderry for this motion because it is about standing up for the people. Where is the member for Caloundra? He has failed to stand up for the people.

There is a petition with more than 5,000 people from Caloundra, and this government wants to erase their voices. It tried to erase them by amending the motion and got caught out, and now we have a second go with the government trying still to downplay what is a serious issue. This is not the place for a youth jail, yet we hear the government treat it as if it is a coffee shop. Well, it ain't no coffee shop! It is right in the heart of a beautiful area. It is right in the heart of an area that has every right to aspire to have the best planning in their local community, and this is not where this facility should go.

It is time we saw honesty from this government. It says that it has youth justice plans, so why did it not reveal before the election that it involved the people of Caloundra and their backyard? With respect to its so-called tough on crime and youth justice, that is a joke! We have already seen the sneakiness of the sell-out with respect to it cutting and removing the strength to deal with youth bail and young people, yet it comes before this parliament and tries to say that it is going to be tough on crime and tough on the youth justice issue.

Mrs Frecklington: All talk, no action!

Ms SIMPSON: I take that interjection from my colleague. It is all talk and no action, yet we also see the government not listening to the voices of the people. The person who should be standing up for the voices of the people—the member for Caloundra—has failed to do that. What we have seen is this Labor government trying to whitewash and delete the section of this motion expressing the voice


of the people with regard to the petition and that is just a disgrace. It still does not get it. It was sneaky and it was dishonest in the way that Labor has treated Caloundra with this youth jail. It was sneaky and it was dishonest in the way it tried to remove recognition of this petition—the people's voices—being brought before the parliament.

We will stand up for the people of the Sunshine Coast and the people of Caloundra because the member for Caloundra is not doing it. He has let his community down. He is still not coming in here and saying that this is unacceptable and that this is not right. He is still in here making excuses for his political masters who are not listening to the people. The government has failed to take this on board and failed to recognise that people have a right to be heard. This government is failing to do that for the very people that it says it represents.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Three minutes on the clock, please. I call the member for Bulimba.

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Under the standing orders and precedent in this House, the Speaker obviously controls the time and, yes, the sessional orders say that this debate finishes at six. I put to you, Mr Deputy Speaker, that the many points of order by the police minister earlier wasted a lot of the parliament's time. I ask, Mr Deputy Speaker, that you rule that all of the members who are on the speaking list be afforded the opportunity to speak.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will take some advice. The sessional orders allow for one hour for this debate and you are right in that the Speaker has some discretion around the time. If all members were allowed to finish, this debate would go significantly over the one hour, so I am allowing the member who is about to speak three minutes to make that contribution.

 **Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development) (5.59 pm): In the short time I have—

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

That the member be no longer heard.

Division: Question put—That the member be no longer heard.

AYES, 27:

LNP, 27—Bates, Bleijie, Boothman, Boyce, Camm, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Hart, Janetzki, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Mander, McDonald, Mickelberg, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, O'Connor, Perrett, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Stevens, Watts, Weir.

NOES, 49:

ALP, 49—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, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Martin, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Miles, Mullen, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.

Pairs: Madden, Bennett; Mellish, Powell.

Resolved in the negative.

Ms FARMER: I rise to speak against the motion moved by the member for Kawana and to support the amendment moved by the member for Caloundra. I want to say two things in the short time I have.

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The Deputy Speaker ruled only five minutes ago that the sessional orders indicate this debate finish at six o'clock. It is six o'clock.

Mr SPEAKER: Resume your seat, please, member for Kawana. I heard the ruling given by the Deputy Speaker. I caution you to not verbal the Deputy Speaker's ruling. I listened to it clearly around how long was available under sessional orders and that he had allocated three minutes to the member to finish and round out the debate. I will caution members that I have been following the debate and it is not that it has bordered on frivolous points of order; there have been frivolous points of order. I will be reviewing the audio and *Hansard* and taking a close look at how the House has conducted itself over the past hour.

Ms FARMER: The first point I want to make is that the member for Caloundra is an outstanding local member of parliament. He is truly excellent. He is a former corrections officer and he speaks to the people in his electorate every single day about the issues that concern them.

Mr Mickelberg interjected.

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

Ms FARMER: The second point I want to make is what a joke those people are on the opposite side. We hear them say they are standing up for the people, they care so deeply for them. If they really cared about what Queenslanders think about youth justice they would have actually put some policies in place about it. The two contributions from those opposite in the last 10 years to the youth justice debate have been, one, boot camps—and we all know what happened there. After the boot camps there was a 75 per cent chance that people would reoffend. It actually increased the likelihood of them re-offending. That was when they were in government. Then the member for Nanango, when she was the leader, went to the last election and, after a whole term of banging on their chests about youth justice reform and youth crime and how it was terrible, the one contribution that they made was curfews.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

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

Ms FARMER: Even their supporters were at a complete loss to work out what the curfew promise was all about.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

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

Ms FARMER: Then they went into the election and said that because it was a such an important policy area and it was so important to Queensland they were actually going to announce their youth justice policy in the first six months. Last time I looked we have been here for a year and there has not been a peep out of them. Here is an opportunity. The Caloundra watch house: we know the member for Kawana was already thinking about doing it. We know it has been a watch house since 2005. There has not been a peep out of any of them about the watch house being there for the last 16 years. That is because there has not been a single escape from that facility in its 16 years of operation.

Those opposite can call things jails when they are actually watch houses, they can talk about how terrible this is and how people need to be safe, but we actually want to know what are those opposite going to do? Youth justice is hard and complex.

Mr Mickelberg interjected.

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

Ms FARMER: That is why we have put in half a billion dollars. We are actually seeing the results of that investment.

Mr Mickelberg interjected.

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

Ms FARMER: Now what we are dealing with is 10 per cent of the serious offenders who are committing nearly 50 per cent of the crime and that is what our policy is getting results on.

(Time expired)

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

AYES, 49:

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

NOES, 27:

LNP, 27—Bates, Bleijie, Boothman, Boyce, Camm, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Hart, Janetzki, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Mander, McDonald, Mickelberg, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, O'Connor, Perrett, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Stevens, Watts, Weir.

Pairs: Madden, Bennett; Mellish, Powell.

Resolved in the affirmative.

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

Mr SPEAKER: Ring the bells for one minute.

AYES, 49:

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

NOES, 29:

LNP, 27—Bates, Bleijie, Boothman, Boyce, Camm, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Hart, Janetzki, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Mander, McDonald, Mickelberg, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, O'Connor, Perrett, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Stevens, Watts, Weir.

Grn, 2—Berkman, MacMahon.

Pairs: Madden, Bennett; Mellish, Powell.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Motion, as agreed—


That this House notes the consultation regarding the proposed use of the Caloundra Watch House and a new youth remand centre; and endorses the Palaszczuk Labor government's strong youth justice reforms, which includes the toughest youth bail laws in the country.

JUSTICE LEGISLATION (COVID-19 EMERGENCY RESPONSE—PERMANENCY) AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from p. 3624, on motion of Ms Fentiman—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (6.15 pm): I rise to speak on the Justice Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Permanency) Amendment Bill. One of the reasons that I do so is that the Economics and Governance Committee, of which I am a member, played a role in this legislation as did the Health and Environment Committee. When we put these temporary measures in place to make working life easier and reduce contact, it made us look at innovations that we could implement in terms of the way that we run our state. During that process we heard commentary from stakeholders. I especially recognise the Queensland Law Society, which felt that some of the temporary health measures that we had put in place could be safely and fairly continued, giving benefit to Queenslanders.

