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## FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

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## THURSDAY, 18 NOVEMBER 2021

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The Legislative Assembly met at 9.30 am.

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

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

### SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

#### School Group Tours



**Mr SPEAKER:** I wish to advise that we will be visited in the gallery this morning by students and teachers from Lee Street Special School in the electorate of Morayfield and St Thomas' Catholic Primary School in the electorate of Bulimba.

### PETITIONS

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

#### Paroo River Bridge

**Ms Leahy**, from 441 petitioners, requesting the House to raise the bridge over the Paroo River at Eulo by 1.3 metres [\[1958\]](#).

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

#### Abergowrie Road, Upgrade

**Mr Dametto**, from 334 petitioners, requesting the House to widen Abergowrie Road and address dips, blind spots and other safety hazards to road users from Trebonne through to St. Teresa's College, Abergowrie [\[1959\]](#).

#### M1, Exit 41

And a petition presented yesterday, from **Mr Crandon**, of 39 petitioners was not as stated, but was requesting the House to recommence the community consultation process for the Exit 41 upgrade with a view to considering a slip lane from the northbound Exit 41 to the Norfolk Village residential area [\[1945\]](#).

Petitions received.

### TABLED PAPER

TABLING OF DOCUMENTS (SO 32)

MEMBER'S PAPER

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

Member for Maiwar (Mr Berkman)—

[1960](#) Nonconforming petition in regards to prohibiting the building of a new coal-burning power station in the Galilee Basin proposed by Clive Palmer's Waratah Coal

### MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

#### Coronavirus, Update; Coronavirus, Vaccination




**Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympics) (9.32 am): I have good news for Queensland: today is a double doughnut day. We have no new cases of COVID in Queensland. There were 9,877 tests conducted over the last 24 hours and 12,773 vaccinations were carried out by Queensland Health. There are now 83.21 per cent of eligible Queenslanders with a single dose and 71.60 per cent are fully vaccinated. I thank Queenslanders for coming out and getting vaccinated and for continuing to come out and get vaccinated.

I am happy to advise that due to the excellent rates of vaccination and the response to recent outbreaks, restrictions on visits to aged care and hospitals in Goondiwindi will lift at noon today. I have even more good news for Queensland: Schoolies is good to go! The Chief Health Officer has advised that he is confident that the two cases on the Gold Coast have been contained with sufficient testing and no further community spread. I thank the people of the Gold Coast for coming out and getting tested. I know that this will be good news for the 53,000 Queensland teenagers who are finishing their school days, many of them heading off to Schoolies celebrations around our great state.


I want to pay tribute to these inspirational young Queenslanders. Our year 12s have completed their final two years of schooling under the shadow of COVID. They have seen many events cancelled. The class of 2021 have had to learn to adapt and, most impressive of all, simply get on with it no matter what was thrown at them. They do not get nearly enough credit for their resilience so I am saying to them now, 'Congratulations! You have made it! Queensland's future is in good hands. You deserve a week off, but please look after each other and stay safe.'

Saturday will mark the start of our super schools vaccination weekend. Stars of the Gold Coast Suns, the Brisbane Roar, the Brisbane Broncos, the Gold Coast Titans, the Queensland Reds and others will be the added drawcard. It does not end there. We will continue to bring the vaccine closer to the people. This coming Saturday a pop-up clinic will operate at the Rockhampton monster truck show. I am quite sure that the member will be there. Next Tuesday, 23 November, there will be a vaccination centre at the Eidsvold cattle sale. It does not get much better than that! There will also be clinics at markets at Mission Beach, Agnes Water, Muttaborra, Calliope, the Mutchilba Community Night and carols by candlelight at Branyan on 10 December. We have less than four weeks before our borders open. Anyone—and I stress this—who has any questions, and I understand that there are some people out there who do have questions, please go and talk to your local GP, your pharmacist or a health professional at one of our clinics. The only way to protect yourself, your family and your community is to get vaccinated.

### State Schools

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympics) (9.36 am): I would like to update the House on how our new schools opening for the 2022 school year are tracking. After opening five new schools this year, we are investing \$200 million to open three new schools next year, creating 600 construction jobs. We are not stopping there either: a further \$913 million is being spent on 11 new schools to open in 2023 and 2024 creating even more jobs. Official names for the three 2022 schools have been announced. Current enrolments stand at 104 for Nirimba State School at Caloundra South, expected to grow to 185 by day one; 130 for Everleigh State School at Greenbank, expected to grow to 220 by day one; and 120 for Coomera State Special School expected to grow to 130 by day one. I am pleased to report that all three schools are well on track to welcome foundation students on day one, 2022. Well done, Minister for Education! We have built and opened 18 new schools since 2015 and will continue to invest in our children's education for our growing communities. I look forward to welcoming the students at one of the new schools on the first day in 2022.

### Palaszczuk Labor Government, Election Commitments

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympics) (9.37 am): Thanks to our strong health response, Queensland's economic recovery is already well underway. Central to our economic recovery plan is investing in Queensland infrastructure and jobs. As a government we made more than 1,000 commitments in the lead-up to last year's election, all aimed at creating jobs, keeping Queenslanders safe and stimulating our economy. Our economic recovery plan and election commitments are delivering for Queensland. We have created more jobs in Queensland than the rest of Australia combined since the start of this pandemic and our economy is growing faster than the rest of the nation.

Today I table an update on the government's progress in implementing our election commitments, including the *Progress report on 2020 government election commitments*, *Progress report on 2017 government election commitments* and *Progress report on 2015 government election commitments*. We have been very busy!

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Government: Progress report on 2015 government election commitments, September 2021 [\[1961\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Government: Progress report on 2017 government election commitments, September 2021 [\[1962\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Government: Progress report on 2020 government election commitments, September 2021 [\[1963\]](#).


I am pleased to confirm that we have already delivered 300 of the election commitments that we made last year. That is almost one commitment delivered each and every day since the election and almost a third of our total for this term. We have delivered on our commitment to develop a climate action plan. We have delivered on our commitment to legalise voluntary assisted dying. We have delivered accessibility upgrades to schools such as Kin Kora State School and Nambour State College; outdoor learning spaces for Moranbah East State School, Beachmere State School and Windaroo State School; that is in addition to establishing homework centres across 120 primary and secondary schools as part of our \$1 billion investment in state education.

We have opened two new manufacturing hubs in Mackay and the Gold Coast, in addition to the hubs already established in Cairns, Townsville, Rockhampton and Gladstone. We have provided free TAFE and apprenticeships to under-25s and will be delivering cybersecurity training operation centres in Cairns and Mooloolaba and a new aquaculture training centre in Cannonvale as part of our \$100 million commitment to improve TAFEs across Queensland.

We have expanded the ban on single-use plastics to include polystyrene items. We have introduced landmark rental reforms to make it fairer to rent a home in Queensland. We have built a hybrid radiology and operating theatre at the Gold Coast University Hospital, delivered a helipad at Wujal Wujal Primary Health Care Centre and started planning for seven satellite hospitals across the south-east as part of our record \$22.2 billion investment in health.

We have a strong record of service delivery. We have delivered 93 per cent of the commitments we made at the 2017 election. I can say with confidence that we are on track to meet our commitments again this term.

### **Veterans, TAFE**

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympics) (9.40 am): On Remembrance Day we gathered at the Shrine of Remembrance, along with hundreds who stood respectfully in Ann Street while, throughout the state, solemn silence was observed on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month. It was a pleasure to have present Her Excellency Dr Jeannette Young, who was attending for the first time since her recent elevation to the role of Governor.

We honour those who serve and we honour those who gave their lives. It is an appropriate time to emphasise that we also help those who have returned to civilian life. We have committed an extra \$10 million to support Queensland veterans, including \$1.8 million in homelessness support, \$1 million to support veterans affected by COVID, \$1 million more for the Oasis Townsville—a wonderful centre that I would like to see replicated across the state—and \$1.1 million for employment and training programs.

Today I can announce, as part of meeting our election commitment, a partnership with TAFE Queensland for a training program called Defence to Civilian Success. We have committed \$900,000 over three years for free TAFE and apprenticeships for up to 300 of our veterans. As the Minister for Training and Skills Development knows, this demonstrates our practical support for ex-service men and women to help them reskill, including for new industries, and that also benefits our economy.

Another \$200,000 will be used to promote the training program to veterans and for a new mentorship program to support veterans with employment in the Queensland Public Service. Over the past three years since we launched the Veterans' Employment Pathway, 885 veterans have found work in government. That is because we value the contribution veterans make to our Public Service after their commitment to our state through conflict, peacekeeping missions, cyclones, fires and floods.


Today we also show how we value our ex-service men and women with this new \$900,000 training program, delivered in partnership with TAFE, which is ready to accept applications. Our veterans served us; now we can do what we can to help them in the next phase of their really important lives.

### **Central Queensland, Clean Energy**

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics Infrastructure) (9.42 am): The Palaszczuk government is determined to ensure that the jobs in the supply chain of the industries of the future are secured here in Queensland. Last month I advised the House that the Palaszczuk government had signed a statement of cooperation for decarbonisation in Central Queensland with resources giant Rio Tinto.

Today I am pleased to announce that two more companies have committed to working with this government to seize the opportunities that clean energy presents. The first is Orica, one of the world's leading mining and infrastructure solutions providers. The second is Alpha HPA, which recently bought land to build a \$300 million high-purity alumina industrial plant in Gladstone. Their high-purity alumina will be used in LED lights, lithium ion batteries for electric vehicles, solar battery storage and consumer electronics. The statement of cooperation ensures that Gladstone and the Central Queensland region will become one of the first regions in the world to truly benefit from the massive growth in the demand for renewable energy.

### Coronavirus, Vaccination

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics Infrastructure) (9.43 am): Over the past 659 days, Queensland has weathered a once-in-a-century pandemic remarkably well. We have had just 2,111 cases, most acquired overseas or interstate. Just 11 cases remain active. Tragically, seven Queenslanders have lost their lives. Right now we are on the cusp of achieving our vaccination targets without experiencing anything like the world has seen and, indeed, unlike the experiences of New South Wales or Victoria. Our economic recovery relies on that health response. It is thanks to our health response that business is open and we are creating jobs.

Disappointingly, over those 659 days Queenslanders have become accustomed to their Prime Minister undermining their efforts. He did not support suppressing the virus. He did not support border closures that kept the virus out. He did not get adequate vaccination supplies in time. He did not support our dedicated quarantine facilities. He failed to achieve his own targets for vaccinating aged care, disability care and First Nations people.

Today, instead of urging Queenslanders to get vaccinated, instead of announcing a national emergency plan to get First Nations people vaccinated, instead of doing his job, the Prime Minister has chosen to undermine the vaccine mandates that have successfully accelerated vaccine take-up here in Queensland and he has done so for the sake of his own cynical political interests. He has chosen to throw his weight—the weight of the high office of the Prime Minister—behind dangerous fringe elements such as those who protested yesterday here and in Melbourne. He is so desperate to claw together a coalition of anti-vaxxers for his own political benefit that he is undermining confidence in our vaccine rollout. He says business should be able to choose whether to require vaccination—


**Mrs Frecklington** interjected.

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

**Dr MILES:**—which would leave businesses out on a limb, having to decide whether to keep their staff safe or compete for patrons with another business without a mandate. Clearly he has not listened to the majority from business and industry who were unanimous in calling for leadership, clarity and direction from government.

Today the Prime Minister has attempted to trivialise the vaccination effort by talking about getting cups of coffee. We want people in Brisbane to get cups of coffee too; we just do not want them to get COVID while they are doing it. Queenslanders who have been vaccinated deserve to get their freedoms back. They deserve to be rewarded for doing the right thing. They do not deserve to be undermined by a prime minister who is more interested in currying favour with coffee baron donors and lunatic backbenchers than he is in the health and the jobs of Queenslanders. Today the Prime Minister has done what he has done every day of this pandemic: attacked Queensland, attacked Queenslanders and attacked our health response, all for the sake of his own political survival.

### Coronavirus, Vaccination

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (9.48 am): Throughout the pandemic Queenslanders' willingness to follow the health advice has put our state in a world-leading position. The Palaszczuk Labor government's plan has protected the lives and livelihoods of Queenslanders and today all Queenslanders are reaping the benefit of that determination. Through the pandemic, on all major economic indicators, Queensland comes out on top. Whether it is jobs growth, 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 the nation. Now, as we prepare to open our borders, there will be more rewards for those who have followed the health advice and are fully vaccinated.




In consultation with business our government is delivering a plan that will allow them to operate free of restrictions for fully vaccinated patrons and customers, but there is considerable resistance to that health advice. At a state and federal level, we see constant attempts to undermine the vaccine mandates recommended by the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee. We saw that opposition outside this House just yesterday. Now our health strategy is being directly undermined by the Prime Minister of Australia. Today Scott Morrison said, 'People should be able to get a cup of coffee in Brisbane regardless of whether you have had a vaccine or not.' The man who seeks to benefit from the strong health plans delivered by states, including Queensland, is now undermining those plans for his own political benefits.

Scott Morrison is willing to put the lives of Queenslanders at risk for a handful of votes. Scott Morrison may not hold a hose but he is willing to pour fuel on anti vaccination flames. Today the Prime Minister also said, 'We are not in favour of mandatory vaccines imposed by government.' This is a Prime Minister who withholds the childcare rebate from the parents of unvaccinated children because of his government's mandate. This is a Prime Minister who just returned from Glasgow. If he had paused for a moment from fighting with France, he would have noticed that the National Health Service in the United Kingdom is at breaking point. The lack of COVID rules in the United Kingdom sees the UK heading into yet another bleak and deadly winter.

If Scott Morrison wants to be a prime minister for all Australians, he should stop undermining Queensland's vaccination plans, stop undermining Queensland's strong health response and should stop undermining Queensland's economic recovery. Scott Morrison should back the Queensland government's strong health response and stop undermining Queensland today.

### School Infrastructure

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (9.51 am): The Palaszczuk government has planned to build 14 new schools in the fastest-growing areas of our state, delivering world-class learning environments for Queensland students. We know that over the 10-year period from 2016 to 2026 thousands of additional students will join our excellent Queensland state schools each year. To keep pace with this growth, we need to build new schools, provide additional classrooms and renovate and refresh existing facilities. That is exactly what we are doing.


Our \$1.9 billion Education Infrastructure Program is contributing significantly to our economic recovery, with 18 new schools built and opened since 2015. As the Premier said, there are three new schools opening in 2022: Nirimba State School in Caloundra South in the excellent seat of Caloundra, eminently represented by the member for Caloundra; Everleigh State School at Greenbank, which is on the cusp of Logan and Jordan that have two great local members as well; and Coomera State Special School in the seat of Coomera. I am sorry Coomera, I cannot say the same in relation to your member!

We are investing around \$200 million to construct them. This is supporting nearly 600 local construction jobs. Enrolments have been coming in for weeks, with hundreds of students getting ready for their first day. Buildings and other educational infrastructure are almost completed at each school; in fact, I know that the members for Logan and Jordan are officiating on my behalf at the handover of the administration building at Everleigh State School next week for which I thank them.

We will be creating even more jobs with over \$1 billion already announced for 11 new schools to open in 2023 and 2024. Our record education infrastructure investment is helping to drive our economic recovery. If we want to see that recovery continue, we need Queenslanders to get vaccinated as it is the key to driving our economic recovery, staying safe and reuniting families for Christmas. Getting vaccinated is the best way to drive Queensland's economic recovery. We are looking forward to safe family reunions at Christmas time.

Finally, I take this opportunity to wish our graduating year 12s all the very best. It has been another tough year with the threat of COVID looming large. I congratulate them all on navigating their way through 2021. For those attending Schoolies—and we heard from the Premier that it is a green light to go—have fun, but not too much fun, stay safe and please get vaccinated.

### Palliative Care

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (9.54 am): Delivering improved palliative care services for Queenslanders with a life-limiting illness is a major priority for the Palaszczuk government. We are investing an extra \$171 million over five years on a

Palliative Care Reform Program to bring improved end-of-life care to Queenslanders no matter where they live. This includes \$54.8 million for non-government service providers in regional, rural and remote Queensland to deliver more palliative care services.

I can advise that submissions are now open to the non-government sector to apply for a share of this \$54.8 million in new funding which will assist people to be cared for, and die, in their place of choice. This is about ensuring Queenslanders with life-limiting illnesses can spend the precious time they have left in a comfortable, familiar environment surrounded by their friends and family. I have nothing but admiration for Queensland's dedicated palliative care workforce and the outstanding job they do delivering care to some of our most vulnerable. That is why I am encouraging all eligible NGOs to get their submissions in for a share of this new funding so that Queenslanders will have more palliative care opportunities in regional, rural and remote areas.

Consultation with stakeholders on our Palliative Care Reform Program to develop a new palliative and end-of-life strategy is ongoing as we work with the sector to strengthen and enhance services. This will include seeking input from: people living with life-limiting conditions; First Nations peoples and communities; people living in rural and remote areas; older people; people living with disability; carers; and the bereaved. We will listen to and work with all stakeholders to provide Queenslanders with improved equity of access and choice to palliative care services.