Before I entered the chamber I heard our friends opposite on Sky News saying that, when people look back at our role and the role of all Queenslanders during this period of COVID, they will describe this time as an unprecedented stain on our history. It is really quite disturbing that they are still running such arguments even as there are significant case numbers in the United States and as parts of Europe are going back into lockdown or increasing their restrictions. It seems that thousands of times others have claimed the pandemic to be over only to be wrong each time. They have not learnt their lessons and many in the LNP are the same.

Some people have described the actions of government as unprecedented and perhaps some of those who were marching today think that. I want to push back on that idea because many of the health measures we have implemented to keep Queenslanders safe, such as the powers given to the Chief Health Officer, are very similar to the legislation of 1917. In 1917 Queensland faced a flu pandemic, which is an entirely predictable pandemic disease just as this one broadly is, not in its detailed characteristics but in its general characteristics. We have introduced the same measures. In 1917 there were border controls and camps where people were quarantined. Incoming ships were quarantined. Of course, in 1917 they did not have the issues that we face with air travel or the large volume of fast-moving cars crossing our borders. The challenges were somewhat different, but the principles that are part of the founding of the Queensland colony and the Queensland state and that were utilised in 1917 are part of the process that has kept us safe now. It is part of our history to protect Queenslanders from dangerous disease, to recognise pandemics and to put in place measures to keep us safe.

Some people talk about rights. Rights are important. However, it must be clearly stated that no-one has the right to infect others with an infectious disease. If we take measures that may impact on some rights, we do it because we recognise that no-one has the right to infect others with an infectious disease and that people have the right to go about their business safely. We recognise the collective responsibility in that approach. The one difference that I want to highlight between 1917 and now is the effective presence of a vaccine. In 1917, if they had an effective flu vaccine that could have made people 10 to 11 times less likely to catch the flu then Queenslanders would have flocked to take it, just as they are doing today. However, but they did not have access to a vaccine.

This time around, though, we have a vaccine. It is safe. It has very rare side effects—side effects we have been very transparent about. We have tried to take Queenslanders into our confidence and show them that there are rare side effects but that they should not be afraid of this because, on balance, it is so much safer to take the vaccine than to face the effects of COVID-19. As I said, if this existed in 1917 Queenslanders would have rushed the gates in order to get it.

We know that having the vaccine makes you much less likely to get COVID-19. If you do not get it then you cannot pass it on, but if you do get COVID-19—and there are breakthrough cases; we have also been transparent about that—the evidence seems to be relatively clear that, even if you have it—and we are 10 to 11 times less likely to get it—you are less likely to pass it on. The study that was most important for me showed that when vaccinated people returned to their house—even if they were later found to have COVID-19—they were much less likely to pass it on to others in their household. Can you think of a greater incentive than keeping your immediate family safe? The best studies about vaccination show that those who are vaccinated are less likely to pass on the virus to those in their own household than are those who are unvaccinated. I cannot think of a better reason to get vaccinated. When I visit my mum at Christmas, we will all be staying together. I cannot think of a better reason for every Queenslanders to get vaccinated than the time they will spend with their families at Christmas.

I am extraordinarily proud of the people of Logan. At the beginning we were not leading the pack, as we are now. There was some uncertainty as people had to digest the information. There was caution because they were being fed so much information, not least from the forces of Mr Palmer but also certain LNP senators. There are federal LNP members of parliament who have not been condemned. All those opposite should stand up and condemn Senator Rennick and the federal member representing Mackay, but none of them will because they do not have the strength to stand for what is right when their party is running in a different direction. There was caution over the misinformation that the LNP and others put out. Once we saw that—

Mr Watts interjected.

Mr POWER: It is extraordinary that those opposite would shout down the great work that people in Logan are doing to get vaccinated. It is disgraceful. In Logan, people are getting vaccinated at record rates. We started up the race for 80 per cent and on Monday we exceeded 80 per cent. On the most recent information that has come out, the Premier announced this morning that we have reached over—

Mr WEIR: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance. I ask that the member in his last two minutes actually speaks to the bill.

Mr POWER: I think that is excellent, Mr Deputy Speaker. I return to relevance. I was getting—


Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Member, I ask you to resume your seat while I rule on the point of order. I have been listening to the contribution. Many of the speakers on both sides of the House have perhaps strayed away from the long title of the bill. I believe the member is rebutting some points that were made earlier, but I ask the member to come back to the long title of the bill.

Mr POWER: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. When it comes to liquor reforms, we know that the people in Logan want to get vaccinated and be in areas and hotels where others are vaccinated. They know that people who are vaccinated are 10 to 11 times less likely to have COVID and that being vaccinated will make it much safer. When they visit cafes and queue up in different places, people in Logan will be safer. Therefore, in Logan we need to race on from the 80 per cent that we were at on Monday and the 83 per cent the Premier announced this morning to 90 per cent. Those who have doubts need to look around Logan and think that nine out of 10 residents are already vaccinated. They are safe—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I bring you back to the long title of the bill, please, member.

Mr POWER: They are safe. When you visit a cafe after these new laws are in place and pick up a drink with your meal, you know that in that queue you will be safe. The entire gamut of legislation will make an enormous difference. These changes to common law are vital to modernising it.

In evidence to the Economics and Governance Committee, the Queensland Law Society spoke of the need for things such as deeds that are executed on paper—or indeed parchment or vellum—to be executed electronically. The pandemic gave us the opportunity to test this change. You could make an argument that with the race to 90 per cent vaccinated in Logan they could do it, but this is just a sensible change resulting in less regulation and better processes. I endorse these changes.

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (6.26 pm): I rise to speak on the Justice Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Permanency) Amendment Bill. My particular emphasis is on the amendment—introduced late—to the QBCC Act. Earlier this afternoon, the minister started his contribution speaking

about the substance of the bill and then very quietly decided to mention the amendment to the QBCC Act which, of course, is relevant to him. If this were not so serious, it would be a comedy. This amendment is now just one more element in a long line of dysfunction that is occurring in the QBCC. Over the past few months there have been allegations of ministerial interference and conflicts of interest by board members. The future of many fire protection small businesses has been put in doubt because of regulation changes. There have been allegations of preferential treatment being given to certain constituents. Now there is a strong argument that this is the biggest stuff-up of them all.

Let me explain to the House what has happened. On 11 November 2019 there were changes to legislation to allow the QBCC to issue a rectification notice in a period prescribed by the regulator. That is fair enough, but there was one tiny, little problem. That is, they never made the regulation. What was the result? The government has potentially invalidated every rectification notice issued over the past two years. That is, they were potentially unlawful. Approximately 2,400 rectification notices were in doubt because of the stuff-up by the minister and his department.

Apparently this was noticed on 3 November this year. What did the QBCC do when they noticed that there was an issue with the lawfulness of their rectification notices? They paused issuing notices for seven days. Let us just pause for a moment ourselves to think about what that meant. That meant that for seven days the QBCC could not undertake one of its core functions—one of its primary reasons for existence—which is to make sure that buildings erected or constructed by builders around the state meet appropriate standards and that home owners are protected. They could not do that.

On 10 November the government made a regulation prescribing the 35-day period. The amendment in this bill seeks to validate the rectification notices that have been issued over the last two years. But, of course, the door has already been open to builders to challenge the validity of the rectification notices. It is my understanding that at the moment there are around 50 cases where that may be occurring.

Can you imagine the scene when embattled Minister de Brenni came into cabinet and said, 'I have stuffed up again.'

Mr BAILEY: I rise to a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. The member is referring to the Minister for Public Works by a title that is inappropriate. He should use the correct title and not use personal names.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): I ask the member to keep in mind the standing orders around using correct parliamentary titles.

Ms PEASE: I rise to a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. I think the member was using unparliamentary language in his speech.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Neither I nor the clerks at the table heard that language.

Mr MANDER: As I was saying, can members imagine the minister going back into cabinet and saying, 'I'm sorry guys, but we have stuffed up again. Once again, we have mucked it up.'

Mr O'Connor: It's embarrassing.

Mr MANDER: It is embarrassing. I will take that interjection from the member for Bonney. When this issue was covered in the media and the minister was asked to comment, a spokesman for Minister de Brenni said, 'This was a QBCC matter and he could not comment further.' I think I recall the minister saying this week that these issues are decided by the parliament. The government has the majority in the parliament. It is the government that decides these things. That is why we are discussing this amendment tonight.

Mr de BRENNI: I rise to a point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker. The member for Everton is conflating a number of comments that he purports that I made in the press with comments that he said I made in the House. I bring it to the attention of the House that he has done that with the express intent to mislead the House.

Opposition members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Lui): I will hear the member in silence.

Mr de BRENNI: I will be writing to the office of the Speaker to raise those concerns.

Mr MANDER: What we have is another gigantic stuff-up by the minister and his department with regard to—

Ms PEASE: I rise to a point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker, with regard to unparliamentary language. It has been used often this evening. I would consider his language to be unparliamentary. I would like you to rule on that please.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Everton, the member for Lytton finds the language used unparliamentary. Do you withdraw?

Mr MANDER: Just a point of clarification, Madam Deputy Speaker: I do not think the member took personal offence.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is unparliamentary language. I ask you to withdraw.

Mr MANDER: I withdraw. The minister has gone into cabinet and said, 'I'm sorry we have another debacle. I have mucked up again.' Of course, that is why we are here tonight. Let us talk about the history of defects and rectification notices to fix defects. There is a long history of stuff-ups—I withdraw—a long history of muck-ups in this area—

Government members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Ms Fentiman interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Waterford, I have asked the House to come to order. I ask that all cross-chamber interjections cease.

Mr MANDER: I asked a question on notice about the average wait time between QBCC receiving a consumer complaint and issuing the direction to rectify the work when it is deemed necessary. I thought it was a fairly basic question.

Mr de Brenni interjected.

Mr MANDER: I take your interjection.


Honourable members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Members, I remind you to cease all cross-chamber interjections.

Mr MANDER: What I would like to say to the minister is, 'Come in spinner.' That is exactly the response that I thought he would make. The response was, 'I'm advised that the data is not recorded.'

I want to educate the minister about Salesforce—the customer service management system that they use in the QBCC. This is what happens with Salesforce. They record when the complaint is received. They record when it is allocated to a building inspector. They record when it is awaiting inspection. They record when it is awaiting a report. They record when a direction to rectify is issued. Every one of those pieces of information—the process for rectification notices—is recorded, but this minister cannot work out how to use the computer. It is absolutely disgraceful that they cannot provide information on a basic key performance indicator of the QBCC on how long it takes to issue a rectification notice after a complaint has been made. Is it any wonder that the QBCC is totally and utterly dysfunctional and the staff there are leaking like a sieve because they have had enough?

Every time this minister gets up and says something that they cannot believe we get more emails telling us exactly what the situation is. They have had enough of this minister. They have had enough of this board. They know that the inquiry that he has announced is a farce because it will not take public submissions and it will not let the staff of the QBCC make complaints or submissions without protection. It is an absolute farce and it is seen for what it is.

 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (6.39 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Justice Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Permanency) Amendment Bill 2021. Earlier this week, Queensland reached a significant milestone, with 70 per cent of our state's eligible population becoming fully vaccinated against COVID-19. We have come so far since 29 January 2020, when we declared a public health emergency for the COVID-19 pandemic. At that time no-one could have imagined that almost two years later the majority of eligible Queenslanders would be vaccinated against the virus. We also had no idea that so many other aspects of our lives would change in response to the pandemic. We have had to adapt quickly to new ways of working, schooling and doing day-to-day business.

Since January 2020 the Palaszczuk government has put in an enormous effort delivering legislation to protect Queenslanders against COVID-19 including putting in place a range of temporary measures to support Queensland businesses and local communities. These measures have brought digital technology into our personal and professional lives to carry out business, legal matters, commerce and administrative functions.

We also put in place supports for small businesses impacted by the pandemic by establishing the Small Business Commissioner to advocate for and provide mediation services for small businesses facing commercial tenancy disputes. Arrangements were put in place to reduce physical contact between people seeking protection under the Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act or to respond to an application for a domestic violence order. The support shown by key stakeholders for these temporary measures has led us to making these measures more permanent.

Some of these measures will bring us into the 21st century such as permanent document reforms that will support the making, signing and witnessing of legal documents by electronic means. This will make it easier for people to make and sign legal documents without the need to be physically present. It will improve efficiencies in legal and commercial proceedings, reduce transaction costs and increase access to justice. The legal profession and broader community are supportive of these measures being made permanent, citing reduced costs and impacts on the environment. These measures will also reduce the time taken to execute legal proceedings from weeks to mere days. This is invaluable for people who are time poor due to work or carer commitments or for those living with a disability or residing in remote locations.

The domestic and family violence COVID regulation brought in during the pandemic last year provided alternative options to traditional methods of verifying and filing applications and appearances at domestic and family violence proceedings. For many women experiencing domestic violence, coming face to face with their perpetrator can be often intimidating and unsafe. It can also deter them from filing protection order applications in the first place. In order to increase access to justice for victims of domestic violence, we need to make the court experience safer and more comfortable. Being able to give evidence via an audiovisual or audio link will provide that.

The Palaszczuk government has been actively pushing reforms to try to end domestic and family violence through our *Not now, not ever* campaign, which made 140 recommendations which our government has delivered. We have also delivered on establishing the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce, which will review the experiences of women across the criminal justice system and will examine coercive control and review the need for a specific offence of domestic violence.

The domestic violence and sexual assault statistics for Ipswich over the last two years are extremely concerning. The number of sexual offences reported to Ipswich district police over 2020 and 2021 is the highest we have seen since the year 2000. The number of DVO breaches reported to Ipswich police over the last two years has also been the highest in 20 years.

Since the start of the pandemic, domestic violence support organisations have seen a surge in demand for their services. The Domestic Violence Action Centre in Ipswich provided support to 8,900 individuals last year and provided over 15,000 individual appointments. They have provided court support to hundreds of individuals to help them navigate a complex justice system—a system which can be extraordinarily challenging and intimidating for many women who are at their most vulnerable. I do want to give a shout-out to our local DVAC. The CEO Amie Carrington is doing an exceptional job. She tells me that she is getting about 30 calls a day around domestic violence issues. Making the court experience safer and more comfortable for women through technology is one way that we can help women achieve the justice they need.