I also acknowledge the recent Queensland recipients of Palliative Care Australia's National Palliative Care Awards. This year there were four recipients: Hummingbird House which in collaboration with Children's Health Queensland Hospital and Health Services Paediatric Palliative Care Services received an award for innovation in palliative care; Dr Graham Grove who was awarded emerging leader; Dr Claudia Virdun, emerging researcher; and the recipient for the most outstanding volunteer, Mr Keri Wassenaar. These are proud Queenslanders, delivering important services to our most vulnerable. We thank you for your services.

### **Coronavirus, Businesses**



**Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development) (9.56 am): Under the Premier's plan to reunite families and keep Queenslanders safe, from Friday, 17 December or sooner restrictions will ease for the fully vaccinated and new measures will come into effect for some businesses to minimise the risks of COVID-19. The public health directive makes it clear which businesses will be bound to require their patrons and staff to be fully vaccinated, including pubs, clubs, nightclubs and music venues. Other businesses may choose to mandate vaccination. Whichever is the case, businesses with fully vaccinated customers and staff will be free to return to normal operation without any capacity restrictions.

Although we know that the majority of businesses are extremely happy to see this new way forward, including industry leaders and businesses alike who have been very positive, we acknowledge that this is a new normal for all of us and that businesses will need help to navigate their way through it. This is why we are developing a raft of support measures for business. Businesses operating under the public health directive will need to display the vaccination rules and ask for evidence of vaccination from customers at the time of check-in. Thanks to the outstanding work of the Minister for Communities and Housing and Minister for Digital Economy and of her department, Queenslanders will be able to link their COVID-19 digital vaccination certificate to the Check In Queensland app which means customers can check in and show that they are fully vaccinated all through the app.


We also know that there will be a range of questions around implementation, which is why we will not only distribute to businesses and have available on both the Queensland Health and Business Queensland websites a series of fact sheets, including Q & A materials, to guide businesses in the way they operate but also, if they are not operating under the public health directive, how to make decisions about mandating, including around workplace health and safety, and the best decisions for their business. We also know that working in partnership with TAFE Queensland we will develop a micro credentials course to assist businesses to implement the new requirements, including on how to de-escalate aggressive customers.

Members may remember that when COVID-19 first hit, we developed a series of COVID-safe microcredentials courses for small businesses to support them through that phase. Those modules were an outstanding success, with 234,000 Queenslanders having completed them by the end of September this year. Based on the feedback we have received so far, we expect this new course to also be popular.

Standard signage, just as we have for the QR check-in right now, will also be developed for businesses to display so that customers are clear, before they walk in, what the vaccination requirements are, including for those who may not be happy about those vaccination requirements. We know this change will be challenging for some patrons and the government is assuring business owners and their staff that they are not expected to act as police. Aggressive and abusive behaviour is not acceptable and if a noncompliant customer refuses to leave the premises, we urge business owners to contact the Queensland Police Service. Penalties will apply for those patrons who do not comply.

However, on top of the support we will provide to businesses, all of us in this House need to appeal to Queenslanders to always deal in a courteous manner with the people whose businesses we interact with. If you are an anti-vaxxer, that is your choice. However, that gives no-one the right to abuse a worker in a business or make them feel uncomfortable in any way for enforcing the vaccination rules of their business. We ask all Queenslanders to think about the sort of person they want to be. In the final element of our support measures, people will see a campaign running out to exhort Queenslanders to always be the best person they can be. We will continue to work closely with peak bodies and industry groups in the hospitality, tourism and small business sector to ensure support is in place for businesses as these changes come into effect.

### Lockhart River

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (10.01 am): Two weeks ago I visited Lockhart River, 800 kilometres north of Cairns, in my capacity as ministerial champion for that community. I was joined by the hardworking member for Cook and Director-General Warwick Agnew. We caught up with Mayor Wayne Butcher, who estimates the community's first-dose COVID vaccination rate is now over 80 per cent. This is a credit to the Director of Nursing up there, Josh Stafford, and his staff, the Royal Flying Doctor Service, and Mayor Butcher's factually-driven community campaign to make sure Lockhart River locals understand the importance of getting vaccinated.


As always, I was blown away by the council's impressive work, like the cultural dance grounds they are developing, the new airport terminal funded by this government and the Lockhart Social Club—projects fostering community spirit. I was pleased to see council road crews hard at work preparing for the wet season. Mayor Wayne Butcher is committed to employing and skilling local workers. Council now owns most of their own equipment and rely a lot less on outside contractors. This includes a recently acquired concrete batching plant. When they use contractors, council leases them the gear and sees the full economic benefit for their community. To the whole community, I thank them from the bottom of my heart for their hospitality and for working with me.

I could not visit Cape York without driving the Peninsula Developmental Road back to Cairns. This \$237.5 million stage 2 upgrade, secured by the Palaszczuk Labor government, will see 55 kilometres more of the PDR sealed, along with an additional 72 kilometres of community access roads to First Nations communities in the cape, boosting safety, improving connections between remote communities and supporting increased tourism year after year.

There is no better example of the Palaszczuk Labor government's support of First Nations procurement than the Cape York Region Package. At the Merluna to York Downs site I met Ralph, Bradley and Jyroz—locals working with First Nation Bama Civil and Downer joint venture to seal the road near the Aurukun turn-off. Ralph is an Aurukun elder who recently started working with Bama on this project. Ralph showed up at the site office one day to see if they needed a hand, and Bama were only too happy to hire him on the project. Ralph is now a vital part of the team.

Finally, I came down the Peninsula Developmental Road to Cairns, stopping in Mareeba where I met Mayor Angela Toppin to talk about boosting the area's vaccination rates. While there is still some way to go, I am pleased to see that the first jab rate in Mareeba has jumped 20 per cent in the last month and moves closer to the state average each day. The message is clear: getting vaccinated is the best way to reunite families for Christmas and drive our economic recovery. The message is: don't make summer drab, get the jab.

### Investing in Queensland Women

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (10.04 am): The Palaszczuk government is absolutely focused on empowering Queensland women and girls and fostering respect

and safety in our communities. Yesterday I was pleased to announce the 26 recipients of our Investing in Queensland Women grant program alongside successful recipients, the Queensland Rugby League. They will share in \$270,000 to deliver their fantastic new campaign featuring male and female legends of the game to spread the message that domestic and family violence will not be tolerated. This follows their announcement last week to ensure their women State of Origin players receive the same pay as the men. It might be timely to also give a shout-out to Queensland Rugby League for their 'Let's tackle this together' campaign to encourage more Queenslanders to get vaccinated.

Every one of these 26 successful organisations will be delivering initiatives that address a range of issues faced by Queensland women and girls such as domestic and family violence, sexual violence prevention, respectful relationships, women's health and career pathways. As a government, we know we cannot do this alone. We need community partners to join us in our work to support women and girls to succeed.

QMusic has received a grant to develop a framework and resources to promote safe and inclusive behaviour in our live music venues. The National Association of Women in Construction will be running regional events for young women in our high schools, as well as for their teachers and career guidance officers, to promote careers in construction. WWILD, the Sexual Violence Prevention Association, will be producing short videos to help people with an intellectual disability to report sexual assault to police.

These are just a few of the innovative and effective projects that will be rolling out in locations such as Georgetown and Cairns in Queensland's Far North, out west in Longreach and in Southport down on the Gold Coast. The Palaszczuk government is committed to supporting and encouraging women and girls to participate in all aspects of society because when women are empowered the economy and state are strengthened. Queensland women are looking to this government to invest in initiatives that address inequality, promote respect and support women and girls to contribute and achieve. That is exactly what this program does.

These initiatives will be delivered in the first half of 2022 which will include Queensland Women's Week in March and also Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month in May. I congratulate all the successful recipients and acknowledge their hard work in making Queensland a safer place for women and girls.

### Arts Sector, Support



**Hon. LM ENOCH** (Alger—ALP) (Minister for Communities and Housing, Minister for Digital Economy and Minister for the Arts) (10.06 am): Queensland's vaccine plan to unite families is well underway, and with our state now at over 80 per cent first-dose vaccination, we are continuing our support for the arts sector, which has been heavily impacted by the effects of COVID-19. Live music venues, festivals and arts workers were some of the first to feel the impact of necessary restrictions, which is why early in the pandemic the Palaszczuk government committed to a \$22.5 million Arts and Cultural Recovery Package and why we continue to invest in the arts.

Today, I am delighted to announce that round 3 of our Live Music Support Fund will open, supporting music venues to offset operating costs, programming and artist fees. A further \$7 million was allocated in this year's state budget to specifically support live music venues, and we are getting on with the job of delivering that much needed funding to the sector.


Last week in Toowoomba I visited the Met Hotel which received funding as part of round 1 and 2 and heard firsthand from the Met's owners, Kosta and Jasmine, about how vital that support has been for their business. Of course, the most important thing people can do to support live music venues right now is get vaccinated. We want to see full venues again and bumper crowds at festivals. The best way to ensure that happens is for everyone who loves live music and wants to support the sector to be double vaxxed.

I am also pleased to announce that applications will open today for the brand new Independent Creation Fund to create jobs and employment opportunities for artists and arts workers. This fund will provide grants of up to \$40,000 to support employment of independent artists, designers, technicians and other arts workers for a period of up to 12 months. This latest fund is another example of our practical approach to supporting the arts sector to keep people in work. I am also pleased to advise that applications are open today for the Sustain Recovery Fund 2021-22, another initiative of the \$22.5 million Arts and Cultural Recovery Package. This fund will support signature Queensland arts and cultural tourism events and festivals impacted by COVID-19 restrictions, program cancellations and access to interstate audiences.

Finally, I am pleased to inform the House that earlier this week at the launch of Opera Queensland's 2022 season I announced an additional \$500,000 investment from the Queensland government which will support the 2022 Festival of Outback Opera at Winton, Longreach, Barcaldine, Blackall and Windorah. The funding will also support a brand new mainstage production of *The Sopranos*—a newly commissioned work by leading Queensland based writer Sarah Holland-Batt—which will be presented at QPAC and then tour regionally. This new commission will provide employment to around 90 Queensland based artists and arts workers, featuring a large cast and chorus.

Next year's Festival of Outback Opera builds on the achievements of the inaugural 2021 festival where almost \$300,000 was injected into regional economies. The arts contributes some \$8.5 billion into the state's economy each year and supports more than 92,000 jobs for Queenslanders. The funding announced here today will further support this important sector in Queensland's road to economic recovery.

### Paradise Dam

 **Hon. GJ BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water) (10.10 am): I rise in this place today with good news for the irrigators in the Bundaberg region. Following last week's soaking rain, Paradise Dam is full, as are other storages in the Burnett sub-scheme. We know that what has happened at Paradise Dam has not been easy for the Bundaberg community—whether that is as someone living downstream or an irrigator operating in the region.

I have visited the Bundaberg region a number of times and, alongside the member for Bundaberg, I have met with a range of irrigators including the fruit and vegetable growers, the macadamia farmers and the strawberry growers. I have visited their properties and I have attended the Paradise Dam industry forum. I have listened to their concerns following a period of record low rainfall in that region. Today I am pleased to say that, following recent rainfall and inflows into Paradise Dam, all growers in the region will now have access 100 per cent of their allocations.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr BUTCHER:** You do not like it when it is full. You do not like it at all.

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

**Mr Millar** interjected.


**Mr Perrett** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Gregory and member for Gympie, you are both warned under the standing orders. Minister, I remind you to please direct your comments through the chair.

**Mr BUTCHER:** Sunwater has today advised the allocation for medium priority customers has been raised from 22 per cent to 100 per cent. This is welcome news for local growers as it provides them with greater certainty for the months ahead. Significant rainfall this early in the wet season is even more positive as there is always the possibility of further falls throughout the summer.

It is also important to note allocations cannot decrease during the water year. High-priority irrigators in the scheme and all customers in the Kolan sub-scheme also have 100 per cent of their allocation. The \$100 million of safety works undertaken on Paradise Dam also mean that the water is now being captured safely. The dam is now able to withstand large-scale storms up to a one in 5,000-year event. The dam is safe—and this has always been the priority for both residents living downstream and the long-term water security needs of irrigators. The Palaszczuk government has committed to making a decision on the long-term future of Paradise Dam by the end of the year, and we remain on track to do just that.

### SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (10.12 am), by leave, without notice: I move—


That the House, at its rising, do adjourn until 9.30 am on Tuesday, 30 November 2021.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

## TRANSPORT AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

### Report


 **Mr KING** (Kurwongbah—ALP) (10.13 am): I lay upon the table of the House report No. 14 of the Transport and Resources Committee. This report covers portfolio subordinate legislation tabled between 16 June 2021 and 31 August 2021 considered by the committee. I commend the report to the House.

*Tabled paper:* Transport and Resources Committee: Report No. 14, 57th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 16 June 2021 and 31 August 2021 [\[1964\]](#).

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

**Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, question time will conclude today at 11.13 am.

### Health System

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (10.13 am): My question is to the Premier. I refer to the seven-year decline in the performance of Queensland Health which has led to blowouts in ambulance wait times and surgery wait times, as well as multiple investigations into botched surgeries and ask: is the Premier's only plan to fix Queensland Health's crisis to hold an inquiry with the aim of blaming everyone else?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the member for the question. I reject the premise of his question. If you want a history lesson, we can go back to when they were in office and how they decimated health in this state. You only have to look at the election commitments. We have rebuilt frontline services in this state because they savagely cut nurses from our hospitals. They cut staff. They fought with doctors.

**Ms Grace:** You closed centres.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** That is right. They closed the Barrett Adolescent Centre. The Leader of the Opposition sat around the cabinet table with the architect, the member for Clayfield, and absolutely destroyed the health system in this state.

**Mr Dick** interjected.

**Mr Minnikin** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Treasurer, you will cease your interjections. The member for Chatsworth will cease his interjections.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** The people of this state have voted three times on some key election commitments—jobs, health and education and let me also add a strong economic recovery plan and keeping Queenslanders safe. They are fundamental issues that impact on Queenslanders, and Queenslanders have responded not once, not twice but three times.

**Ms Bates:** Arrogant!

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** No. These are facts. These are just the plain facts I am putting on the table.

**Mr Crisafulli** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Leader of the Opposition.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I take those issues very seriously. That is why we are expanding our hospitals. That is why we are building seven new satellite hospitals. That is why we are making sure that people in the Torres Strait have access to hospital care.

**Mrs Gerber:** No ED, no overnight beds—it's not a hospital.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Currumbin.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Yes, and we are building a satellite hospital in Tugun in the member's electorate. She can thank me later. On top of that, Queenslanders over the past two years have faced an unprecedented pandemic.

**Mr Crisafulli** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The Leader of the Opposition will cease his interjections. He has asked the question. I would like to hear the answer.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Queenslanders have done a fantastic job. They have responded and they have stepped up and done every single thing that we have asked them to do. We know that because of the high vaccination rates that we are now seeing. We are trying to weather this pandemic, and that is due to the hard work of every single Queenslanders in this state who do not want to see their loved

ones end up in hospitals with COVID tragically being ill or unfortunately, as we have seen in other states and around the world, dying from COVID. Those opposite may ignore COVID, but it is real and it is happening and it is coming.

*(Time expired)*

### Health System

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** My question is to the Minister for Health. In response to the health inquiry, the AMA says the government needs to look at themselves, while nurses' union boss, Beth Mohle, says Queensland Health is broken. Will the government follow this health advice—

**Dr Miles** interjected.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:**—and take responsibility for the Queensland Health crisis?

**Mr SPEAKER:** Deputy Premier, you are warned under the standing orders. I have been very clear about having to hear the question as it is being delivered.

**Mrs D'ATH:** I am more than happy to answer the member's question because when it comes to looking at the health system we have to look at what the demand pressures on the public health system are. It is not the public health system that creates the demand itself; it is the external pressures that lead to demand. Those on the other side like to quote the AMA and the nurses' union. Dr Chris Perry from the AMA has said this morning that we do need to highlight the lack of funding—why you have out of pocket expenses—

**Mr Crisafulli** interjected.

**Ms Bates** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Leader of the Opposition, I have tried to give you guidance today. I do give you latitude. It has been incessant. You are warned under the standing orders. Member for Mudgeeraba, you are also warned under the standing orders.

**Mrs D'ATH:** I acknowledge that Dr Perry would like to see broader issues being looked at. The AMA is very aware. They are sitting around the table with us working on what our strategies are to deal with ramping, bed pressure and internal systems. He also said today, 'I applaud the minister for bringing on this inquiry because we do need to highlight the lack of funding.' He goes on to say—

They have out-of-pocket expenses because of the rebates. The schedule of fees are a third in real terms of what they were 30 years ago, and then you wonder why when you go to your GP in a metropolitan area you're in and out in about five minutes. Well, they have to because the \$37 rebate doesn't pay for anything when you've staff out the front, rent, depreciation and dressings et cetera. The doctor is not there for the love of it. The love of it doesn't pay for their own kids' school fees, their mortgage on their house, and they have to charge you money out of pocket to see you very, very quickly, which is not a good way of practising medicine.

That is the reality of it. Beth Mohle from the QNMU said this morning, 'We welcome an inquiry into the current excessive demand on our health system. We need to look at the system as a whole.'