The bill will also amend the Liquor Act to permanently allow certain licensed restaurants to sell limited amounts of wine with takeaway or delivery meals. This will support our local restaurants, particularly considering they have borne the brunt of changing restrictions and abrupt lockdowns. Since the start of the pandemic, restaurants have seen their table bookings go down considerably, while takeaways and deliveries have skyrocketed from nine per cent pre-pandemic to 30 per cent afterwards. To ensure the right balance is struck between business interests and concerns around alcohol related harms in the community, the amendments in this bill have been delivered in consultation with key stakeholders including liquor and hospitality businesses, as well as community organisations and health research organisations.

While the bill reflects consumers' changing expectations and the desire for greater convenience, we also acknowledge that easier access to alcohol via delivery services can result in harm to some parts of the community. Providing limitations such as allowing up to 1.5 litres, or two bottles, of wine to be purchased with a takeaway meal up to 10 pm strikes the right balance of reflecting consumers' expectations while minimising alcohol related harm.

The bill also extends the expiry of the Retail Shop Leases and Other Commercial Leases (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Regulation 2020. This continues the good faith principles developed under national cabinet which guide commercial lease negotiations between lessees and lessors during

the COVID health emergency. It also allows the Queensland Small Business Commissioner to continue in their role of advocating for small businesses and providing information and mediation services to small businesses in relation to commercial lease disputes.

Small businesses have had to be agile and responsive to a range of restrictions that have been put in place since the start of the pandemic. Many small businesses have risen to the challenge, but many have also faced significant losses in income. Queensland's Small Business Commissioner, Maree Adshead, is doing a fantastic job in advocating for small business in Queensland. Since May 2020, the commissioner has carried out more than 6,000 activities for small businesses, commercial tenants and landlords including dispute mediation services. Two-thirds of leasing disputes have been successfully resolved either by informal resolution or mediation due to the commissioner's efforts.

We have been very impressed with the work she has done. We see her in Ipswich quite a lot and we are very grateful for it. I want to mention her particularly today and the small business minister for their stellar efforts this morning in helping out many of our small businesses in Ipswich who came up against a real obstacle. We have been able to get some good resolutions for that.

Ms Farmer: Because their local member is such a great act.

Ms HOWARD: Thank you. I will take that interjection. We know that small businesses are essential to our local communities and they are the key to Queensland's economic recovery. In Ipswich, small businesses are the life and soul of our community, employing thousands of workers, enlivening our CBD and suburbs, and providing a personalised touch and friendly face which sometimes cannot be found in larger corporations.

Small businesses, as I said earlier, have also borne the brunt of the restrictions, and even the short, sharp lockdowns we have experienced here have had an impact on some of our businesses as they have been forced to shut during the lockdown period. Many of them have had to adapt quickly and utilise digital technology to ensure that their businesses can weather the storm—and they have done it really well.

I know many Ipswich businesses have risen to the challenge and have successfully made the transition to new ways of doing business. Last year almost \$740,000 was distributed to businesses in the Ipswich electorate through the Small Business COVID-19 Adaption Grants program. These grants were the boost that businesses need to help them stay afloat. The Palaszczuk government also introduced this year the COVID-19 Business Support Grants, with grants going to almost 30,000 businesses across Queensland already. We know that many small business owners have been under a great deal of stress since the start of the pandemic. Small business owners have employees to pay and families to support.

The Palaszczuk government is making sure our small business communities are supported during this challenging time because we know they not only strengthen Queensland's economy but also are crucial to strengthening our local communities by helping families to prosper. Through the Small Business Commissioner and the commercial lease measures provided in this bill, the Palaszczuk government is demonstrating that we are backing our small businesses all the way.

I thank the Attorney-General for bringing this bill to the House and for all the excellent work she does. I commend the bill to the House.



Mr PERRETT (Gympie—LNP) (6.48 pm): I rise to speak on the Justice Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Permanency) Amendment Bill 2021. This bill seeks to provide permanency to several temporary measures which were introduced to streamline government practices during the COVID emergency. They cover issues such as electronic signatures on certain legal documents or witnessing over video links, measures regarding filing applications and appearances at domestic and family violence proceedings, the authorisation of the sale of liquor, and lease reforms. I note that the committee has made five recommendations for additional reforms or seeking clarification.

In our increasingly digitised world, the way we do business and operate without being physically present is clearly changing. Some of the temporary measures embrace these new practices and help streamline procedures by bringing systems into the 21st century. While it is anticipated they will help save time and money and give greater access to justice, it is important to always remember that there are many in the community who do not have access to electronic means and still do business with hard copies.

This bill proposes changes to the making, signing and witnessing of certain documents. It will allow for electronic signing and witnessing via video link for documents such as affidavits, statutory declarations, general powers of attorney for businesses, deeds, and particular mortgages. As part of

an advance health directive it will also allow nurse practitioners, in addition to doctors, to sign a certificate stating that the person making the document appears to have capacity. The Australian Medical Association advised caution in allowing nurses to sign advance health directives.

Following examination of these proposals the committee has made some additional recommendations. It recommends that the minister in the second reading speech explain the benefits of utilising regulations to determine standards of accepted methods of electronic signatures. Submissions from the Queensland Law Society and legal stakeholders also raised issues with the signing of deeds, and the committee has called for the consideration of further reforms.

Recommendation 3 proposes reforms to address the execution of deeds by the state, and recommendation 4 proposes they be considered by partnerships in cases where an individual is not appointed by a deed. Ms Karla Fraser, partner at the large commercial law firm Allens, advised the committee of a recent situation where ‘... other parties were able to sign a deed electronically under the Regulations, the Queensland government did not.’ She said, ‘There is no reason why governments should not be able to sign documents electronically.’ If we are introducing a system where individuals, businesses and industry stakeholders can sign electronically, we should not preclude governments.

Another reform in this bill streamlines domestic and family violence proceedings. While it proposes to permanently keep some measures from last year, they are narrow in scope and are only available in urgent cases. The bill will allow for domestic and family violence matters to be heard via video or audio link. The operation of alternative verification processes for temporary protection orders and electronic filing were approved by the principal registrar. It is important that victims are supported and protected from further trauma in legal proceedings. Where technology can protect victims from coming face to face with perpetrators and facilitate keeping a distance from them that can only be a positive change. This is why the LNP supports this reform.

Reforms to the provision of liquor are also narrower in scope than those introduced under the emergency provisions. Under the emergency provisions, 2.25 litres are allowed to be sold via takeaway or a delivery meal. That equates to three bottles of wine or a sixpack of beer, cider or premixed drinks. This bill limits the quantity and type of alcohol. It will reduce the quantity to 1.5 litres of wine with the condition it must be sold with a full meal and not snacks. While the explanatory notes state that the amendments are ‘anticipated to deliver tangible public benefit by reflecting contemporary food service standards and changing customer expectations’, industry stakeholders say it will disadvantage an already hurting sector.

Among those opposed are the Restaurant & Catering Association of Australia, Spirits and Cocktails Australia, Independent Brewers Association, independent cafes and restaurants, Scenic Rim Brewery, White Brick Brewing, and the Chamber of Commerce & Industry Queensland. The COVID pandemic meant that many businesses have had to change the way they operate just to stay afloat. The Restaurant & Catering Association of Australia said it has ‘drastically and permanently changed the face of the hospitality industry.’ The sector has had to deal with government lockdowns—sometimes at short notice—mandates about patron numbers and the loss of potential customers from interstate while still trying to stay viable.

Some of those changes include the sale of takeaway alcohol, which has become an important source of revenue. The hospitality industry has been hit hard. The Restaurant & Catering Association of Australia represents 8,354 businesses in Queensland. Those businesses employ 112,000 people. It submitted—

The removal of beer and RTDs ... as well as the cap at only a 1.5 litre bottle of wine will have a devastating effect on an already hurting industry.

It makes no sense to limit the alcohol to wine. The committee has made two recommendations regarding the service of alcohol. In recommendation 5 the minister has been asked to consider allowing the option of additional alcohol types to be sold with a takeaway meal. It proposes the inclusion of beer, cider or premixed drinks in addition to wine. Recommendation 6 has called for clarification from the minister about measures to support the responsible service of alcohol by restaurants and cafes which sell it with takeaway meals.

The lease reforms concern commercial and retail leases. The department advises—

As well as preserving any rent relief arrangements under the Leases Regulations, the amendment will allow the Queensland Small Business Commissioner to continue to provide mediation services in respect of eligible lease disputes until such time as the permanent statutory officer of the QSBC is established.

For almost 18 months we have been subject to claims of an emergency to justify the government grabbing greater powers and the introduction of emergency legislation. They should be used in only the most stringent circumstances and reviewed with the tightest time frames and not used to bypass parliamentary oversight. Emergency legislation is not a substitute for proper legislation. I do not oppose the bill.



Mr RUSSO (Toohey—ALP) (6.55 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Justice Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Permanency) Amendment Bill 2021. As stated in the explanatory notes—

The objectives of the Bill are to make amendments to legislation in the Justice portfolio to make permanent particular parts of the following temporary measures introduced during the COVID-19 emergency:

- the *Justice Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Documents and Oaths) Regulation 2020*—referred to as the “Documents Reforms”; and
- the *Domestic and Family Violence Protection (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Regulation 2020*—referred to as the “Domestic and Family Violence Reforms”.

The Bill will also amend the Liquor Act to allow licensed restaurant operators to apply for a permanent condition of licence authorising the sale 1.5 litres of wine (i.e. two bottles) with a takeaway meal up to 10pm.

The Bill also extends the expiry of the *Retail Shop Leases and Other Commercial Leases (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Regulation 2020* (Leases Regulation).

The COVID-19 pandemic of the last almost two years has raised a number of challenges for us all. As a parliament, it was critical we put in place measures to minimise, as much as possible, the impacts caused by this pandemic. The introduction of a range of temporary measures has revealed that beneficial outcomes could be achieved through the continued use of at least some of these temporary measures. The measures supported by this amendment bill we are debating today include reforms for the making, signing and witnessing of legal documents such as affidavits, statutory declarations, oaths, deeds, certain mortgages and general powers of attorney through electronic means or by allowing witnessing over audiovisual link. The bill also allows for permanently implementing arrangements to allow nurse practitioners to sign certification forming part of an advance health directive. These are practical and effective actions. It is encouraging to note the support given by stakeholders in considering the proposed reforms.

The pandemic provided us all with opportunities to look at new and sound ways to manage how we interact and how we engage, and it allowed us to review what we can do to make things better. The pandemic stripped away things we might have thought important, but it turns out there were some things that could be done in a way that provided better and more beneficial outcomes.

The pandemic brought the issue of family and domestic violence to the forefront. It is a good thing we are speaking out about and looking more closely at the menacing and deceptive behaviours these perpetrators are inflicting on their victims, often on a daily basis. The bill also clarifies that it is at the magistrate’s discretion as to whether to conduct all or part of the proceedings by AV link or audio link. Everything we can do to make it easier for victims of domestic and family violence to seek assistance to deal with the behaviours of offenders must be done. We would not be in our strong position today without the decisive and effective action taken by the Palaszczuk government over the past 22 months.

Debate, on motion of Mr Russo, adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

Water Infrastructure, Barlil Weir



Mrs FRECKLINGTON (Nanango—LNP) (7.00 pm): It gives me great pleasure to stand in this House tonight and talk about a much needed water project in the Nanango electorate, and that is Barlil Weir. As I have said so many times in this House, water is liquid gold. Unfortunately, we are not capturing enough water and putting it to good use. A prime example is the proposal for a 1,000 megalitre re-regulating weir on the Barambah Creek at Barlil in the South Burnett. This is a project that was first floated back in 2000. It was fully scoped, approved and designed and the site was purchased under the Burnett Catchment Water Infrastructure Project, but it was never built. The Barlil Weir was completely forgotten by those opposite. This is another example of how the Palaszczuk Labor government just does not get water infrastructure.

Thankfully, the primary producers of the South Burnett have not forgotten this project. It remains firmly on our radar as a piece of infrastructure which would provide the water security that we need. I have met with local primary producers who crop in that area, and they know that an investment in water


is not only an investment in agriculture but an investment in hope and growth in this wonderful area. There is significant interest and support for the building of Barlil Weir. In fact, in early 2019 Sunwater made an application to the current Labor government to apply to the National Water Infrastructure Development Fund for funding. This money would have funded 49 per cent of the cost, but the Palaszczuk Labor government unfortunately did not support the application.

However, this is a viable project. It has been identified as one of the top water security projects by Jacobs consulting in their 2020 option analysis for the South Burnett water feasibility study, and that is why I backed it in the 2020 election with a promise to fund the project. At estimates this year I asked the Sunwater CEO, Mr Glenn Stockton, if the Barlil Weir was still on Sunwater's priority list. He said—

Barlil Weir continues to be assessed by Sunwater on an ongoing basis ... is likely to be identified as an opportunity for further planning through upcoming regional water assessments.

Last week I met with Stuart Nicholson, who represents the Barker-Barambah Creek irrigators. This irrigator and others want this project. The Barlil Weir stacks up and it deserves this government's support. The Labor government needs to stop ignoring these types of water security projects. On behalf of my local irrigators and the South Burnett community, I call on the Palaszczuk government to stump up and fund the Barlil Weir.

Lakeside Park

 **Mr KING** (Kurwongbah—ALP) (7.03 pm): I rise tonight to talk about Lakeside Park, the iconic racetrack formerly known as Lakeside International Raceway. It first opened in 1961 and has played host to some amazing racing over the years—the Formula One Tasman series, the Australian Touring Car Championship, the Australian Superbike Championship and the Australian Grand Prix. Iconic racers like Jack Brabham, Dick Johnson, Peter Brock and Mick Doohan have all raced there over the years.


Sadly, in 2001 the Pine Rivers Shire Council bought the land and closed the racing down. I doubt there is anyone here who does not know how proud I am that Lakeside is in my electorate of Kurwongbah and how involved I have been in the Save Lakeside campaign. Through people power and significant investment by Queensland Raceways, Lakeside reopened in April 2008. Although I am a motoring enthusiast—I never hide that—and a regular visitor to that track, my support goes well beyond my personal interest. It is good for our community.