**Mr Lister** interjected.

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

**Mrs D'ATH:** The intersection between our primary healthcare system, our aged care system, our NDIS system and what is happening to public hospitals needs to be looked at. People should have a look at the waiting list in the private system and primary health care. The member for Mudgeeraba today acknowledged that their policy was to get everyone into a private hospital for elective surgery. The reality is how do you do that when private hospitals are closing down? Private hospitals themselves cannot take extra patients. They are coming to us for support and collaboration because they are struggling to stay open in the regions. You cannot look at the pressures and demands on the public health system, where demand is outstripping population growth, without looking at all of those external factors.

### Regional Queensland, Coronavirus Vaccination

**Mr O'ROURKE:** My question is of the Premier and Minister for the Olympics. Will the Premier update the House on steps to involve local community leaders to boost the COVID-19 vaccination rate in the regions?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the member for Rockhampton for that very important question. He is a very strong advocate for his local community, and he is out there promoting vaccinations in his community and stressing how important it is for families to get vaccinated to protect themselves, their families and their communities.

As I said, we have good news in Central Queensland this week: the single-dose vaccination rate was up 4.1 per cent to 77 per cent. We still want to see it get to 80 per cent. Hopefully, the monster truck show will see a few more people get vaccinated on the weekend. The double dose is at 61.1 per cent, which is up 3.7 per cent. We really want to see those numbers lift higher. At the Rockhampton community vaccination centre yesterday 384 vaccinations were delivered. There have been 33,950 delivered so far, so that is very good news, but of course we want to make sure we get that 80 per cent double dose right across our state. As I have said, down in the city around Brisbane it is almost at 90 per cent, but in the regions we need to continue to drive that.

That is why next Monday my cabinet and my MPs will be out and about across regional Queensland once again driving up the vaccination rates in this state. Wouldn't it be wonderful if those opposite joined this, because it is so critical to the future of our economy in this state. I can advise that regional forums will be held in Cairns, Mount Isa, Airlie Beach, Barcaldine, Gladstone, Gympie and Dalby. Once again it is great to see everyone out and about across the regions. In fact, my ministers will be across regional Queensland next week, driving up those vaccination rates and making sure that community leaders are also on top of it.

**Mr Bleijie** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Member for Kawana, perhaps you can go out there and support the vaccination program as well.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Direct your comments through the chair, Premier.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** The member for Kawana could do that. In fact, all members opposite could. It has been left to one side of this House to promote vaccination in this state. Let me just say that it is extremely disappointing that the Prime Minister of our country is now seeking to undermine Queensland's strong vaccination program. It is extremely disappointing that he is not standing up for Queensland and what Queenslanders want and what Queenslanders are doing. Once again he wants to undermine the good work that Queensland has done.

### Health System

**Ms BATES:** My question is to the Minister for Health. The government has pushed responsibility for the Queensland Health crisis onto everyone else. What does the minister actually take responsibility for?

**Mrs D'ATH:** I thank the member for her question. If a health minister is to take responsibility for the health system, they must understand what the pressures on the health system are. They must be willing to engage with stakeholders about where those pressure points are, because if you think it is about just building more hospitals and putting on more beds and thinking that that will deal with the demand that is coming in the door, you do not understand the health system.

You have to understand that as the population grows, as the population ages and people live longer, chronic illness increases. Fewer people are taking up private health. People who have private health are walking into public hospitals because they do not want to, or cannot, use private health in their area because it is not available or it is too expensive. GPs are retiring and no-one is filling those places. Those in aged-care beds do not have a GP servicing them anymore, so what does the aged-care facility do? Ring up an ambulance, send them to the hospital and hope they will stay there so they can fill those beds in their aged-care facility and not take responsibility for those people anymore. There are no NDIS providers, so no-one can provide home support and let them live with the high quality of care and the lifestyle they deserve. Instead, they are in a ward in a hospital bed, and that is their home. That is not good enough for people who have a disability. Why should people who have a disability be treated like that? Why don't they deserve a home? They do. We have to have these conversations.

Before they write a letter to you, Mr Speaker, and try to refer me off for misleading, can I just be clear. I did say that the opposition wants to send everyone off to private hospitals for surgery. I will correctly quote the member for Mudgeeraba from a transcript. On radio this morning while she was having a sulk about the health minister at the time, the now Treasurer, she said, 'The first thing that he did was slash the on-time surgery guarantee policy the LNP was going to implement—"If we were elected we would have done it; we didn't do it when we were in government, but if you give us another chance we would because this is what it would have done"—so that people who didn't have to have their surgeries on time in a public hospital could actually have their surgeries on time in a private hospital.' That was their solution.



What happens when the private hospital says, 'We're struggling to keep our doors open in the regions because there's fewer people with private health, and those who have private health are not coming to us; please help us'? The private hospitals are coming to us saying 'please help' because the Commonwealth is completely missing in action in this space.

### Natural Disasters, Preparedness

**Mr SMITH:** My question is of the Deputy Premier. Can the Deputy Premier outline to the House what the Palaszczuk government doing is protect to protect communities this disaster season, and is the Deputy Premier aware of any alternative approaches?

**Dr MILES:** I thank the member for Bundaberg for his question. His community knows better than most the impact that natural disasters can have. Last week when I was in Cairns, another disaster-prone Queensland community, I announced an initiative designed to support regional communities to be more resilient and reduce insurance costs in those vulnerable communities. Mr Speaker, 33 local government areas and the Weipa Town Authority will be eligible to share in up to \$10 million in grants from the Queensland Reconstruction Authority.

We know that Queensland is the most disaster-prone state in the nation, having experienced roughly 90 natural disasters in the last decade. Since our government came to office we have invested \$184 million in disaster resilience and mitigation projects since 2015 as well as \$16 million into new and upgraded flood warning infrastructure. That is on top of the \$42.5 million that we have committed to the Bundaberg flood levee—the No. 1 flood resilience, community resilience and disaster resilience project in our state. That project alone will save 600 homes from flooding, it will create 679 jobs and it would be under construction right now if the LNP had supported it and if the Commonwealth government had matched our commitment.

Imagine my surprise, member for Bundaberg, when I was one of the three people tuned into the Leader of the Opposition's Facebook page to hear him talking about flood mitigation—he did not mention Bundaberg but he was talking about flood mitigation—and he said that flood mitigation projects mean—

They don't have to ring their insurer, they don't go through the heartache of, where did I leave the photo album, the pet's missing, I hope Grandma's OK on the other side of town—

That is ironic because the LNP's preferred option for Bundaberg is a better evacuation route. They think that Bundaberg residents should have to ring their insurer, they should have to go through the heartache, they should have to worry where the photo album is, they should have to worry about grandma. That is their message to the people of Bundaberg. I say to them: if you are serious about disaster resilience then you should be supporting our effort to save Bundaberg from another flood and you should be helping us secure those funds for the Bundaberg flood levee—for everyone in Bundaberg, for their pets and for their grandmas.

### Coronavirus, Queensland Border

**Mr JANETZKI:** My question is to the Premier. For months, thousands of Queenslanders have been stuck over the border in their cars, caravans, tents and motel rooms, desperate to come home. Now these Queenslanders are being forced to pay \$150 each for a COVID test. Why won't the government cover the cost for these Queenslanders who have been failed by the exemptions unit and who just want to come home?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** My understanding is that some of these requirements are the same for other states. We want to continue to keep Queenslanders safe. To have a PCR test that comes back and says that you are negative allows you to come into this state as long as you are double vaccinated. These are the requirements. We have released the plan. Here is the plan that the member may want to have a look at. These are the strong requirements we have put in place to keep people safe. When I travelled over to Tokyo, I had to undertake these tests as well. This is a requirement to make sure that you are safe.

**Mr Bleijie:** I bet the Premier didn't pay for the test.

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

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Because I was on work. It was work related.

**Mr Mickelberg:** Tone deaf.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Buderim!

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Mr Speaker, I find that offensive and I ask him to withdraw.

**Mr MICKELBERG:** I withdraw.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Our strong plan is working. Because we have hit 70 per cent double dose, we are actually seeing people from other parts of the country coming in to Queensland and doing home quarantine. These are really strict requirements and I make no apology for them being strict because we are keeping Queenslanders safe. We know those opposite want the borders just wholeheartedly opened—

**Mr Bleijie** interjected.

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

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** They always did. They are always undermining what the government is doing—every single step of the way, every single day. Queenslanders have supported our strong action. Queenslanders have voted on this issue and they continue to support our strong stance. Because we have had that strong health response, we have been able to grow our economy, as members have heard, creating over 90,000 jobs compared to pre-pandemic levels. We will continue to do that.

What I say to those opposite is that the best way they can help Queenslanders at the moment is to go out in their communities and promote vaccination. There is one side that is very vocal on getting vaccinated, and there is one side that is silent. They are silent on this because they want Queensland to fail. Those opposite want Queenslanders to fail when it comes to vaccination. I will stand up for this state. Now we see the Prime Minister wanting to undermine Queenslanders as well by his reckless comments that he made this morning. It is incredibly disappointing. I say to those opposite: drive your vaccination rates up in your local communities and continue to keep Queenslanders safe.

*(Time expired)*

### Health System

**Mr KELLY:** My question is to the Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment. Will the Treasurer please update the House on how the government's investment in health supports Queenslanders? Is the Treasurer aware of any other approaches?

**Mr DICK:** I thank the member for Greenslopes for his question. As the member for Greenslopes knows well, in the era of COVID, protecting health is a core component of our state's economic recovery plan. We have invested in frontline health workers, and I pay tribute and recognise frontline Queensland Health workers who have kept us safe throughout the duration of the pandemic. In the last budget, our government increased the Queensland Health budget by \$686 million, meaning the Queensland Health budget has grown by 13 per cent in two years.

I am asked if there are alternative approaches. We hear a lot of wild accusations from the Leader of the Opposition about the Queensland Health system, but what happens when he is asked what he would actually do, which happened just last week? Switch on the auto-babble—'Um, something something, better triage, something something, we'll set up a website, something, real-time data.' What a joke. Imagine that. 'It's an emergency. I need to go to the hospital. Wait a minute, I'm just logging onto the new website.'

That is not the worst part. The worst part is that the Leader of the Opposition would put the member for Mudgeeraba in charge of the health system in Queensland. The member for Mudgeeraba could not last one year as a minister in the Newman government, which had the largest majority in Queensland history. The member for Mudgeeraba to this day is a financial member of an organisation which opposes the mandatory vaccination of health workers. If the Leader of the Opposition wants some real-time data, there is some real-time data he should check out about the conditions on the registration of the member for Mudgeeraba as a nurse. The member for Mudgeeraba is a registered nurse yet has conditions on her registration. Member for Broadwater, go to [www.ahpra.gov.au](http://www.ahpra.gov.au) and have a look at those conditions. They are lecturing to every other health worker in Queensland, yet they would put the member for Mudgeeraba in charge of the health system in Queensland.

What about what they would do to the health system. Look at the costings debacle, which the Leader of the Opposition signed off on as a member of the shadow cabinet. If the LNP were elected, there would be 5,025 fewer health professionals employed by Queensland Health, including 3,270 fewer nurses and midwives. He is so disrespectful of the system, he will not even listen. He wants to ask questions but he never listens. What a surprise.

**Mr Watts** interjected.

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

**Mr DICK:** That is not a cut; that is a savage cut to the Queensland Health system. I say to the Leader of the Opposition: cut the auto-babble, cut out the deceptions and support our investment in mighty Queensland Health workers.

### **Mackay Base Hospital**

**Mr LAST:** My question is to the Minister for Health. Mackay Hospital has now confirmed its horror 48 hours resulted in not one but two deaths. Will the minister now admit there is a crisis at Mackay Hospital and expand the review to other departments to help restore confidence?

**Mrs D'ATH:** I thank the member for his question. They are important issues, but can I say that when they put these comments out there and make inferences about the conduct, expertise and skills of our health workers—and that is what it is, even though they say, 'This is all about government'—they are saying that the health workforce at Mackay Hospital are not doing their job properly. That is what they are saying. When they make these accusations, that is exactly what they are saying.

In relation to the cases that were referred to yesterday by the opposition, I acknowledge that the shadow health minister, the member for Mudgeeraba, wrote to me yesterday afternoon asking not whether these matters were properly investigated, whether there were external reviews or anything else, just simply, 'Will you now expand the review?' That review is specific to the particular area of obstetrics which has the expertise on that panel to look at those areas.

I want to make it very clear, as I did yesterday, that any unexpected loss of life is always a tragedy, and I express my deepest sympathies to the family and loved ones of those lost. All public hospitals, all private hospitals, day procedure services and healthcare centres in Queensland have processes in place to review clinical incidents in accordance with the requirements of the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care. There were reviews undertaken into these matters by the internal HHS, the Coroner, the TGA and the Queensland Police Service. Furthermore, I am advised that due to these deaths, all occurring within a 24-hour period, the Mackay HHS commissioned an independent review by an external clinician which was undertaken in December 2019. So, while they are calling on an independent review to include this, it had already happened back in 2019.

**Mr Dick:** Like you did when you were in government.

**Mrs D'ATH:** The external review noted that there were no apparent themes or associations—

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock! Treasurer, if I can give you guidance, you cannot direct your comments at those opposite in the manner in which you are doing it. You are warned under the standing orders.

**Mrs D'ATH:** The external review noted there were no apparent themes or associations between these three incidents and an action plan was developed in response to the findings which focused on compliance, performance and the sharing of learnings and patient safety. The action plan was endorsed and has been completed by the HHS in February of this year. I note that some of these matters are still subject to other external processes, so I will not go to the detail of these cases, nor do I want to talk about personal circumstances and breaching people's privacy, but I can assure the House and the public that they were all subject to an external independent review.

### **Coronavirus, Vaccination**

**Ms PUGH:** My question is to the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services. Can the minister please update the House on what the Palaszczuk government is doing to boost vaccination rates, and is the minister aware of any challenges the vaccine rollout may face?

**Mrs D'ATH:** I thank the member for the question.

**A government member** interjected.

**Mrs D'ATH:** Minister for Education, would you like to answer?

**Ms Grace:** I was dreaming.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order, members! That may be the first time I have ever seen two ministers jumping and fighting to answer a question. That is wonderful! Thank you for your keenness.

**Mrs D'ATH:** That is because on this side of the House we are so passionate about vaccination. Every minister wants to talk about vaccinations, and I know the Minister for Education is excited about what I am going to talk about which is the super schools weekend. We are so thrilled with what is

happening at the moment. We are seeing a surge in our daily vaccination numbers with a significant acceleration in vaccine uptake since the announcement by the Premier last week—the same announcement that the Prime Minister of this country is now undermining, which is very disappointing—the same Prime Minister and Commonwealth health minister who insisted, if not demanded, that every state health minister ensure they use their own public health directives to mandate it for aged care. They told us we must do this. It was their decision. They told us we had to do it. Why did we have to do it? We argued that, ‘You regulate aged care. It is within your power; we do not have the power over them. We are having to use our emergency powers when you can undertake legislative reform to mandate this.’

We know why they did not do it. It is because they are internally imploding. I was going to say it is because there is so much internal tension and disagreement with mandating. That seems to be disappearing. I do not think there is much dissension internally now. It appears that the LNP federally are opposed to mandatory vaccination. Am I supposed to write to the Commonwealth health minister, Greg Hunt, and say, ‘Do you want us to lift our directive now on mandating which you told us to do for aged care? If you do not want this anymore, you better let all of us know because you told us to do it.’

I acknowledge how great it is that this weekend is super schools weekend. We have players from the Broncos, the Reds, the Gold Coast Suns, the Gold Coast Titans and the Firebirds out there promoting this as well, which is absolutely amazing. We also have Johnathan Thurston—JT—and Teliqua Clancy promoting the vaccines to Thursday Island, Horn Island, Yarrabah, Lockhart River and Palm Island which is just fantastic. Of course, we still have George Christensen out there calling this apartheid, and his name on a flyer supporting the Leader of the Opposition—

*(Time expired)*

### **Queensland Building and Construction Commission, Review**

**Mr MANDER:** My question is to the Minister for Public Works. How can members of the public—

**Mr Hinchliffe** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Sandgate, you are warned under the standing orders. Please state your question again, member for Everton.

**Mr MANDER:** How can members of the public and current and former staff of the QBCC make a submission to the QBCC inquiry, and what legal protections will be available for whistleblowers?

**Mr de BRENNI:** I thank the member for the question. As the member for Everton would know, public whistleblowers are protected by legislation of this state. We are very pleased to have announced the independent review of the performance of the commission to ensure that it continues to perform at a high level—that it continues to support the 110,000 licensees in Queensland and the very many home owners and investors who are, quite frankly, being delivered an excellent product.

Earlier in the week, I spoke about the award ceremonies that were held at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre where Queenslanders came together to celebrate the terrific work of Queensland trades. I think it is incredibly disappointing that those opposite continue to downplay their excellent work.

The terms of reference of the review that we announced earlier this week have been made public. I am sure that the members have had an opportunity to read that. It clearly says that the independent reviewer will design a consultation framework. It will be supported by the Australian and New Zealand School of Government from the University of Queensland. They will publish that and they will invite all of those submissions. Everybody is welcome to make a submission to have their views contemplated.

### **Advancing Clean Energy Schools**

**Mr RUSSO:** My question is of the Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing. Can the minister update the House on the rollout of the Advancing Clean Energy Schools program and the Palaszczuk government's commitment to 50 per cent renewable energy sources by 2030 and advise if there are any alternative approaches?

**Ms GRACE:** No wonder I was excited. It is such a great question because here we are working towards our 50 per cent renewable energy targets by 2030 and our Advancing Clean Energy Schools program is delivering in spades. In the member for Toohey's electorate alone we have 1,600 panels installed, and I know he is very grateful for those schools having those wonderful solar panels on their roofs, as we are seeing right throughout Queensland. We have installed 152,000 solar panels at nearly

700 schools since 2019. That is an extraordinary effort by the department when you take into account the last 22 months of COVID. At the same time—and I will say more about this hopefully next sittings—of 649 schools to be air-conditioned, we have now fully completed 625. It is absolutely extraordinary. There are 24 to go. I know there is a big push happening over the Christmas holidays. Those opposite—

**Dr Miles** interjected.

**Ms GRACE:** You are exactly right—I will take the interjection: they said it could never be done. Maybe they were talking about New South Wales rather than Queensland because I believe they have only done about 15 of about 500 schools at the moment, yet we have delivered 625. It is extraordinary. It has created 1,500 jobs here in Queensland which is all part of our economic recovery. It is remarkable and I congratulate my department on delivering.

In terms of comparable commitments, as the member for Toohey asked about, I look at those opposite and it really is like searching for a needle in a haystack. I remember a story my parents told me when I was young about the boy who cried wolf—il lupo in Italian—and I remember them telling the story that they came the first time and they found nothing, they came the second time and they found nothing and then when he called them again they did not believe him. That is a bit like what we are getting from those opposite at the moment. They are crying wolf on the health crisis.

The word ‘crisis’ is used as if it is a word that is bandied around. We are in the middle of a health pandemic. We have delivered world-class systems keeping Queenslanders safe, and what do we have from those opposite? Crisis. We hear all of the interjections from those opposite when it comes to mandatory vaccinations. We do not have to scratch very far to hear the comments coming across the chamber. Where do they stand on that? They have absolutely nothing and are crying wolf on mandatory vaccinations. When it comes to zero emissions by 2050, remember the Prime Minister crying wolf on electric vehicles at the last election? He said, ‘There’ll be no more utes. You can’t tow anything. You’re going to be stranded.’ Those opposite have absolutely no policies. Their crying wolf will come to get them because when they ask for those votes the people will come and find nothing.

#### **Stewart, Mr D**

**Mr BLEIJIE:** My question is to the Minister for Trade. I refer to the delayed appointment as Agent-General of the Premier’s former director-general, Mr David Stewart, who has been under CCC investigation. Has Mr Stewart started in this role and, if not, when is he starting? Has the Treasurer been informed of any outcomes of the CCC investigation into Mr Stewart?

**Mr DICK:** I have to thank the member for Kawana for his question because it has been five months and eight days since the opposition has bothered to ask me a question—five months and eight days. To put that in context—

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Ms Grace** interjected.

**Mr DICK:** I will take the interjection from the education minister. I have waited five months and eight days. To put that in context, that is before the latest outbreak of COVID in New South Wales and Victoria. So the party of business, the party of the economy, the party of small business cannot ask a question on the Queensland economy, and five months and eight days later it still cannot ask a question on the Queensland economy, but that is all I would expect from the member for Kawana after trawling on the internet to get photos of me and photos of members of my family. I will say this about the member for Kawana: you might pick on me, member for Kawana, but you are not going to pick on my dog Scout. That is the last thing you will do. Member for Kawana, you might think—

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

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order, members!

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Mr Speaker, I rise on standing order 118(b) but also 118(a) which refers to ministers debating questions. I ask that the minister be drawn back to the question—the serious question—I asked about someone who is subject to a CCC investigation.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The point of order is valid. I ask you, Treasurer, to address the question as asked.

**Mr DICK:** Thank you, Mr Speaker, and I appreciate your indulgence; I was taken aback. I am advised by Trade and Investment Queensland that Dave Stewart will take up the role of Agent-General later this year. Logistics around his arrival and the market are still being finalised. Ms Linda Apelt's contract, the current Agent-General—and what a fantastic job Linda Apelt has done as the Agent-General in London—ends on 3 December. Arrangements are in place for an appropriate handover and transition, as I have been advised, and what an important market for us.

The United Kingdom is a key trading partner for Queensland with \$1½ billion in goods traded in the 12 months to September 2021. To absolutely underline the point in terms of that question from someone who was a former attorney-general, I do not know anything. I have not been advised of anything about the CCC report because the CCC would not advise me about that, which is something the member for Kawana should know. In conclusion, let me say this: my dog Scout gets more likes on Facebook than the member for Kawana.

### **Coronavirus Vaccination, Enforcement**

**Ms BUSH:** My question is to the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services. Will the minister update the House on how police will support the business community with restrictions that will come into place for unvaccinated people attending certain venues and whether the minister is aware of any alternative approaches?

**Mr RYAN:** I thank the member for her strong support of the work that our police have done throughout the pandemic and ongoing. In not too many weeks we will hit the 80 per cent mark—the double dose mark—and that means that certain venues will become vaccinated-only venues such as entertainment venues, hospitality venues and other venues which is in all Queenslanders' interests to keep us safe. We are working very closely with businesses right across the state and our Queensland Police Service will be supporting those businesses in enforcing that vaccination-only status. I want to particularly acknowledge the commentary that the commissioner has provided already that the police will be there to support businesses in enforcing the vaccination-only status.

I do have to start off by giving credit where credit is due. I note that on the weekend it was reported that the Leader of the Opposition dismissed suggestions that the vaccine rules were too extreme—so credit where credit is due. He dismissed suggestions that the vaccine rules were too extreme. I also note commentary that when the Leader of the Opposition became the leader of his party he said, 'If something is wrong, I will be prepared to call it out as such and I will do it in a forceful manner.'

I ask the Leader of the Opposition to honour his test of leadership and call it out in a forceful manner the commentary that we are seeing from members of his own party about the vaccine rules which he says are not too extreme. Why is he not calling out Senator Matt Canavan, who is talking about Queensland being a police state—an offensive term to the hardworking people in Queensland in our Police Service, in our government agencies? Why is he not calling that out? Why is he failing his own test of leadership? Why is he not calling out again Senator Matt Canavan when he is saying that the people of Queensland want their free country back? That is incorrect and why is the Leader of the Opposition not calling that out? Why is he not calling out Senator Matt Canavan again when he stands in front of a sign that says 'vaccine mandates do not work'?

Why is the Leader of the Opposition failing his own leadership test and not calling out George Christensen, who has said that medical apartheid tyranny is in Queensland? Why is he not calling out that in a forceful manner, to use his own words? Why is he not calling out Senator Gerard Rennick, who has a big sign saying 'no vaccine discrimination'? Why is he not calling out the member for Wide Bay, Llew O'Brien, who says that Queensland is an apartheid state? Why is he not calling out Andrew Laming—

**Mr SPEAKER:** The minister's time has expired.

**Mr RYAN:**—who has raised concerns about the scheme? Why is he not calling out—

**Mr SPEAKER:** The minister's—

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Member!

**Mr RYAN:**—Phillip Thompson—

**Mr SPEAKER:** Minister!

**Mr RYAN:**—in his—

**Mr SPEAKER:** Minister!

**Mr RYAN:**—scathing attack—

**Mr SPEAKER:** Minister! Your time has expired, as I tried to indicate. Please resume your seat.

*(Time expired)*

### **Coronavirus Vaccination, Enforcement**

**Mr KNUTH:** My question without notice is to the Premier. While the government pats itself on the back, Queenslanders are furious because of draconian measures enforcing mandatory vaccination through coercion, loss of personal freedoms and employment. Will the Premier explain why the government is implementing an outdated segregation policy which has angered even those who are fully vaccinated?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the member for Hill for his question. The best thing the member for Hill can do to keep his community safe is to encourage it to get vaccinated. This is absolutely critical because this virus will hunt out the unvaccinated. This is now the pandemic of the unvaccinated. If members do not believe me, they should look at what is happening in the US, right across Europe and right around the world. This is now the pandemic of the unvaccinated. I do not want to see unvaccinated Queenslanders end up in our hospitals and staff having to tell their families and their loved ones that people have passed away. I do not want that for Queensland and I do not think the member for Hill wants for that Queensland either.

Unfortunately, there are some people at the moment, as the Minister for Police was saying, on the opposite side who are pandering to a specific group of Queenslanders who are creating fear and scaremongering that is going to cause devastation to their families if they get the virus.

The best thing that everyone in this House can do is to protect their communities and to urge people to get vaccinated. The vaccine is safe. It has been tested, tested, tested. Billions of people across the world have had this vaccine. We vaccinate our children, our grandchildren, nephews and nieces when they are very young to protect them against diseases that can have devastating consequences.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Sorry to interrupt, Premier. Member for Traeger, and numerous members on my right, there is only one member who has the call and that is the Premier.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Imagine how strong the voices of everyone in this chamber would be who supported the vaccination program. At the moment we have New South Wales almost at 95 per cent double vaccinated. We need Queenslanders to lift our vaccination rates to keep them safe. Even at 80 per cent double vaccinated the modelling still shows thousands of people ending up in hospital. That is why we are urging as many people as possible to get vaccinated. In the regions we really need to see these numbers lift. I urge members of the Katter party to continue to urge their communities to get vaccinated. In North-West Queensland, they have had a great increase of four per cent; in the member for Traeger's electorate, 70.4 per cent, but their double dose is sitting at 55.4 per cent. That is not where we need Queensland to be. They need to lift higher.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** The best thing is to get people vaccinated.

*(Time expired)*

### **Gold Coast, Business Support**

**Mrs MULLEN:** My question is to the Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development. Will the minister please update the House on the Palaszczuk government's support for border businesses on the Southern Gold Coast?

**Ms FARMER:** I thank the member for her question about those border businesses, because those businesses on the Queensland-New South Wales border have really struggled and have been doing it tough. That is why we have worked closely with the Greater Southern Gold Coast Chamber of Commerce, Destination Gold Coast and the Gold Coast City Council and community and businesses leaders, like the chamber president Hilary Jacobs and Steve Edgar, who is the CEO of the Coolangatta Surf Club, to develop our \$14.5 million border support package because we wanted to make sure that that package was going to meet the needs of those local businesses.

That has included \$12.8 million in grants, \$700,000 for mental health support, \$50,000 for the Essentially Cooly marketing campaign and \$1 million in Play Money vouchers just to spend at those border businesses. Last week I spoke at a chamber breakfast with Hilary and her members and it was so nice to see the wonderful Jann Stuckey there who, of course, is the former member for Currumbin and also a former small business minister.

**Mrs Gerber:** You can have her!

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Currumbin, I do not think that was particularly becoming. You are warned under the standing orders.

**Ms FARMER:** It is funny that the member for Currumbin should say that because clearly pretty much everyone in the room was pleased to see Jann. Clearly the member for Currumbin and the member for Burleigh were definitely not pleased to see the former member for Currumbin. We had a great old chat and she is so passionate about local businesses.

**Mr Hart:** I sat beside her. What more do you want?

**Mr Mander:** No-one is pleased to see the former member for Currumbin.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. In light of my previous warning to the member for Currumbin, you are warned as well, member for Everton.

**Ms FARMER:** I guess we can see they cannot help themselves. I think it is pretty clear they are still not over it. On a positive note, it was just great to speak to so many businesses about our Play Money vouchers. They are going gangbusters. In fact, we have actually sold out—17,000 vouchers; more than \$1.7 million in sales. Those businesses who have done it tough are so positive. I need to call out what the LNP is doing to support those businesses. We are doing everything on this side of the House. We have created certainty with the vaccination plan. It is time that the LNP took leadership and gave that certainty to businesses themselves. What the Prime Minister has done this morning for small businesses in Queensland is say, 'Well, maybe we are not so sure. Maybe there are some question marks.' What they need is a plan to move forward. They need to be certain. It is time the Leader of the Opposition said what he is going to do, if he is going to call out the Prime Minister.

### **Coronavirus Vaccination, Enforcement**

**Ms BOLTON:** My question is to the Premier. New mandatory vaccine requirements will see severe impacts on our communities with further losses of a range of healthcare workers and small businesses. Can the Premier advise why alternative strategies, already successfully utilised, such as rapid antigen and PCR testing, PPE, telehealth and capacity restrictions, are not options being offered to these businesses and workers?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the member for the question. From the outset can I say that it is very good to see the Sunshine Coast getting vaccinated. In fact, the Sunshine Coast has 86.7 per cent single dosed and 74.7 per cent double dosed. I think the Noosa rates are even higher than that. It is great to see that in the member's electorate. Being tourist destinations I would like to see Cairns and the Gold Coast follow Noosa's lead to get to those high vaccination rates.

We looked at a whole range of measures. The Chief Health Officer advised us, in relation to the final plan that we submitted to the public, that the mandatory vaccines for healthcare workers is absolutely necessary. What they found overseas is that people were coming into the hospitals with COVID and giving it to other people who were in there for other surgeries. Patients and health workers were contracting COVID. Therefore, it is absolutely vital because we want to keep our hospitals operating.

In relation to businesses, we know that people who are coming here want to know that they are going to feel completely safe going into a restaurant, a cafe, a bar or a nightclub and that their families, especially their children, are not going to be subject to getting COVID. This is absolutely a safety measure. It is absolutely a healthcare measure and it is absolutely about keeping communities safe.

Once again let me reiterate to this House that every single member of this House should be urging vaccination. It is disappointing that one side of politics is seeking to weaponise this—we know there is a federal election coming—hunting out those votes and that is not going to protect Queenslanders. You should be standing up for the health care of your family members and community members. You should be standing up for them and doing everything you possibly can to prevent them ending up in hospital from COVID or, tragically, dying from COVID.



## Copper

**Mr WALKER:** My question is to the Minister for Resources. Can the minister please explain the importance of copper to the Queensland resources sector and is the minister aware of any developments in the industry?

**Mr STEWART:** I thank the member for Mundingburra for his question. He knows how important the resources sector is to North Queensland and particularly to our community. He knows when the North West Minerals Province rocks, so does Townsville. Bad dad joke! I am taking a leaf out of your book, Mr Speaker.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I take offence to that and I ask the member to withdraw.

**Mr STEWART:** I withdraw, Mr Speaker. The resources industry supports around 80,000 workers directly employed, many of these in our regions. It has been a traditional strength of Queensland's economy and will continue to be a major strength of our economy moving forward.

Queensland, particularly the north-west of the state, has a proud history in mining copper. It continues to be a key pillar of our resources industries and our economic recovery from COVID-19. Right now in Queensland there is real confidence around copper. In fact, I can confirm to the House that yesterday Glencore and Evolution Mining entered into a binding agreement for the sale and purchase of Glencore's 100 per cent interest in the Ernest Henry mine. That \$1 billion sale is a huge vote of confidence in the future of the mine and in the value of copper. In September this year I was at Ernest Henry for a safety reset and I witnessed firsthand the quality of that particular operation. I spoke to Glencore about the huge potential that the site brings. It is exciting that a company such as Evolution Mining can see that potential as well, which is why they have invested \$1 billion to secure the mine's future.

I am sure that all of my colleagues in North Queensland—I am sure the member for Thuringowa will agree—will be very interested to hear that I am informed by Evolution Mining that the product from Ernest Henry will continue to be treated in the local region, at Glencore's Mount Isa smelter and in Townsville's refinery, which is also located in the electorate of the member for Mundingburra. That is important as those jobs are a crucial part of our economic recovery. It is the Palaszczuk Labor government that gives confidence to the resources industries and makes major investment such as that actually happen.

Copper is a crucial commodity for the growing renewable energy sector. As the Treasurer informed the House recently, in the past financial year copper exports rose by \$425 million or 23 per cent and right now the price of copper is \$9,680 per tonne. There is huge demand for Queensland's world-class minerals and there are amazing opportunities for this state to take advantage of those possibilities—and why not, because Queensland has it all.

## Health System

**Ms CAMM:** My question is to the Minister for Health. I refer to revelations in Cairns and other regional hospitals that, because of staff shortages, a rape victim left hospital after waiting a day for forensic testing while others have waited up to 36 hours. Will the health minister fix her broken health system so that rape victims can get the justice and the treatment that they deserve?

**Mr SPEAKER:** Minister for Health, you have two minutes to respond.

**Mrs D'ATH:** I thank the member for her question. I am sure the member is aware that a lot of work has been done and a lot of investment has been made in this space over the past couple of years to boost the opportunity to train staff. From January to the end of October, 410 sexual assault investigation kits were received from police compared to 376 kits the previous year. Seventy-four nurses have completed the full program and 169 nurses from HHSs including Cairns, Central West, South West, Darling Downs, Central Queensland, Children's Health, Sunshine Coast, Gold Coast, Mackay, Metro North and Wide Bay, have enrolled in and will undertake the program.


We know it requires training and specialist skills to undertake that work. It is not a case of simply providing the kits. Staff have to be qualified and trained to do the proper assessment. We will continue to work with sexual assault victims. We want to make sure that they are supported. Recently we have implemented strategies so that, even if a person does not make a complaint or says they will not make a complaint to the police, they can have a forensic examination and DNA samples can be collected just in case they do decide to progress a complaint to police later in the year.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The period for question time has expired.