There are awesome tourism opportunities which bring great local economic benefits. As a hire venue, Lakeside is easily accessible and available for community events and conferences—when COVID restrictions permit, of course. The footprint of the track and the location of buildings mean there is ample green space for locals to enjoy—something that I know other outer metropolitan communities are crying out for. Lakeside hosts cycle training, including our Australian Paralympic team training. I will just slip a cheeky plug in here about Lakeside hosting potential training for the Olympics. Lakeside is important for our youth. Having a place for young drivers to race in a safer, supportive and affordable environment takes hooning off our streets. Lakeside is home to defensive driver education programs as well as vehicle safety testing and manufacturing days, with RACQ and QUT among its clients.

Finally, Lakeside Park is also helping Queensland students to achieve a Certificate II in Engineering Pathways qualifications through the Formula High School Racecar Build Program—a program culminating in a six-hour endurance race event at Lakeside. Just last month, Lakeside hosted 500 students and teachers as part of this program, an elective subject for high school VET students that also contributes QCE points towards their high school certificate. I wish they had something like that when I was at school.

John Tetley, the operator, is an owner with ambition. They have a long-term vision for the place that includes: quad bike and four-wheel drive training; nature based, non-motorised activities, such as mountain bike trails; and a caravan and camping area. Unfortunately, as it stands, any expansion is constrained by noise restrictions and a few vocal residents and we need to sort that out. The Deputy Premier, my neighbour, is also a supporter of the place. We think it has a lot of potential and should be able to operate.

Redlands, Health System

 **Dr ROBINSON** (Oodgeroo—LNP) (7.06 pm): It was my pleasure last week to host in Cleveland the opposition Leader, David Crisafulli, and the shadow health minister, Ros Bates, at the Redlands RSL. The Redlands health crisis town hall meeting was well attended by locals who came to share their

stories. Some spoke about their personal health issues, including terrible experiences due to the failure of the health system under the management of the Palaszczuk government. I table a *Redland City Bulletin* story on that.

Tabled paper: Article from the Redland City Bulletin, dated 10 November 2021, titled 'Locals complain of long emergency wait times at Redland Hospital during visit from LNP' [1955].

In the lead-up to the town hall meeting, I was contacted by a health professional from the Redland Hospital. This insider confirmed what the LNP opposition has been saying for some time—that the hospital is underfunded and poorly managed by the government. It has taken honest insiders to reveal the truth that things are far worse than the government is saying. I table a second story by the *Redland City Bulletin*.

Tabled paper: Article from the Redland City Bulletin, dated 15 November 2021, titled 'Redland Hospital maternity unit to take on general medical and surgery patients as staffer complaints' [1956].

Sadly, it has taken insiders to blow the whistle at places like Mackay Base Hospital and Caboolture Hospital to expose how bad things really are. In June it was revealed that ambulance ramping at Redland Hospital had blown out to a record bad 65 per cent, making Redland Hospital the worst performing in all of Queensland. The insider revealed in the lead-up to the town hall meeting that beds in the maternity section were going to be used for general purposes besides for local mums to have their babies. What is going to happen to Redland mums and bubs when they need those beds? At Redland Hospital there are no ICU beds, there are no new beds in new wards, they tried to remove palliative care beds and now they are repurposing maternity beds—no wonder Redland Hospital management is in a mess.

The Queensland health insider went on in the *Redland City Bulletin* interview to tell us that Redland Hospital health workers are exhausted, overworked, disrespected and ignored and that they have had enough and are speaking out and making complaints but they are going largely unheard. They are at breaking point, suffering from a culture of bullying and blame and they are put under great pressure to work beyond capacity. Executives are said to be using COVID as an excuse to cover for poor bed management. Paramedics were being told to take patients to other hospitals because of the ramping issues. The insider said that there had been many births at the maternity ward recently and was asked what would happen if a pregnant woman comes in who needs a bed when the beds are full.

One other matter that shows Labor say they care but do the opposite is the discontinuing of financial support for Homeless United in the Redlands. I table a third story from the *Redland City Bulletin*.

Tabled paper: Article from the Redland City Bulletin, dated 15 November 2021, titled 'Redland Community Centre's Homeless United program funding turned down' [1957].

I asked Minister Enoch a question without notice today, and I have sent a letter asking why she felt a local Redlands homeless service provider that had been funded and achieved great local results was not good enough to continue to be funded. Over 400 people have been assisted and 257 homeless people have been housed by this operation. I call on the minister to explain her decision and invest in this effective local Redlands agency.

Yeronga



Hon. MC BAILEY (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (7.09 pm): We have just heard another lecture from those opposite, whose policy on health seems to be putting their fingers in their ears and singing, 'La, la, la. There's no pandemic. There's no impact.' It is really amazing.

The old Yeronga TAFE site is located in my electorate in Yeronga, on the edge of Annerley. It has been redundant for quite some time and is not fit for purpose for TAFE into the future, so there has been some planning around a mixed-use precinct there. I have been very involved with my local community to make sure they are looked after in terms of the opportunities that come with a redevelopment. It is right next to the Yeronga State High School, which is doing very well. Enrolments are really increasing. It is well located next to the Yeronga station, so there is fantastic public transport as well. I let the people in my electorate know—in Yeronga and Annerley in particular—that EDQ have formally lodged a development application. The outcome, I think, is very good, but we want public input.


To give members an idea, there is a 730-square-metre space for the Yeronga Community Centre, which does a great job supporting the vulnerable in my community every day, to have a permanent home on this site, to be co-located with the Annerley-Stephens History Group and the railway model club. I cannot speak more highly of the Yeronga Community Centre, which provides breakfast clubs for local kids and all sorts of other things to help our community. There is 5,500 square metres for a

children's health services hub, which I think is a fantastic opportunity, particularly for our high school students located next to it. There are 178 units for retirement accommodation, so our seniors are able to move within their community when their housing needs change. There are 78 social and affordable housing units under the Brisbane Housing Company and 38 townhouses. The high school requested that they get back their second oval, and that is exactly what we are doing. The kids will have a bit more space as their enrolments continue to grow.

We have tried to achieve a good balance between new development and community outcomes. It is located close to Yeronga Memorial Park so there is ample parkland all around. It is close to the Yeronga Park Memorial Pool, as well as Souths Rugby Union Club and Yeronga State School, which is currently seeing a massive conversion of a very big, old dental hospital into new classrooms and new administration facilities for growing enrolments.

It is a fantastic community. I give a shout-out to the local businesses nearby like River City Cycles and Yeronga Bakery & Café, which will be loved by new and existing residents. I encourage people to look at it and make a submission. They have 20 days to do so. It is on my Facebook page. They should take a look as it is worth looking at.

Gympie Hospital

 **Mr PERRETT** (Gympie—LNP) (7.12 pm): Late last month, our Master Clinical Services Plan was released. It was 20 months late, having been due before COVID. Perhaps it was delayed because Gympie needs a new hospital. The report found—

The existing Gympie Hospital infrastructure creates significant clinical and operational challenges, with services spread across multiple, poorly connected, multi-aged buildings. The fragmented operation of the facility is exacerbated by the steep topography of the site, and the inherent forms and structural constraints of the aged buildings.