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

Resumed from 17 November (see p. 3645), on motion of Ms Fentiman—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mr RUSSO** (Toohey—ALP) (11.13 am), continuing: I will start where I finished last night prior to the adjournment debate. We would not be in this strong position today without the decisive and effective action taken by the Palaszczuk government over the past 22 months. Measures to reduce regulatory barriers and to support the recovery of small business are incredibly important tools as Queensland recovers and moves forward in our strong economic recovery. Now we need everyone to get vaccinated and I thank Queenslanders who have already rolled up their sleeves to get vaccinated. The actions taken by the Palaszczuk government not only have saved lives; they have saved jobs, they have saved people's homes and they have saved families. That does not diminish what many have faced during the past year.

Previous emergency response measures include establishing a temporary Queensland Small Business Commissioner to provide information and advisory services to the public about matters relevant to small business. That measure was very well received by small business owners and operators across the state and provisions are underway to make the position permanent. The bill provides for the QSBC to continue to provide mediation on affected lease disputes until the position of the QSBC is made permanent and also preserves any rent relief arrangements under the lease regulation.

The bill references temporary liquor reforms made in response to COVID-19 to provide restaurants and selected cafes with a limited ability to sell takeaway liquor. While differing from the COVID-19 temporary takeaway liquor measures, the bill will introduce an approval process for restaurants to apply to the Office of Liquor and Gaming Regulation for a variation of licence authorising the sale of 1.5 litres of takeaway wine with a takeaway meal. As everybody knows, in my electorate many restaurants suffered because of COVID. In March 2020 the Premier visited my electorate to support those restaurants and had yum cha at the world-famous Landmark Restaurant.

Stakeholders expressed various and often opposing views about this part of the bill. The inquiring committee formed the view that there is an opportunity to find a middle ground that meets the needs of all parties and supports small business as well as the harm minimisation strategies over which concerns were expressed.

In the remaining time I will deal with some of the amendments that will be moved by the Attorney-General during consideration in detail. These are sensible amendments that allow government departments to take advantage of the modernisation of practices by which important legal documents are made, signed and witnessed. The amendments are welcomed, are complementary to business practices and will improve access to justice in Queensland.

The objectives of the amendments include improving the intended operation of the document reforms. They clarify provisions and introduce a transition provision to provide legal certainty for deeds executed by the state and corporations under the justice legislation. The bill will amend the Oaths Act to clarify the procedural and document retention requirements that apply to the witnessing of affidavits and statutory declarations in person and over audiovisual link, consistent with the policy and objectives of the bill. The bill will allow a witness to sign either the same document, a true copy of the document or a counterpart of the document, that is, a copy that does not contain the other signatures. This provides flexibility for the document creation process to ensure that documents can be made efficiently, depending on the circumstances of each case.

When the witness signs the same document or when a true copy of the document is signed by the signatory or substitute signatory, it results in a document that has both signatures on it called the official version, but the signatures may not be original because the documents can be scanned and electronically shared. The bill currently provides that the version of document that was signed physically or electronically by the signature is supported. I commend the bill to the House.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Martin): Before I call the member for Capalaba, I just remind members in this House that the following members are currently on a warning issued under the standing orders: the members for Nanango, Gregory, Gympie, Murrumba, Broadwater, Mudgeeraba, Southern Downs, Kawana, Toowoomba North, Woodridge, Sandgate, Currumbin and Everton.



**Mr BROWN** (Capalaba—ALP) (11.20 am): Innovation often comes about following times of adversity. It is in this spirit that I rise in support of the Justice Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Permanency) Amendment Bill 2021. This bill seeks to make permanent certain temporary regulatory measures in the justice portfolio that we introduced during the COVID-19 pandemic. This bill proposes measures to support the making, signing and witnessing of certain legal documents through electronic means. The purpose of this reform will modernise the way legal documents are created, will deliver real and practical benefits and will increase certainty, cost savings and, importantly, access to justice.

Matters pertaining to domestic and family violence are also addressed in this bill. It is proposed to make permanent certain measures introduced by the Domestic and Family Violence Protection (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Regulation 2020. This includes the provision of alternative options in certain circumstances to the traditional methods to verifying and filing applications during domestic and family violence proceedings.

One of the elements of the bill I note with interest are the proposed amendments to the Liquor Act 1992 to provide the ability for certain licensed restaurants to be able to sell 1.5 litres of wine for takeaway or delivery with takeaway meals. Ordinarily, the ability of licensed restaurateurs to sell takeaway liquor is limited to one open and one unopened bottle of takeaway wine to adults dining on the premises. Temporarily, takeaway liquor arrangements were introduced in May last year during COVID-19 allowing licensed restaurants to sell takeaway liquor until 10pm with takeaway food orders and in an amount not exceeding 2.25 litres of liquor excluding straight spirits. This bill introduces an approval process for restaurateurs to apply to the Office of Liquor and Gaming Regulation for a variation of licence to authorise the sale of 1.5 litres of takeaway wine with a takeaway meal.

As all of us in this House know, COVID-19 has drastically changed the shape of many industries. The restaurant and hospitality industry has not been spared. I note that Restaurant and Catering Australia, one of the stakeholders representing the sector, informed the committee that the demand for takeaway options during the pandemic had surged to nearly 37 per cent of all orders, reflecting the change in social behaviours. Its CEO Wes Lambert advised—

Takeaway liquor has become an important source of revenue for operators.

This was particularly important given that restaurants, cafes and caterers have lost \$10 billion in booking events since the pandemic started. With the fact that COVID-19 has changed the whole world and consumer demand has changed radically during the pandemic, Queensland has fared far better than most places in the world because of a strong health response. Our economy is making a strong recovery, but customer behaviour and technology are changing. Hospitality businesses such as restaurants and cafes have adapted. Innovation has added new revenue streams such as takeaway, delivery and bespoke experiences.

Consumers have embraced these changes. I know that many licensed restaurants in my community have found a valuable avenue to at least in part offset the economic impacts that have been felt through the pandemic. I have taken advantage of these measures myself. I know that David and the team at Jaipur Palace, the best Indian in Redlands by a long way, will attest to that. Do yourself a favour if you are ever out on the Bayside. This reform in this bill acknowledges this fact and seeks to reduce red tape for restaurants. It will further support an economic recovery by small businesses in my community and indeed across the state.


It is important to acknowledge that the Attorney-General has the balance right in regards to limiting it to wine. Having worked for a number of years as a retail manager in the liquor industry, we need to ensure that we support those hoteliers and clubs that pay a lot for their licences and that they are protected, because they do put a lot of money into those licences. There are also the leases that go with them and the staff which man them, which I was one of. We have to look very carefully, if we ever think about expanding this any further, because when it comes to wine we have the balance right. Any further measures could be a slippery slope and open the floodgates to a duopoly where Coles and Woolworths, as we see down south, have all their retail liquor in their retail stores. We have a fantastic system in Queensland based off the hoteliers, their licences and, normally, the three detached bottle shops.

We need to ensure that we protect that, because hoteliers in this state do a lot more than Coles and Woolworths, especially in regional and remote towns. I had the benefit of travelling around the state in terms of the rural liquor bill. Those places are meeting hubs and give so much back to their community in donations, footy team sponsorships, and the list goes on and on. I want to make sure that we get the balance right in regards to this and do not take it any further.

**Mr Lister:** Thanks Don!

**Mr BROWN:** I take that interjection. Another aspect of the bill I would like to highlight pertains to leases, regulations and the Small Business Commissioner. One of these measures introduced by the Palaszczuk government earlier in the pandemic established a Small Business Commissioner. The function of this commission is to provide information and advisory services to the public about matters relevant to small businesses, particularly in relation to COVID-19 response measures. It will assist small businesses in reaching informal resolution for disputes relating to leases and administer a mediation process in relation to small business tenancy disputes.

In October the Minister for Employment and Small Business and the Minister for Training and Skills Development introduced the Small Business Commissioner legislation to the House. I acknowledge that as I cannot refer to it before it is debated. In terms of the Small Business Commissioner and its role during this pandemic, I have received plenty of feedback in relation to its support of constituents in my area, particularly in regards to lease disputes. We know that they went through a particularly hard time, especially with lockdowns where revenue streams dried up, and there was worry over the payment of these leases. In many cases, the Small Business Commissioner stepped in and helped out very much in that process. With that, I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (11.28 am): I rise to speak in support of the Justice Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Permanency) Amendment Bill 2021. I begin by thanking the State Development and Regional Industries Committee for their work on this important bill—the committee chair, the member for Bancroft, and all members of the committee. I thank the secretariat for their work in supporting the committee in this important consideration.

As we all know, in January 2020 Queensland announced a health emergency and from that point Queensland and indeed the world has been confronted with the challenges of a global pandemic. Queenslanders have had to change the way we go about our daily lives, business and schooling. Our community in Queensland has responded and we have adapted to be able to conduct business and live our lives in new ways.

Queenslanders have done so well. We have followed the guidelines, we have taken care of each other and we are now getting vaccinated to continue with our recovery and to protect each other and our community. So much so, the Wynnum Fringe festival is on this weekend. For those members who have not got their tickets, please go to [wynnumfringe.com](http://wynnumfringe.com) and book some tickets. There are lots of free events. We are only able to go ahead with that because of our great response to COVID. I thank everyone for that.

In response to COVID-19, the government has been agile and has introduced temporary measures for the COVID-19 emergency to ensure that we supported our small businesses, consumers and communities. These temporary measures are due to expire on 30 April 2022 pursuant to the Public Health and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2021. The Justice Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Permanency) Amendment Bill 2021 will permanently implement particular parts of the temporary laws that were made in the justice portfolio to commence prior to the COVID-19 expiry date, to provide a seamless transition for the community and stakeholders. These amendments will apply to 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.

The bill will also amend the Liquor Act 1992 to allow licensed restaurant operators to apply for a permanent condition of licence authorising the sale of 1.5 litres of wine or two 750 millilitre bottles with a takeaway meal up to 10 pm. The Justice Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Permanency) Amendment Bill 2021 also extends the expiry of the Retail Shop Leases and Other Commercial Leases (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Regulation 2020 until two years after the COVID-19 legislation expiry date, unless it is repealed sooner.

As a result of the COVID-19 emergency and the advent of lockdowns and restrictions on 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 document and oaths regulation introduced temporary measures to allow documents to be made, signed and witnessed electronically, with simplified execution requirements. The Justice Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Permanency) Amendment Bill 2021 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 bill modernises the 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.

The bill permanently implements the arrangement under the document and oaths regulation which allows nurse practitioners, 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 capacity to make the document. 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 also 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.

The Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012 sets out the legislative framework for providing civil protection from domestic and family violence through domestic violence orders and police protection notices. Applications for domestic violence orders 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 the aggrieved. Ordinarily, private applicants—an applicant who is not a police officer—must verify an application for a domestic violence order 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 domestic and family violence COVID regulation puts 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 directions. The bill modernises, streamlines and increases accessibility to domestic and family violence proceedings by providing for alternative verification arrangements for private applications for protection orders and variations of domestic violence orders, in urgent situations further allowing domestic and family violence proceedings by audiovisual link or audio link and allowing electronic filing of documents in domestic and family violence proceedings where electronic filing of the document is approved by the principal registrar.

The bill amends the Liquor Act to provide a permanent ability for licensees holding a subsidiary on-premises licence—for example, a restaurant—to apply for approval, via a licence condition, to sell a limited amount of wine for takeaway or delivery with a takeaway meal. An approval is conditional upon the licensee establishing systems and procedures to ensure the responsible service of takeaway liquor. The liquor reforms proposed by the bill aim to reduce regulatory barriers for restaurants and support the recovery of small businesses from the economic impacts of the pandemic. The amendments are also anticipated to deliver a tangible public benefit by reflecting contemporary food service standards and changing customer expectations. The reforms differ from the current broader COVID-19 temporary takeaway liquor authorities. However, the changes resulting from stakeholder consultation will reduce the potential for harm and provide greater regulatory control. The reforms are also consistent with existing Liquor Act provisions allowing the sale of one opened and one unopened bottle of takeaway wine to on-premises diners.

The leases reforms will extend the expiry of the leases regulation, and any other regulation made under section 23 of the COVID-19 Emergency Response Act 2020 prior to the COVID-19 legislation expiry date, until two years after that date, unless it is repealed sooner. This will allow the Small Business Commissioner to continue to provide mediation services in respect of eligible lease disputes—for example, affected lease disputes and small business tenancy disputes, as currently defined in the leases regulation—until such time as the permanent statutory office is established.

This bill is sensible. It makes permanent some of the temporary arrangements that enabled Queenslanders to go about their business—business owners like Belinda from Schuks at Manly. Belinda is now able to share her sensational range of specialised Australian wines as takeaway with her ethically and sustainably sourced meals. I do a shout-out to all of our local businesses because they have done it tough. I acknowledge the great work they have done to date and what they will continue to do. We all know that we have to be vaccinated to stay safe and to look after each other. Our local small businesses are the backbone of our economy. I acknowledge the great work they do and look forward to continuing to support them.

I remind everyone again of the Wynnum Fringe festival. A lot of our local businesses will be open. We have a great range of restaurants and cafes. Pop down to the festival on the weekend. I commend the bill to the House.



**Mr KRAUSE** (Scenic Rim—LNP) (11.38 am): In making a few comments on this bill, I extend my support to all of the hardworking small business people running hospitality businesses in the Scenic Rim electorate, including our small brewer at Mount Alford in the Scenic Rim called Scenic Rim Brewery. Members who have had a glance through the report will note that Scenic Rim Brewery was one of the submitters on the bill. Whilst they are generally supportive of the proposal to make some of these provisions permanent, there is disappointment on their part and on the part of other independent brewers that the measures have not been extended to the fullest extent they could have been.

I have spoken in this House many times about the need to support—

**Mr Healy:** Yes, you have.

**Mr KRAUSE:** I take the interjection from the member for Cairns that I have spoken many times. Member for Cairns, you are not shy of saying a few words either sometimes.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Martin): Through the chair please, member for Scenic Rim.

**Mr KRAUSE:** The member for Cairns will, I am sure, readily acknowledge that he likes to have lots of cross-chamber chatter from time to time as well. Coming back to the bill and to the great advocacy of the Scenic Rim Brewery, I was pleased to be able to sponsor an award at the Scenic Rim Business Excellence Awards a couple of weeks ago for the best hospitality venue. In fact, I was able to present that award to the Scenic Rim Brewery. They are a husband-and-wife business, a family business, set up just a few years ago. They brew their own beer at Mount Alford in the old Mount Alford general store. They also serve a great selection of food made with a bit of Dutch flavour because some members of their family have Dutch heritage. They are a small business and these measures that were brought in around the start of COVID-19 helped them through those difficult times.

As a small brewer, as with all independent brewers, they face difficulty competing against the major breweries. It is a classic issue of big business versus small business. Over a number of years, as I was about to say before the member for Cairns interrupted before, I have advocated for the playing field to be made fairer for small businesses across the board but in particular in this space because it is dominated by the big brewers and it is also dominated by the big retailers who dominate through BWS, Dan Murphy's and other brands that are owned by Coles and Woolworths. They have so much power. Everything we can do to level the playing field for smaller players should be considered. I am disappointed that takeaway provisions for beer in those small places will not be included in these permanent measures. Even if they were included, those small businesses would still be facing the huge market power of Coles and Woolworths and competing against them.


I know that some members may have different views about this, when it comes to levelling the playing field, and say that pubs should be given a level of protection, so to speak, because they pay their licence fees. The reality is that in most of Queensland, especially in South-East Queensland, that market is dominated by the big players. They have plenty of power. Opening up that market to a certain extent I do not think would make a huge difference to most people in the hotel industry. There will always be exceptional circumstances. That could be dealt with through the licensing process from a region-to-region perspective. It is good to see at least some measures to support small business being made permanent in this bill.

The other thing I wanted to touch on briefly was the changes made to the way that deeds and agreements are executed. I note that there were some technical but practical submissions made by the Australian Banking Association but also large law firms—Allens Linklaters and King & Wood Mallesons, as well as the Queensland Law Society. Anyone in this House who has worked in banking and finance or in legal practice will understand that some of the technicalities around the signing of deeds and powers of attorney can be complicated. There are some good submissions in relation to simplifying those provisions, especially when it comes to the execution of deeds by partnerships.

It is all a bit dry, but some of these provisions presently on our statute books do complicate matters when it comes to signing deeds by partnerships. There could be more reform in this space. I am pretty sure it is not included in this bill. There are recommendations for further reforms. I think the government should take that forward to make it simpler for people in those industries to be able to execute their documents with legislative certainty that they will be enforceable. Otherwise, as was pointed out by Ms Karla Fraser from Allens—I should declare that I previously did some work with

Ms Karla Fraser from Allens in my previous job—‘people default to the conservative position’ to ensure certainty around the execution of documents. It is the government’s role—it is the parliament’s role—to give certainty around these matters through legislation.

Those comments were made around the execution by the state electronically which is not provided for in this bill. Hopefully that can be taken up in the future as well. It is about making the wheels of commerce and the wheels of industry roll quicker and easier which probably reduces the amount people need to spend on legal fees. Despite the fact that I used to work in a business where we charged legal fees, that is a good thing for business as well because it reduces their cost base. With those comments made, I conclude my contribution and look forward to hearing everything that other members have to say.