The hospital cannot be patched. The report said—

Whilst ongoing minor capital works are undertaken at the site to maintain safety standards, there is a need to move away from incremental capital works in favour of a broader investment in the site.


Whichever statistic you look at—ambulance ramping, wait times or rates of chronic disease—Gympie has systemic problems.

Almost daily I receive complaints: patients are discharged late at night; those transferred to the Sunshine Coast are discharged with no way to come home; patients are using their mobile phones to ring for staff for attention; there are emergency department wait times; there are no beds; patients are being sent home only to return with a worsening condition and are told the hospital cannot help and 'go talk to your GP'; there are no responses to phone calls; and there are long waiting lists.

Josephine is 78 and lives more than 60 kilometres away from the hospital. Her husband was taken by ambulance to the emergency department at 10 am. Despite several calls to the hospital, no-one called back. She was finally called at 2 am to pick him up. He had atypical pneumonia yet had to wait on a bench outside, dressed in a singlet and shorts. It was August, it was cold and he had been there for some time. Staff tell me that Queensland Health is trying to spin its way out of problems and massage messages. There is a culture of secrecy, a lack of transparency, cover-ups and stalling.

Last Thursday the minister advised me that 17 unvaccinated staff were on leave. Since that response I have received numerous emails from staff saying that I have been misled: the figure is much higher and it is at least double that number. If a loss of staff caused problems with the paediatric ward, this must be impacting services. I am hearing anecdotally that staff are run off their feet, stressed and overworked. It has been reported directly to me that a toxic culture, horrendous workplace bullying and discriminatory behaviour exists. I was told that staff are concerned with the lack of equipment and patient care, given the significant staff deficits resulting in elective surgeries being postponed this month, even with no current COVID in our community. We are heading for a crisis if the government keeps ignoring Gympie.

Springwood Electorate

 **Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement) (7.15 pm): It is an honour to stand in the House once again to acknowledge the community of Springwood. There is a lot to love about the community of Springwood. Take, for example, the amazing mountain bike trails funded by this government, our world-class winery supported by our Buy Queensland procurement policy or the outstanding citizens kept safe by this government, now 71 per cent double vaxed.

We have some of the brightest minds, the next generation of leaders, coming through our local schools. I was recently reminded of this when I visited St Edward's Catholic Primary School in Daisy Hill. A few months ago I was asked by the principal, Mr Sheehan, to come and chat with their year 6 civics class. I was joined by our local councillor, Lisa Bradley, and federal member and shadow Treasurer, Jim Chalmers. It is notable that we had all three levels of government represented. The good thing about Logan is that when our representatives all work together across the three levels of government, we really do deliver for our community.

I was asked to speak about my role as a member of parliament. I talked about how important it is that a good state government delivers for young people in their lives. Things like better roads, quality schools and the world's best hospitals are all critical elements of our community and a critical focus of our government. I asked them to imagine what it would be like if there was nobody to make sure that laws were obeyed, to look after the sick and elderly or to keep the environment clean.

I want to inform members that these students are some of the smartest minds you will ever meet. They peppered me with questions that would put this opposition to shame. I did my best to answer all of them and to describe our role as MPs. Clearly they were inspired, because they decided to write to our Premier to say thank you for her leadership of our state. I want to share with the House a little of what they said. Paige wrote to thank the Premier for the road 'that gets everyone closer to the city on the freeway so nobody will get mad when there are tons of traffic'. Angus writes—

Thank you, Premier, for helping the hospitals throughout Queensland through the tough times during COVID-19. Your decisions have helped thousands of people and thank you for all the other things that benefit Queensland citizens every day.

Mila says—

I wanted to thank you again for trying to keep the environment safer and more sustainable for our community.

She goes on to say—

If children were allowed to vote, I'd place my vote on you!

Finally—this one is great; you will love this one—

An opposition member: I think you wrote these.

Mr de BRENNI: No, these are all written by the students. Lucy writes with an important request. She says—

Also I think there should be a change to schools. All students should not have homework.

That is a very tough one, Lucy. I think I will refer that one to the Minister for Education for a response. All these letters demonstrate that Springwood kids are passionate about their community and the future of this state. Once again, it makes me proud to be their representative and to serve them here in this place.

Noosa Electorate



Ms BOLTON (Noosa—Ind) (7.18 pm): As we joyfully celebrate masks coming off, Queenslanders coming home and borders reopening, there is also enormous grief. Our inboxes overflow with pleas from residents, regardless of vaccination status, opposing what they see as the introduction of a two-tier society through new directives. Segregation, isolation and discrimination against Queenslanders is wrong morally and ethically.

For Noosa, this now includes potential decimation—from hospitality businesses that may need to close as a result of vaccination mandates, workers left without jobs and patients stranded. Yes, these latest announcements will see increasing waitlists with losses of doctors, chiropractors, midwives, psychologists, dentists and other health professionals because of their vaccination status. So far over 200 from my electorate have contacted me. Then we have disability carers like Jess, who is disabled herself. With multiple health issues, she now faces unemployment after being refused a vaccination exemption. Jess and those she cares for are distraught, and we have not even been told how long this nightmare will go on for. What is being handed down without consultation or debate is endangering people's lives and livelihoods. This is not a reward for the vaccinated. As they have said, what is being perpetrated on their unvaccinated loved ones and their community is unnecessary and divisive.

I stand here and make three pleas. Firstly, please extend options to small businesses and workers through daily PCR or rapid antigen testing and PPE, which is already being utilised by unvaccinated exempt Queenslanders and across the world. Secondly, provide a guarantee to our businesses that any costs in defending court action because of any mandates will be covered by

government or allow them to utilise the distancing and capacity restrictions as they have previously. Let us remember that small town cafes, pubs and restaurants nor libraries are heaving nightclubs or stadiums. They are intimately connected with their community—often the only hub for our most vulnerable—and should be given options. Lastly, I ask that those who have severe medical conditions which should preclude them from having a vaccination be given access to exemptions, and we are being written to that that is not happening. Unity and clarity is needed, not divisions.

For those making these decisions who have the security of a salary regardless of mandates, just like all of us here as MPs, I beg you to reconsider and reassess. We were told from the very start of this pandemic that we were in this together. Actions speak louder than words, and there is nothing 'together' in mandates that separate or segregate us. As I said last sitting, this is not who we are or what we aspire to.

Beenleigh Cane Festival; Herbst, Mr NR



Mrs McMAHON (Macalister—ALP) (7.21 pm): Beenleigh is back! Last month the Beenleigh Cane Festival returned after a seven-year hiatus. On 16 October Beenleigh turned on the sunshine and the sugar for the return of the Beenleigh Cane Parade, which featured over 50 floats making their way up George Street and City Road. Community groups, sporting clubs, local schools and bands took to the streets for a good old-fashioned street parade. I participated in the last Beenleigh Cane Parade alongside the Attorney-General in 2014, and with the return of the parade I was promoted to parade judge.