 **Mrs MULLEN** (Jordan—ALP) (11.45 am): I am pleased to rise to make a contribution to the Justice Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Permanency) Amendment Bill 2021. There is no doubt that COVID-19 has challenged our communities in so many ways but, if there is a silver lining in all of this—and I hope we can find at least one—it is that we have been given the opportunity to rethink the way that we have been doing some things. The old adage ‘this is the way we have always done it’ is simply not a good excuse anymore—and, as a government, we have shown that we can be more agile and can move quickly to support businesses and our community. What has emerged is that we can also make permanent changes to some of the temporary measures introduced during the COVID-19 emergency.

COVID-19 has propelled government, business and the community into the digital age, forcing us to embrace and use technology in new ways in all aspects of business, commerce and, of course, in our personal lives. The legal sector is one that traditionally may have been a bit slower to react and move to new practices—but, as we have seen through some of the regulations, it has enabled technology to be used to make important legal documents. As these temporary measures have been so well received by businesses, stakeholders and the community, the government now proposes, through this bill, to make more of them permanent.

The bill makes tangible, practical improvements to the making, signing and witnessing of documents which affect people and industry each and every day. Not only does the bill enable the use of electronic signatures; it also provides that the signature of a person and witness do not need to be on the same singular, original document in some circumstances. This is an important practical change which prevents parties having to be physically together to sign these documents or post original documents back and forth which can be logistically and sometimes frustratingly difficult.

Not being in the same room at the same time is something we have all become very familiar with. It is interesting to reflect back to 2019, when flexible work arrangements, whilst available, were not really common for most people. So many people within my community would tell me that, despite a desire to work more flexibly and from home at times, avoiding long commutes, they would find resistance from their employers telling them it simply would not work. Well, it turns out that only months later a global pandemic has made this not only possible but absolutely critical during periods of lockdown.

Whilst it has taken a global pandemic, countless Zoom and Microsoft Teams meetings later show us that indeed it can be done but also that it does not diminish efficiency in the workplace and in most cases has increased efficiencies. I know from the discussions I have had with a number of my lawyer friends that the temporary provisions around the use of electronic signatures did significantly increase efficiencies for them and changed the way commercial practices run.

Under the provisions of the bill, documents will be able to be fully executed in a matter of days. The bill allows for electronic signing and witnessing via video link for important documents such as affidavits, statutory declarations and general powers of attorney for businesses, 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; a notary public; a justice of the peace or commissioner for declarations employed by a law practice; or a justice of the peace or commissioner for declarations employed by the Public Trustee, if the Public Trustee prepares the document.

I give a shout-out to our justices of the peace. They do amazing work in our community. I know they themselves were quite challenged during COVID-19 by not being able to be in shopping centres and places where the public could visit them. Many of them made their homes open to be able to undertake this really important work in our community, so I give credit to them.

For affidavits and statutory declarations that are witnessed over video link, the bill allows these documents to be physically signed or electronically signed and/or made using counterparts if witnessed by a special witness, with procedural requirements to apply to mitigate the risk of false statements. All of the reforms proposed by the bill will improve access to justice, reduce costs for 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.

These reforms represent a significant step forward for Queensland; however, they also contain a number of safeguards to protect against the risks inherent with the use of technology and the changes to witnessing requirements. I understand the safeguards have been developed following extensive consultation with a range of stakeholders. I would like to commend the Attorney-General and her department for the work they have undertaken on these very complex legal changes.

The bill also 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, in particular: to 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, where approved by the principal registrar.

Again, this will modernise and streamline access to justice by providing victims with greater flexibility to participate in domestic and family violence proceedings, including by giving magistrates the discretion to conduct all or part of the proceedings via audiovisual link or audio link. Allowing vulnerable Queenslanders to make documents or give evidence under oath from the comfort of their home or workplace using technology will further support victims. I work closely with our domestic and family violence prevention services in my electorate. Access to justice, but also justice in a form that is safe, respectful and trauma informed, is an important step forward. These measures help ensure that vulnerable applicants can seek protection from domestic and family violence without unnecessary delay.

The bill also amends the Liquor Act 1992 to permanently retain aspects of the temporary COVID-19 takeaway liquor authorities for licensed restaurants. The Palaszczuk government recognises that consumer preferences are changing, and the ability to sell takeaway liquor with takeaway food has assisted restaurants and cafes in what has been an extremely tough time for the hospitality industry. Ensuring businesses can increase their revenue by selling takeaway wine with their meals has supported them to keep their doors open and keep Queenslanders employed.

Consumers have demanded greater choice and convenience in being able to enjoy a meal with alcoholic beverages at home; however, everything in moderation. So to reduce the risks, the proposed licence condition limits the sale of takeaway liquor to a maximum volume of 1.5 litres of wine, or two bottles, sold with a takeaway meal between the hours of 10 am and 10 pm. The provision of a meal with alcohol is a known responsible service of alcohol measure. To maximise the benefits of this strategy and ensure the integrity of this new licence condition, the bill requires a full meal to be provided with takeaway wine.

I appreciate that the parliamentary committee did make a recommendation 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 note the decision by the government to not support this recommendation, with the reasoning that what is being proposed in the bill is consistent with the existing permanent takeaway frameworks, as it does not expand the type or amount of takeaway liquor able to be sold. Whilst I understand the cautious approach being undertaken by the government in this matter, I also appreciate the disappointment felt by some stakeholders.

As a government we have recognised the value of our local craft brewers and artisanal alcohol producers through such strategies as the Queensland Craft Brewing Strategy. I am hopeful that further support for our local craft brewers and artisanal producers can continue to guide future policy development in this space. I commend the bill to the House.



**Ms BUSH** (Cooper—ALP) (11.53 am): I rise to make a contribution to the Justice Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Permanency) Amendment Bill. Biologists have researched the theory of evolutionary stasis, which is that, in contrast to the theory that evolution occurs slowly and incrementally, evolution is actually a lot more abrupt and transformative, and haven't we as a society evolved and adapted so much in the last 19 to 20 months. Since the COVID-19 public health emergency was declared the Palaszczuk government has responded and put in place a range of temporary



measures to support Queenslanders as individuals and communities but also to support our business sector. The purpose of the bill is to now make permanent and build upon particular parts of those temporary measures introduced during the COVID-19 global emergency.

No-one can dispute how we faced an overnight need to transition a lot of how we lived, loved and worked into a digital platform. Indeed, my mum is a great example of this. When iPads first became a thing I tried to get her onto an iPad so that we could have more face-to-face time, but she was not particularly interested. Then I gave birth to my first beautiful daughter, Albie, and I encouraged her again to hop onto an iPad so that we could share some of those moments with her. Again she was not interested. But the moment her church started moving their services online during COVID she was straight out there, which says a lot about her connection to the church and maybe her views toward me also—I am not sure. We have all had to rapidly get across that digital platform, and I am really confident that many in our community who maybe were a bit digitally hesitant have embraced that.

As these temporary measures have been so well received by businesses, stakeholders and the community, the government now proposes, through this bill, to make many of them permanent. The bill makes tangible, practical improvements to the making, signing and witnessing of documents that affect people and industry every day. Not only does the bill enable the use of electronic signatures; it also provides that the signature of a person and witness do not need to be on the same singular original document in some circumstances. What this means is that parties no longer have to be physically together to sign these documents or post original documents back and forth, which can be logistically difficult not only for those who work remotely but simply for those of us who have competing demands on our time.

The bill allows for electronic signing and witnessing via video link for important documents such as affidavits, statutory declarations, general powers of attorney for businesses, 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; or a notary public, a justice of the peace or commissioner for declarations employed by a law practice. All of these reforms will improve access to justice, reduce costs for 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 with the support services in place they may need to get these documents completed and will no longer have to travel to sign documents in person before a witness. They also contain a number of important safeguards to give greater protection against the risks that we know can occur with the expanded use of technology and with the changes to witnessing requirements. These safeguards have been developed following extensive consultation with a range of stakeholders.

Importantly, the bill also 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 provided under the Domestic and Family Violence Protection (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Regulation 2020 in particular circumstances. The permanent measures adopted 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 where approved by the principal registrar.

As others have said, these reforms are very much wanted by the domestic and family violence sector. All of us ought to know by now the barriers that people experiencing violence face in reporting the crimes against them, not to mention throughout the prosecution process. Again, this will modernise and streamline access to justice by providing victims with greater flexibility to participate in domestic and family violence proceedings, including by giving magistrates the discretion to conduct all or part of the proceedings via audiovisual link or audio link. Allowing vulnerable Queenslanders to make documents or give evidence under oath from their home or other location where they can have support and use technology will further support victims in what is an acutely stressful time. These measures help ensure that vulnerable applicants can seek protection from domestic and family violence without unnecessary delay.

The bill amends the Liquor Act 1992 to permanently retain aspects of the temporary COVID-19 takeaway liquor authorities for licensed restaurants. I am going to give a shout-out to the work of Johnny Gambaro. When COVID restrictions were put in place, he immediately showed industry leadership in

pivoting his service delivery model. He established the Gambaro 2 Go contactless model of delivery, which was wildly successful. I recently attended the Hostplus restaurant and catering awards celebrating Queensland's hospitality sector, and it was so great to see their optimism for the future.

Notwithstanding COVID, we need to recognise consumer preferences are changing and the ability to sell takeaway liquor with takeaway food has assisted restaurants and cafes in what has been an extremely tough time for the hospitality sector. Ensuring businesses can increase their revenue by selling takeaway wine with their meals has supported them to keep their doors open and keep Queenslanders in jobs. We need to recognise though that the delivery of packaged alcohol directly into homes does have the potential to increase the risk of alcohol related harm. To mitigate this, the government has consulted widely with stakeholders representing the liquor and hospitality industry, as well as community organisations, health research organisations, small businesses and relevant government agencies to strike a balance between commercial interests and alcohol harm minimisation.

This balance is to be achieved by amendments that enable restaurant licensees operating under a subsidiary on-premises licence to apply to the Commissioner for Liquor and Gaming for a variation of licence that permanently authorises the sale of takeaway liquor for their business. This proposed new licence condition will only be available to existing or proposed restaurant businesses which must operate as on-premises dining facilities and not just as takeaway only facilities.

The licence condition limits the sale of takeaway liquor to a maximum volume sold with a takeaway meal between prescribed hours. Amendments further provide that licensees will need to establish appropriate systems and procedures for the responsible service of takeaway alcohol to be granted approval. An example of this would be developing systems that require identification to be shown if you want to purchase alcohol online. This prevents the sale of alcohol to minors. Approvals may be subject to conditions the Commissioner for Liquor and Gaming determines necessary to ensure the responsible service of takeaway alcohol. As per existing Liquor Act provisions, the licence condition can be amended or revoked if the licensee fails to comply. Contravention of a condition is also an offence under the Liquor Act.

This bill seizes on learnings made across a range of justice-associated domains. It leverages our opportunity to embrace technology, innovate, increase efficiencies and improve access to justice. I commend the bill to the House.



**Mr HEALY** (Cairns—ALP) (12.02 pm): I rise in an attempt to make a contribution to this vitally important legislation.

**Mr Whiting:** Keep practising.

**Mr HEALY:** I will take that interjection. On 29 January 2020 a public health emergency was declared under section 319 of the Public Health Act 2005 in relation to COVID-19. I reflect on that day. In the weeks before, I remember seeing this thing called corona starting to migrate from China. I was watching the news because I knew that Cairns had a significant number of visitors out of the Chinese market, as did other parts of Queensland and Australia. I thought 'Wow, this will have a significant impact.' Little did I know obviously down the road that we were going to be living in the grasp of this train wreck that we now know as COVID-19.

While thinking about that, I recall wondering whether it would get here, but here we are today with over 1,250 deaths in Victoria, 612 deaths in New South Wales and 14 deaths in the ACT. In fortress Queensland, we have taken the appropriate steps and that was reflected in the public health emergency act of 29 January. The COVID public health emergency was declared across all of Queensland. As a result of COVID, sadly, we have had seven fatalities but we continue to do what the people of Queensland have asked—that is, to protect them.

The Queensland government put in place a range of temporary measures for the purpose 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—which was vast, unprecedented and significant—caused by the public health emergency that we needed to have in place. The justice legislation amendment bill 2021 permanently implements certain aspects of temporary laws that were made in the justice portfolio in response to the COVID-19 public health emergency. The three key reform areas in the bill are documents reforms, domestic and family violence reforms, and liquor reforms. The bill also extends the operation of retail shop leases and other commercial leases.

The bill modernises the 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. This is a good thing. This is very positive.

Affidavits, statutory declarations and oaths normally need to be taken in the physical presence of a lawyer, justice of the peace, commissioner for declarations or another person authorised to take an oath under the law of the state, the Commonwealth or another state or territory. These changes reflect the modern age and the government's ability to acknowledge that—in particular, the Attorney-General, who I congratulate for this insightful legislation. This is also increasing efficiencies and ensuring the way we do business is important for business not just today but moving forward. It is important and it increases efficiencies. As I said, it recognises that we can use technology and make improvements.

With the advent of the COVID-19 emergency, it was necessary to quickly adopt modified arrangements to allow important legal documents to continue to be made. Making these arrangements permanent, however, requires careful consideration of the risks involved in adopting these modified arrangements and the impact on human rights. The reforms radically modernise the making, signing and witnessing of these important documents. These modified arrangements represent a significant change to longstanding legal practices. I also recognise that is a good thing. These practices and traditions have been central to the administration of justice and the legitimacy of civil and criminal proceedings and so the rule of law and procedural fairness. While the use of technology provides unique opportunities to modernise and adapt practices, it is important that the solemnity in making these documents not be eroded and that exposure to abuse and fraud, especially in relation to vulnerable people, is limited.

As I have mentioned, in 2020 in response to the COVID-19 public health emergency, temporary measures were implemented by the domestic and family violence protection regulation 2020 to provide modified arrangements for the making, signing and witnessing of various documents. These measures were for the purpose of protecting the health, safety and welfare of persons affected by the COVID-19 emergency by reducing physical contact between persons and, in turn, complying with the social distancing and other public health measures required to minimise the spread or the potential spread of COVID-19.


I note the proposed amendments to the Liquor Act 1992 to provide for licensed restaurant operators to be permanently authorised to sell a maximum volume of 1.5 litres of takeaway wine. I also note that the minister has indicated the range of products may be extended—may be extended; I just want to emphasise that.

I will refer directly to the legislation because it enhances and embraces what we are talking about. The explanatory notes state—

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.

The reforms will therefore improve access to justice, reduce transaction costs, and increase the efficiency of conducting private and commercial transactions.

I am confident that these are strong improvements. I would like to commend the minister, the department for its work, the committee and the fine-looking member for Bancroft, 'Ron Burgundy'. In closing, I am confident that as we break the back of COVID-19 with our state's increased vaccination numbers we will see more positive initiatives like these important amendments emerge from this unique period in our state's history. There has to be something good that comes from it. This is very positive. In detailed discussions with the minister, I understand that other ministers are lining up to see changes take place, so that is very positive news. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms RICHARDS** (Redlands—ALP) (12.09 pm): I rise in support of the Justice Legislation COVID-19 Emergency Response—Permanency) Amendment Bill 2021. The COVID-19 pandemic has brought with it opportunities to work in new and innovative ways that we have not been required to consider before. I reflect on my previous career. The question mark in relation to productivity always hung over having flexible working arrangements. One good thing that has come out of the pandemic is that we have proven that flexible working arrangements are absolutely achievable, and they are achievable in many different ways. I think there are a lot of people in this place who would not have minded shares in Zoom or Teams prior to the pandemic.

This legislation is modernising longstanding legal practices relating to document execution. I take this opportunity to give a shout-out to all of our incredible justices of the peace. In recent months I have had the opportunity to present a number of 50-year and 40-year service certificates. They certainly make a very big contribution to our community.

There are other aspects of the bill that I am particularly interested in, which affect the lives of everyday Queenslanders. Referring back to the significant changes in the way that we are living today, I do not think anybody sitting around the Christmas table in 2019 could have imagined what these last two years had in store for us. Domestic and family violence has been on the increase through the pandemic, so the amendments that address the domestic and family violence reforms are important. We know that almost one in 10 women in a relationship experienced domestic violence during the pandemic, with many reports that the violence and coercive control increased. This is an extraordinary statistic to reflect on.

While I am on my feet, I take the opportunity to thank Stacey and the team at The Centre for Women & Co. I know the Attorney-General concurs with the amazing work that they do across both of our regions. Their crisis response team is incredible. They are passionate and work in some of the most challenging sets of circumstances, so I commend them on their work.

Domestic and family violence is an issue that exists across Queensland. I do not think there is an electorate that is represented in this parliament that does not know the impact it is having on our communities. The Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012 sets out the legislative framework for providing civil protection from domestic and family violence through domestic violence orders and police protection notices. Applications for domestic violence orders 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 domestic violence order by way of a signed and witnessed statutory declaration before a lawyer, a JP or a commissioner of declarations 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. This bill puts in place modernised 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 directions.

The bill also modernises, streamlines and increases accessibility to domestic and family violence proceedings by providing for alternative verification arrangements for private applications for protection orders and variations of domestic violence orders in urgent situations, allowing domestic and family violence proceedings by audiovisual link or audio link, and allowing electronic filing of documents in domestic and family violence proceedings where electronic filing of documents is approved by the principal registrar. In this way, 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.

Our government has responded by ensuring ongoing access and flexibility for those seeking protection from domestic and family violence by introducing temporary measures during COVID-19 to reduce physical contact between persons seeking protection or responding to an application for a domestic violence order, and this bill extends these protections to the people of Queensland. Such important legislative reforms will continue to have a positive impact on the lives of those vulnerable Queenslanders currently experiencing domestic and family violence.

I turn to the section on leases. This area of reform that the bill addresses is one that affects many Queenslanders and specifically many small businesses across the state. I take this opportunity to commend the work of the Queensland Small Business Commissioner, Maree Adshead. Her incredible work and advocacy throughout this pandemic in supporting small businesses has been extraordinary. The workload that she has experienced in supporting small businesses has been extraordinarily important. I know that in my electorate, she assisted a number of small businesses with complex leasing issues.

We know that small businesses have done it tough through the pandemic and, as a government, we have to support them now to help them rebuild and get back on their feet. These lease reforms in the bill will extend the expiry of the leases regulation and any other regulation until two years after that date, unless it is repealed sooner. This will allow the Queensland Small Business Commissioner to

continue to provide mediation services in respect of eligible lease disputes. That includes affected lease disputes and small business tenancy disputes, as currently defined in the leases regulation, until such time as the permanent statutory office is established.

Further, we know that over 30 per cent of Queenslanders rent the home that they live in. The bill will assist those tenants who have tenancy disputes in an ongoing capacity. The bill will also amend the COVID-19 Emergency Response Act 2020 to extend the operation of the Retail Shop Leases and Other Commercial Leases (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Regulation 2020 until 30 April 2024, unless it is ended sooner. Ultimately, this bill will allow the Queensland Small Business Commissioner to continue to provide crucial mediation services in commercial leasing disputes and to continue to advocate for all Queensland small businesses.

We have heard from many in this debate with regards to the provisions that will allow continued takeaway of wine from our restaurants and cafes with their meal. We have heard also about the support that this provision has given to many of our restaurants and cafes. I take this opportunity to thank all of the cafes, restaurants, pubs and clubs in my electorate that have shown extraordinary resilience and continue to keep servicing our Redlands community.

In conclusion, these amendments create stability for the community and have real-life impacts on Queenslanders across our state. From women seeking protections from domestic and family violence to small business owners seeking to negotiate the terms of their tenancies, the reforms that this bill extends will have a positive impact on our state and the people who live within it.

I commend the Attorney-General for bringing this bill to the House. I congratulate the committee and the secretariat on their work. I commend this bill to the House.



**Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (12.17 pm), in reply: I thank all honourable members for their contributions to the debate on the Justice Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Permanency) Amendment Bill 2021. As I indicated earlier, the bill permanently implements and builds upon certain temporary measures that the government put in place during COVID-19 and these permanent measures have strong stakeholder support.

I want to address a number of matters raised in the second reading debate. I want to acknowledge the member for Clayfield's comments regarding issues which could arise from inconsistencies between jurisdictions such as the Supreme Court and QCAT for executing documents and the need for ongoing consistency. In this regard, I note that unless and until a regulation, rule of court or practice direction is made, the bill adopts the approach in section 14(1) of the Electronic Transactions (Queensland) Act 2001 and provides that the method used for electronically signing affidavits and statutory declarations must be as reliable as appropriate for the purpose for which the document is signed.

The bill allows heads of jurisdiction to make rules or practice directions to specify controls or limitations on the methods of electronic signature that can be used. Given the risks associated with making these documents electronically, it is appropriate that the bill provides scope for the acceptable methods of electronic signature to be narrowed if issues arise. To promote consistency, the bill explicitly requires heads of jurisdiction to consider the need to ensure consistency with the rules or practice directions of other courts.

If a regulation is made under the Oaths Act, the regulation will prevail to the extent of any inconsistency and would apply universally to all affidavits and statutory declarations regardless of the court or tribunal in which they are used, and this would also ensure consistency across all Queensland courts and tribunals. It is not currently proposed to make a regulation before commencement of the documents reforms in this bill, but we will keep a close watching brief on the implementation of the reforms to identify whether it is necessary to make such a regulation.

I note the member for Clayfield's comments regarding property law and body corporate reforms. I am very pleased to advise that we have commenced targeted consultation with stakeholders to finally modernise the Property Law Act, and an exposure draft is expected early next year.

I can further advise that the government has established a community titles working group, which is chaired by the Deputy Director-General of Liquor, Gaming and Fair Trading, and includes stakeholder representatives to provide advice to government regarding the issues affecting community titles schemes. It has met several times already. There is obviously a lot of work to get through on complex issues. They will be examining matters in stages.

I note that members in the House held varying positions on the Liquor Act, and I am not surprised. Many members spoke in favour of extending takeaway liquor provisions to include beer and premixed spirits as per the committee recommendation. However, I do note that there have been no proposed amendments to the bill put forward. As I said in my second reading speech, we will continue to monitor developments in this area.

In response to concerns raised by the member for Traeger regarding responsible service of alcohol under the Liquor Act, restaurants are designated low risk and are not required to have an approved manager with a Responsible Management of Licensed Venue certificate, unless they trade after midnight. Approved management requirements relate predominantly to venues where there is large-scale on-premises consumption of liquor at bars, such as in hotels and nightclubs. We do not propose to change the current approved manager requirements, given that the amount of takeaway liquor being provided is limited and that it has to be served with a takeaway meal.

In response to the member for Traeger's concern regarding the RSA requirements for delivery drivers, these requirements are specific to the members of staff involved in the service and supply of liquor at a licensed premise. It does not remove the delivery driver's obligation to ensure that liquor is delivered in a manner compatible with harm minimisation principles, specifically that they do not supply liquor to a minor at a private residence.

The government also has an election commitment to examine these issues holistically across all licence types and to consider the efficiency of introducing the overarching regulatory framework governing online alcohol sales and deliveries in collaboration with key industry and community stakeholders. That is anticipated to commence next year, so we have lots more to do when it comes to the Liquor Act, which I am sure all members are very excited to hear.

The member for South Brisbane commented that the government is more concerned with protecting commercial tenants from eviction than residential tenants and implied that the extension of the leases regulation is continuing to provide rent relief. I want to clarify for the benefit of the member for South Brisbane that the protection period under the Retail Shop Leases and Other Commercial Leases (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Regulation came to an end on 31 December 2020. From 1 January this year, with respect to commercial leases, landlords are not prevented from taking action against tenants for breaches of a lease. Perhaps she was a little confused, but I am happy to provide that information. The extension of the operation of the Retail Shop Leases and Other Commercial Leases (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Regulation only preserves tenants' rights accrued during the protection period and that allows the Small Business Commissioner to continue to provide mediation services for affected lease disputes that are in progress.

The minor amendments to the bill remove any doubt as to whether directions issued by the Queensland Building and Construction Commission since November 2019 for the rectification of building work remain valid. This includes any actions taken in reliance on those directions. It simply clarifies the government's expectation that Queensland home owners deserve to have defective or unfinished building work fixed as quickly as possible.

I note that the member for Burleigh expressed concern about the validity of directions previously issued by the regulator. The reason we are proposing amendments is to put beyond doubt that the directions that have been issued since November 2019 were validly made, even though a time frame had not been prescribed in regulation at that time. We are making it clear that the rights of Queensland home owners will not be prejudiced due to questions around a legislative technicality. Those home owners deserve to have defective or unfinished building work addressed in a timely manner.

At this time, the government considers the amendments contained in the bill appropriately balance the commercial interests in meeting consumer demand for greater takeaway food and beverage options with the community's interest in minimising the risk of harm from the misuse and abuse of takeaway alcohol outside of the COVID-19 emergency.

The reforms in the bill importantly deliver significant benefits to Queenslanders by modernising the way legal documents are made, improving access to justice in domestic and family violence matters, and supporting Queensland businesses. It is a historic piece of legislation that will ensure that Queensland continues to be seen as a progressive and modern state—one that encourages innovation, embraces technology and drives efficiencies in commerce. Once again, I thank all honourable members for their contributions during the debate. I commend the bill to the House.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

**Consideration in Detail**

Clause 1—



**Ms FENTIMAN** (12.25 pm): I move the following amendment—

**1 Clause 1 (Short title)**

Page 10, lines 4 and 5, '*Justice Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Permanency) Amendment Act 2021*'—

*omit, insert—*

*Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2021*

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

*Tabled paper:* Justice Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Permanency) Amendment Bill 2021, explanatory notes to Hon. Shannon Fentiman's amendments [1965].

*Tabled paper:* Justice Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Permanency) Amendment Bill 2021, statement of compatibility with human rights contained in Hon. Shannon Fentiman's amendments [1966].

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 1, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 2—



**Ms FENTIMAN** (12.26 pm): I move the following amendment—

**2 Clause 2 (Commencement)**

Page 10, lines 7 and 8—

*omit, insert—*

The following provisions of this Act commence on a day to be fixed by proclamation—

- (a) parts 3 and 4;
- (b) parts 5 to 8;
- (c) parts 9 and 10;
- (d) schedule 1.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 2, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 3 to 17, as read, agreed to.

Clause 18—



**Ms FENTIMAN** (12.26 pm): I move the following amendment—

**3 Clause 18 (Insertion of new pt 10, div 4)**

Page 17, lines 13 to 16—

*omit, insert—*

**Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2021**

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 18, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 19 to 25, as read, agreed to.

Insertion of new clause—



**Ms FENTIMAN** (12.27 pm): I seek leave to move an amendment outside the long title.

Leave granted.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I move the following amendment—

**4 After clause 25**

Page 21, after line 17—

*insert—*

**Part 4A**

**Amendment of Governors (Salary and Pensions) Act 2003**

**25A Act amended**

This part amends the *Governors (Salary and Pensions) Act 2003*.

**25B Insertion of new s 7A**

After section 7—

*insert—***7A Pension relating to Governor to whom defined benefits paid or payable**

- (1) This section applies in relation to a person—
  - (a) who ceases to hold the office of Governor after the commencement; and
  - (b) who, immediately before holding the office of Governor, was a member of a defined benefit category in the State public sector scheme.
- (2) The rate of the pension payable to the person is the rate mentioned in section 7(3) less the defined benefit offset amount for the person.
- (3) If the defined benefit offset amount for the person is the same as or more than the rate mentioned in section 7(3), the rate of the pension payable to the person under this part is nil.
- (4) If the defined benefit offset amount for the person is less than the rate mentioned in section 7(3)—
  - (a) the rate of the pension payable under subsection (2) applies in relation to the person instead of the rate mentioned in section 7(3); and
  - (b) the pension payable in relation to the person for a financial year under this part must be worked out on the basis of the rate of the pension payable under subsection (2).
- (5) For this section, the **defined benefit offset amount** for a person is the amount decided by an actuary approved by the Minister to be the annual value of defined benefits paid or payable to the person in relation to the person's defined benefit membership by—
  - (a) working out the State funded component of the defined benefits; and
  - (b) converting the amount mentioned in paragraph (a) into an annual amount, as if it were paid in the form of an annual pension on the same terms as a pension payable under this part.
- (6) In this section—

**defined benefit membership**, in relation to a person, means the person's membership of the State public sector scheme mentioned in subsection (1)(b).

**defined benefits** means benefits payable to a member in a defined benefit category of the State public sector scheme under the deed for that scheme.

**State funded component**, of defined benefits paid or payable to a person in relation to the person's defined benefit membership, means the amount of the defined benefits less the amount attributable to contributions made by the person in relation to the membership.

**State public sector scheme** means the scheme under the *Superannuation (State Public Sector) Act 1990*.

**Mr NICHOLLS:** This amendment has been brought into the House yet again as a result of the failure of the Palaszczuk Labor government to properly plan for the future. Clause 4 is about amending the Governor's pension legislation and to clarify the position regarding the newly appointed Governor due to Her Excellency having previously spent some considerable time in the Public Service and being a member of the defined benefit fund. The reality is that, unless these amendments had been made, Queensland taxpayers would have been spending more money on the pension—through no fault of the Governor, I might say—simply as a result of the passage of time and the previous legislation not being brought up to date.

The opposition will not oppose this amendment, but the opposition highlights the incompetence of this government. This is now the second amendment that has been brought into this place at the last minute without any sensible consultation. I acknowledge that I received a briefing from someone from the department yesterday at one o'clock to address these important issues.

These are important issues. There are concerns about how much people are paid, and it is prudent that the appropriate measures are put in place to do so. Having dealt with this in the last sitting week, we now are brought back to deal with this another time, and it is not as if there has not been a lot of forewarning that this might be an issue. The appointment of the Governor was announced on 21 June this year and the Governor was appointed on 31 October, so four months and 10 days have elapsed since the decision to appoint the Governor was made and no doubt the Premier had considered this well in advance of the official announcement being made. This does again highlight the legislative incompetence of this government in terms of bringing these amendments forward and having to continue to come back to this place to fix these problems.



Turning to the provisions of the amendments themselves, which would seem to a normal person quite confusing in the references they use, it talks about the rate of pension payable to the person. It refers to the previous legislation, clause 7(3). It refers to a defined benefit offset amount. It calls for the appointment of an actuary to determine the value of the defined benefit payout. All of this leaves the Queensland taxpayer no clearer as to the amount that will be paid. It should be around 35 per cent of the salary of the Governor at the time they leave office, but I would ask the Attorney if she can advise the House and the people of Queensland the value that that is expected to be at the conclusion of the Governor's term in five years time should the Governor not be reappointed.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Clearly these amendments are complex. They are proceeding now because we needed to take the time to get additional advice from superannuation experts and the State Actuary about how best to calculate the complex offsetting arrangement for lump sum superannuation payments. The recent amendments passed gave an incoming Governor the choice between retaining their current superannuation fund or to receive the pension under the act. The additional amendments ensure that the state contributions to a former governor's defined benefit entitlement are offset against the lifetime pension. It is complex. We needed to get advice from the State Actuary. I cannot tell members what that complex calculation will be, but what I can tell members is that the relevant minister will approve the State Actuary's calculation of the defined benefit offset amount.

It is usual, and the government's intention, that the State Actuary will undertake the calculation. It defines the calculation based on specified financial assumptions. Those sorts of calculations are not uncommon for the State Actuary, but it has taken some time to get that advice, and it is important that we get this right. The State Actuary will confer the lump sum entitlement payable upon crystallisation of the defined benefit fund into an annual pension amount which can then be offset against the Governor's pension. We have also committed to review the act this term of government. These amendments were of course necessary before the Governor makes an election about what she wants to do with her superannuation and pension. It is appropriate that we sought the advice of the State Actuary for these complex calculations and I am very pleased now that the House can vote on these amendments. It is very important that we do so and it was important that we took the time to get the State Actuary advice.

Amendment agreed to.

Clauses 26 to 32, as read, agreed to.

Clause 33—



**Ms FENTIMAN** (12.33 pm): I move the following amendment—

**5 Clause 33 (Insertion of new pt 12, div 23)**

Page 25, lines 5 to 8—

*omit, insert—*

**Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2021**

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 33, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 34, as read, agreed to.

Clause 35—



**Ms FENTIMAN** (12.33 pm): I move the following amendment—

**6 Clause 35 (Amendment of s 1B (Definitions))**

Page 28, lines 26 to 28—

*omit, insert—*

section 31B.

**original physical version**, of a document, for part 6A, see section 31B.

Generally in relation to the documents amendments, they are intended to improve the operation of document reforms in the bill. They clarify certain provisions providing legal certainty that, as one example, the state and corporations sole can execute deeds. The documents amendments implement the third recommendation of the State Development and Regional Affairs Committee and also respond to issues raised by stakeholders during the committee process and I think they are very straightforward. There are a number of them, but I think they are all very straightforward and serve to clarify the bill's intent.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 35, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 36 to 38, as read, agreed to.

Clause 39—



**Ms FENTIMAN** (12.34 pm): I move the following amendments—

**7 Clause 39 (Insertion of new pt 4, div 3)**

Page 40, line 3, after 'document'—

*insert—*

or a true copy of the affidavit or declaration

**8 Clause 39 (Insertion of new pt 4, div 3)**

Page 40, line 7—

*omit, insert—*

- (2) If subsection (1)(a) applies and the affidavit or declaration is required to be given, produced or used for any purpose, the electronic document or true copy confirmed by the witness, or a printout of the electronic document or true copy, may be—

- (a) given, produced or used for the purpose; and
- (b) relied on as evidence of the affidavit or declaration.

*Example for subsection (2)—*

The electronic document or a true copy confirmed by the witness, or a printout of the electronic document or true copy, may be given to a court or other entity, and relied on by the court or other entity, as evidence of the affidavit or declaration.

- (3) If subsection (1)(b) applies and the affidavit or declaration is required to be given, produced or used for any purpose—

**9 Clause 39 (Insertion of new pt 4, div 3)**

Page 40, lines 15 to 35—

*omit, insert—*

affidavit or declaration; and

- (c) the counterparts constituting the document, or a printout of the counterparts, may be—
  - (i) given, produced or used for the purpose; and
  - (ii) relied on as evidence of the affidavit or declaration.

*Example for subsection (3)—*

The counterparts constituting the document, or a printout of the counterparts, may be given to a court or other entity, and relied on by the court or other entity, as evidence of the affidavit or declaration.

- (4) Subsections (2) and (3) do not limit the power of a court, tribunal or other person to whom the affidavit or declaration is given for any purpose to require production of the electronic document or a true copy, or the counterparts in the form of electronic documents.