Competition was fierce in many categories, but the overall winner was the *SS Walrus* float which celebrated Beenleigh Rum Distillery's salubrious beginnings as an illegal floating rum distillery in the 1860s—which, by the way, makes it Australia's oldest still producing rum distillery. Congratulations to all entrants. The evening of the 16th was capped off with the Beenleigh Cane Festival gala ball. Beenleigh society frocked up and rocked up to the Beenleigh Events Centre for a black tie event featuring live music, dancing and a menu showcasing local produce and charity auctions. The festival was hosted by Beenleigh Rotary and I want to thank it for the massive amount of work that went into getting this event, previously a regular on the Beenleigh calendar since the 1960s, up and running again. It was no small feat and I was glad to support this event as a participant and now a judge and sponsor. I look forward to its plans to reintroduce the Cane Queen competition.

While Beenleigh said hello again to one of its well loved events, last week Beenleigh said goodbye to one of its most prominent citizens. Noel Herbst was a cornerstone of the Beenleigh community—from being ringmaster at the Beenleigh Show since 1967 and one of Beenleigh district's prominent canefarmers. But where Noel came to prominence across Queensland was as a pioneer of the Queensland prawn farming industry, starting by investing in prawn farming in the 1980s.

In 1993 he was instrumental in establishing the Australian Prawn Farmers Association and over the last 35 years he has made a valuable contribution to the development of the prawn farming industry in Australia. This included development of innovative farming techniques, sustainable farming practices and research initiatives. Mr Herbst was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia for service to the Australian prawn farming industry and to his local community.

Members of the House here may not have known Noel like I did, but I can almost guarantee you knew his prawns. For those who remember the previous term when we held a number of fundraisers for natural disasters on the Speaker's Green, Noel Herbst's Gold Coast Tiger Prawns supported the events and his prawns were featured on the menu enjoyed by members from both sides.

Vale, Noel Reginald Herbst.

Tuffield, Mr D, OAM




Mr WATTS (Toowoomba North—LNP) (7.24 pm): Derek Tuffield OAM, Chief Executive Officer of Lifeline Darling Downs and South-West Queensland Ltd, has announced his retirement. I want to tell the House a little bit about this great man who came to the Darling Downs 40 years ago and has spent 34 years devoting his life to Lifeline in our region. Derek has been the CEO of Lifeline Darling Downs in Western Queensland for the past 21 years and he has worked at Lifeline for more than 34 years. When he joined Lifeline in 1987, the organisation employed 20 staff. Today under his leadership, it employs 300 staff supported by more than 270 dedicated volunteers and covers over 550,000 square kilometres. Lifeline Darling Downs, as people may be aware, offers community focused programs and

it deals with domestic and family violence, it deals with child protection, it offers financial counselling and it offers emergency relief. It has a great program coming up, Loads of Love, which will raise dried goods for hundreds of families across our region.

It is unbelievable to think of the impact he has had on our community of Toowoomba. Often communities are marked by an icon or a landmark. Toowoomba has been well and truly served by Derek Tuffield and he is an icon of Toowoomba. He not only has an Order of Australia Medal; he is also a fellow of the University of Southern Queensland for his services to our community. He is a life member of both Willowburn Football Club and Football Toowoomba Inc. I know that he did an awful lot of work to make sure those football clubs progressed and grew. He is an honorary member of the USQ Golden Key club and won the Community Hero Award for Blueprint for the Bush in 2008. He has been a commissioner of declarations for 35 years, he has been a member of the Gambling Help Network in Queensland since 2000 and a current chairman of the Responsible Gambling Advisory Committee in Queensland. He is an independent chairman of Southern Queensland Rural Health.

Derek has also been a member of the Christmas Wonderland committee for the last 17 years. This is a great fundraising event that lights up the wonderful Queens Park for people to come and see. Derek is married to Rosemary and is a proud father of three adult children, and I am sure that he might just get to spend a little bit of time with them now. He has been a wonderful person who has affected so many people in our area—so many families, so many disadvantaged. He has given so much help to so many and our community says thank you, Derek.

Adopt-a-Soldier Campaign

 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (7.27 pm): Tonight I want to pay tribute to the Adopt-a-Soldier campaign and the tremendous efforts made by Mr Matt Rennie to recognise all of Ipswich's forgotten war heroes. I also want to thank the Ipswich RSL Sub Branch for its work in helping to make the Adopt-a-Soldier campaign a success. Matt Rennie is a Malaya and Korean War veteran and a recipient of the Medal of the Order of Australia. He is a remarkable man who set out to identify veterans in the Ipswich Cemetery who were either buried in unmarked graves or who were buried without recognition of their military service. Matt started on this journey almost 20 years ago—and I remember it—and he worked with the Ipswich RSL Sub Branch to find out who these forgotten soldiers were.

Earlier this year, Matt and the Ipswich RSL Sub Branch launched the Adopt-a-Soldier campaign to raise funds for a memorial in Ipswich Cemetery recognising these unknown soldiers. The unveiling of the memorial on 30 October was a chance for the Ipswich community to come out and hear the names of those soldiers and pay their respects. Without Matt Rennie's painstaking research, we may never have known their names, nor would they have been given the formal recognition they deserved. I was honoured to attend the unveiling and listen to the names read out by Bremer State High School students who attended. All in all, 165 names were read out. Each one of them had a family and a story. Whatever their rank, they were important to someone and loved. Now, they will never be forgotten thanks to Matt's work and the Adopt-a-Soldier memorial. The memorial allows people to pay their respects by 'adopting' a soldier and helping to ensure their name and their legacy live on.

Many of these forgotten war heroes served in World War I before returning home and eventually becoming patients at the Sandy Gallop Mental Asylum, as it was known in Ipswich. Many of them lost touch with families and communities and tragically suffered from what we would now recognise as PTSD. With little mental health support available to these soldiers at the time, it is not surprising many of their lives were cut short. It is deeply unconscionable that at the time of their deaths these men and women were buried in unmarked graves or did not have military recognition on their headstone. For instance, Matt tells the story of a young soldier from Dinmore who enlisted in World War I when he was just 16. He was badly gassed in France when he was 17 and was back in Ipswich by the time he was 18. He tragically died at the age of 21. This young man probably suffered terribly in the last few years of his life and now the Adopt-a-Soldier dedication ensures that his service to the country will never be forgotten.

The memorial has also brought closure to the families of those forgotten soldiers who now have their military service recognised. However, Matt's work continues and he will not stop until he is able to recognise all of our forgotten war heroes. It is a remarkable commitment and I am grateful to Matt Rennie for his tireless contribution to veterans and the entire Ipswich community. For those who are interested, the Adopt-a-Soldier memorial is in the AIF section of the Ipswich General Cemetery on the corner of Warwick Road and Cooney Street.

The House adjourned at 7.30 pm.

ATTENDANCE

Andrew, Bailey, Bates, Bennett, Berkman, Bleijie, Bolton, Boothman, Boyce, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Camm, Crandon, Crawford, Crisafulli, D'Ath, Dametto, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Frecklington, Furner, Gerber, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Hart, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, Janetzki, Katter, Kelly, King A, King S, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Lauga, Leahy, Linard, Lister, Lui, MacMahon, Mander, Martin, McCallum, McDonald, McMahon, McMillan, Mickelberg, Miles, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Mullen, Nicholls, O'Connor, O'Rourke, Palaszcuk, Pease, Perrett, Pitt, Power, Pugh, Purdie, Richards, Robinson, Rowan, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Simpson, Skelton, Smith, Stevens, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Watts, Weir, Whiting