Amendments agreed to.

Clause 39, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 40—



**Ms FENTIMAN** (12.35 pm): I move the following amendments—

**10 Clause 40 (Insertion of new pt 6A)**

Page 41, lines 19 to 22—

*omit, insert—*

**official version**, of a document, means—

- (a) if under section 31U(2)(a) the witness confirms the document is the document signed by the signatory or substitute signatory and—
  - (i) the document is given in the form of a physical document—the document; or
  - (ii) the document is given in the form of an electronic document—the document or a printout of the document; or
- (b) if under section 31U(2)(b) the witness confirms the document is a true copy of the document signed by the signatory or substitute signatory and—
  - (i) the true copy is given in the form of a physical document—the true copy; or
  - (ii) the true copy is given in the form of an electronic document—the true copy or a printout of the true copy.

**original physical version**, of a document, means the version of the document that was physically signed by the signatory or substitute signatory if the version is not the same as the official version of the document.

**11 Clause 40 (Insertion of new pt 6A)**

Page 52, after line 13—

*insert—**Note—*

A person to whom the signatory directs the document, true copy or counterpart be given may be or include the witness for the document.

**12 Clause 40 (Insertion of new pt 6A)**

Page 53, line 13—

*omit, insert—***31Y Documents made using official and original physical versions****13 Clause 40 (Insertion of new pt 6A)**

Page 53, line 24 to page 54, line 2—

*omit, insert—*

- (2) If the document is made using an original physical version, the signatory for the document must ensure the original physical version of the document is kept.
- (3) The person or body for a court or tribunal who has the power to make rules of court or practice directions regulating the practice and procedure of the court or tribunal may make, give, issue or approve a rule or practice direction that states a minimum period for which an original physical version of a document that is filed or admitted into evidence in a proceeding is to be kept.
- (4) To remove any doubt, it is declared that—
  - (a) a signatory for a document does not commit an offence against this Act or another Act only because the signatory fails to ensure the original physical version of the document is kept under subsection (2) or (3); and
  - (b) the official version of a document is not invalid only because the signatory fails to ensure the original physical version of the document is kept under subsection (2) or (3).
- (5) Subject to any requirement under any law, once the witness gives the document or true copy

**14 Clause 40 (Insertion of new pt 6A)**

Page 54, lines 18 to 20—

*omit, insert—*

- (7) This section does limit the power of a court, tribunal or other person to whom a document is given for any purpose to require production of the original physical version of the document.

**15 Clause 40 (Insertion of new pt 6A)**

Page 55, line 15, 'originating version'—

*omit, insert—*

original physical version

Amendments agreed to.

Clause 40, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 41 and 42, as read, agreed to.

Clause 43—

**Ms FENTIMAN** (12.36 pm): I move the following amendments—**16 Clause 43 (Insertion of new pt 8)**

Page 57, lines 18 to 22, 'Justice Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Permanency) Amendment Act 2021'—

*omit, insert—***Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2021****17 Clause 43 (Insertion of new pt 8)**

Page 57, lines 25 to 27, 'Justice Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Permanency) Amendment Act 2021'—

*omit, insert—***Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2021**

Amendments agreed to.

Clause 43, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 44, as read, agreed to.

Clause 45—



**Ms FENTIMAN** (12.37 pm): I move the following amendment—

**18 Clause 45 (Amendment of s 12 (Execution of powers of attorney))**

Page 59, line 8—

*omit, insert—*

(1) Section 12(1)—

*insert—*

*Notes—*

- 1 See the *Property Law Act 1974*, part 6, division 1 in relation to a document containing a power of attorney that takes effect as a deed.
- 2 See the *Property Law Act 1974*, section 46A in relation to a power of attorney given by an individual under a deed.

(2) Section 12(2)—

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 45, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 46 and 47, as read, agreed to.

Clause 48—



**Ms FENTIMAN** (12.37 pm): I move the following amendments—

**19 Clause 48 (Insertion of new ch 9, pt 5)**

Page 69, lines 5 to 9, 'Justice Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Permanency) Amendment Act 2021'—

*omit, insert—*

**Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2021**

**20 Clause 48 (Insertion of new ch 9, pt 5)**

Page 69, lines 12 to 14, '*Justice Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Permanency) Amendment Act 2021*'—

*omit, insert—*

*Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2021*

Amendments agreed to.

Clause 48, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 49 and 50, as read, agreed to.

Clause 51—



**Ms FENTIMAN** (12.38 pm): I move the following amendments—

**21 Clause 51 (Replacement of ss 44—46)**

Page 74, lines 11 to 15—

*omit.*

**22 Clause 51 (Replacement of ss 44—46)**

Page 75, lines 21 to 25—

*omit.*

**23 Clause 51 (Replacement of ss 44—46)**

Page 76, lines 30 to 33—

*omit, insert—*

(3) To remove any doubt, it is declared that—

- (a) subsection (2) applies to a document even if the document is executed at a different time from, and is separate to, other documents that form part of the transaction; and
- (b) a power of attorney given by an individual under a deed under subsection (2) may be signed under subsection (2) whether or not in the presence of a witness.

**24 Clause 51 (Replacement of ss 44—46)**

Page 78, line 9, 'A corporation'—

*omit, insert—*

Subject to subsection (2A), a corporation

**25 Clause 51 (Replacement of ss 44—46)**

Page 78, line 10, 'common'—

*omit.***26 Clause 51 (Replacement of ss 44—46)**

Page 78, line 24, 'A corporation'—

*omit, insert—*

Subject to subsection (2A), a corporation

**27 Clause 51 (Replacement of ss 44—46)**

Page 79, after line 6—

*insert—*

(2A) A corporation sole or statutory corporation may execute a document that is to have effect as a deed, without using a seal, if the document is signed by a person, or in a way, authorised by the Act or another document under which the corporation is established, incorporated or registered.

**28 Clause 51 (Replacement of ss 44—46)**

Page 79, lines 7 to 10, from 'subsection (2)' to 'if'—

*omit, insert—*

subsection (2), or a corporation sole or statutory corporation if a seal is used, the fixing of a seal to a document is taken to have been witnessed by a person if

**29 Clause 51 (Replacement of ss 44—46)**

Page 79, lines 17 to 20—

*omit.***30 Clause 51 (Replacement of ss 44—46)**

Page 79, lines 21 and 22, from 'Further' to 'be'—

*omit, insert—*

A corporation that is not incorporated under an Australian law may execute a document that is to have effect as a deed if the document is

**31 Clause 51 (Replacement of ss 44—46)**

Page 80, after line 18—

*insert—*

**statutory corporation** means an entity established, incorporated or registered under an Act of the Commonwealth or a State, that is not a corporation registered under the Corporations Act.

**32 Clause 51 (Replacement of ss 44—46)**

Page 81, after line 12—

*insert—***46GA Execution by the State**

- (1) A person who is authorised to execute a document that is to have effect as a deed for the State may execute the document by signing the document.
- (2) The person may sign the document under subsection (1) without using a seal and whether or not in the presence of a witness.
- (3) If a seal is used to execute a document that is to have effect as a deed for the State, the fixing of the seal to the document is taken to have been witnessed by a person who is authorised to witness the fixing of the seal if—
  - (a) the person observes the fixing of the seal by audio visual link; and
  - (b) the person signs the document; and
  - (c) the document includes a statement that the person observed the fixing of the seal by audio visual link.
- (4) This section is subject to section 46F(2A).
- (5) This section does not limit the State's powers or legal capacity under another law.
- (6) In this section—

**State** includes a public sector unit and any other entity that represents the State.

**33 Clause 51 (Replacement of ss 44—46)**

Page 81, lines 14 to 19—

*omit, insert—*

- (1) A document that is to have effect as a deed for a person may be signed by or for the person by signing a counterpart or true copy of the document.

**34 Clause 51 (Replacement of ss 44—46)**

Page 81, after line 25—

*insert—*

(3) In this section—

*person* includes a partnership, an unincorporated association and the State.

**Mr NICHOLLS:** The LNP will be supporting these amendments. I want to confirm our support for them and note that the changes have been brought about as a result of both the representations made by organisations like the Law Society and legal firms, a review of the material by officers of the department together with the committee recommendations.

In terms of amendment No. 27, this goes to what the Attorney has previously mentioned in relation to a corporate sole or statutory corporation executing a document, and that of course is sensible and makes good sense.

Amendment No. 31 deals with a statutory corporation and removes any ambiguity in relation to state registered or incorporated corporations being able to execute documents which was highlighted by a number of submissions made to the inquiry. In terms of statutory corporations, for example, the Cross Rail River Delivery Authority is a statutory corporation. In the past statutory corporations that have fallen outside of the jurisdiction of the Commonwealth's ASIC register have been established and continue to be established—that is, special purpose vehicles, effectively.

Amendment No. 32, amending clause 51, replacing sections 44 to 46, authorises a person authorised by the state to execute a document, which only makes common sense. In my primary address in relation to the debate on the bill I raised this issue. This is not quite the same example as the example that I gave in relation to New Zealand, but upon receiving a briefing from the officers of the department we are satisfied that it is actually a sensible amendment that ensures that those documents that are executed by deed by authorised officers of the state are able to be done.

I note subsequently there will also be a validation for deeds executed by officers of the state during the COVID pandemic period under which the emergency legislation was in force in case there was any question in relation to those. Amendment 34 in that respect also expands the definition of a person to include a partnership, an unincorporated association and, importantly, the words 'and the state'. These are sensible amendments that the opposition will be supporting. I am glad that the department and the Attorney have taken up those amendments.

Amendments agreed to.

Clause 51, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 52 to 54, as read, agreed to.

Clause 55—



**Ms FENTIMAN (12.41 pm):** I move the following amendments—

**35 Clause 55 (Insertion of new pt 26)**

Page 84, line 22, 'provision'—

*omit, insert—*

**and validating provisions**

**36 Clause 55 (Insertion of new pt 26)**

Page 84, lines 23 to 27, 'Justice Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Permanency) Amendment Act 2021'—

*omit, insert—*

**Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2021**

**37 Clause 55 (Insertion of new pt 26)**

Page 86, after line 1—

*insert—***360B Execution of deed by corporation sole or State after commencement of Justice Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Wills and Enduring Documents) Amendment Regulation 2020**

(1) This section applies in relation to the execution of the following documents—

- (a) a document that is to have effect as a deed for a corporation sole signed, during the transition period, by a person, or in a way, authorised by the Act or another document under which the corporation is established, incorporated or registered;
- (b) a document that is to have effect as a deed for the State signed, during the transition period, by a person authorised to execute the document.

- (2) The execution of the document is taken to be, and always to have been, as valid as if the new provisions were in effect during the transition period.
- (3) Without limiting subsection (2)—
  - (a) anything done under or in relation to the document is, and was, as valid as if the new provisions had been in effect during the transition period; and
  - (b) the rights and liabilities of all persons under or in relation to the document are taken to be, and to have been, for all purposes the same as if the new provisions had been in effect during the transition period.
- (4) Despite the *COVID-19 Emergency Response Act 2020*, section 5, if this section is inconsistent with the *Justice Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Documents and Oaths) Regulation 2020*, this section prevails to the extent of the inconsistency.
- (5) In this section—
 

**new provisions** means—

  - (a) section 44, other than the following provisions—
    - (i) definition *accepted method*, paragraph (c);
    - (ii) definition *consent*; and
  - (b) sections 45, 46B, 46D, 46F(2A), (3) and (6), 46GA and 46H; and
  - (c) section 46C, but subject to the word 'clear' in section 46C(1)(b) being taken to be a reference to the word 'conspicuous'.

**transition period** means the period—

  - (a) starting on the commencement of the *Justice Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Wills and Enduring Documents) Amendment Regulation 2020*; and
  - (b) ending immediately before the commencement of this section.

Amendments agreed to.

Clause 55, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 56—



**Ms FENTIMAN** (12.41 pm): I move the following amendments—

**38 Clause 56 (Amendment of sch 6 (Dictionary))**

Page 86, line 10—

*omit.*

**39 Clause 56 (Amendment of sch 6 (Dictionary))**

Page 86, lines 27 and 28—

*omit.*

Amendments agreed to.

Clause 56, as amended, agreed to.

Insertion of new clauses—



**Ms FENTIMAN** (12.42 pm): I seek leave to move an amendment outside the long title of the bill.

Leave granted.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I move the following amendment—

**40 After clause 56**

Page 86, after line 28—

*insert—*

**Part 8A**

**Amendment of Queensland Building and Construction Commission Act 1991**

**56A Act amended**

This part amends the *Queensland Building and Construction Commission Act 1991*.

**56B Amendment of s 72 (Power to require rectification of building work and remediation of consequential damage)**

Section 72(2A)—

*omit, insert—*

(2AA) A regulation may prescribe a period within which the commission must make the direction.

(2A) If a period is prescribed under subsection (2AA), the commission must make the direction during the prescribed period.

**56C Insertion of new sch 1, pt 18**

Schedule 1—

*insert—***Part 18 Transitional and validation provisions for Justice and Other  
Legislation Amendment Act 2021****85 Definition for part**

In this part—

**validation period** means the period—

- (a) starting at the beginning of the day on 11 November 2019; and
- (b) ending at the end of the day on 9 November 2021.

*Notes—*

- 1 The *Building Industry Fairness (Security of Payment) Act 2017*, section 281 commenced on 11 November 2019.
- 2 The *Queensland Building and Construction Commission (Rectification of Building Work) Amendment Regulation 2021* commenced on 10 November 2021.

**86 Application of amended section 72**

Section 72, as amended by the *Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2021*, is taken to have applied from the start of the validation period.

**87 Validation of particular directions to rectify or remedy**

- (1) This section applies in relation to a direction made, or purportedly made, under section 72(2) during the validation period.
- (2) It is declared that the direction is, and always has been, as valid as it would have been if the 35-day period had been prescribed by regulation under section 72(4) throughout the validation period.
- (3) Also, subsection (4) applies if the period stated in the direction for rectifying building work or remedying consequential damage ended on a day that was—
  - (a) between 28 and 34 days after the day the direction was made, as stated in the direction; or
  - (b) later than 35 days after the day the direction was made, as stated in the direction.
- (4) It is declared that the direction is, and always has been, as valid as it would have been if the period stated in the direction had complied with the 35-day period.
- (5) Without limiting subsection (2) or (4), any action, or purported action, taken in reliance on the direction is taken to be as lawful and valid as it would have been if the matters mentioned in the subsection had effect.

*Example of action, or purported action, taken in reliance on the direction—*

the grant, under section 72B, of an extension of the period for compliance with the direction

- (6) This section does not limit the operation of section 76 of this schedule in relation to matters provided for under a policy mentioned in that section.
- (7) In this section—

**35-day period** means the period prescribed under section 72(4) by the *Queensland Building and Construction Commission Regulation 2018*, section 53A.

*Note—*

Section 53A was inserted by the *Queensland Building and Construction Commission (Rectification of Building Work) Amendment Regulation 2021*.

**88 Extension of time for giving directions**

- (1) This section applies if, during the suspension period—
  - (a) the limitation period for giving a direction to rectify or remedy building work ended; and
  - (b) the commission did not give the direction.
- (2) Despite section 72A(4), the limitation period for giving the direction is taken to end on the day that is 7 days after the commencement.
- (3) In this section—

**limitation period**, for giving a direction to rectify or remedy building work, means the period, mentioned in section 72A(4), of 6 years and 6 months after the building work to which the direction relates.

**suspension period** means the period—

- (a) starting at the beginning of the day on 3 November 2021; and
- (b) ending at the end of the day on 9 November 2021.



**Mr MANDER:** This amendment refers to the Queensland Building and Construction Commission Act. If there was a theme song that best summarised the reason for this amendment it would be a song by that great American philosopher and songwriter Britney Spears: *Oops, I've done it again!* There is no other way of describing it, because this amendment is necessary due to the ministerial oversight of something that goes to the very core of the functions of the QBCC where over the last two years approximately 2,400 rectification notices are potentially unlawful.

Inspecting complaints about building work is one of the core functions of the QBCC and they are potentially unlawful because of this oversight. Not only that, because of this oversight for a period of seven days the QBCC stopped carrying out that function because they realised that it was probably unlawful.

Both ministers—the Attorney-General and the Minister for Public Works and Procurement—when talking about the need for this amendment at different times during the debate have described it simply as a technicality. Let us quickly again go through what happened. Changes were made to legislation to allow the QBCC to issue a rectification notice in a period prescribed by regulation, but there was only one tiny problem and that is that they never made the regulation. One might call it an oversight. One might call it an omission. One might call it forgetfulness. One might call it—

**Mr Minnikin:** A blunder.

**Mr MANDER:** A blunder. I will take that interjection. One might call it a mistake. I call it pure incompetence. There is no other way to describe it. When one has to bring in an amendment that is retrospective for two years you know you have made a major mistake. The LNP supports this amendment because we support the construction industry and we support the protection of consumer rights, but we should have never had to waste the time of this parliament or those officials who needed to put this together because this oversight, this mistake, this act of incompetence, should never have occurred.

**Mr de BRENNI:** I want to clarify some of the remarks made by the member for Everton and in particular point out his fundamental misunderstanding of the provisions in the QBCC Act. At no time was the QBCC required to, or did at any time feel that it needed to, cease or suspend inspections of building work. That is fundamentally untrue. If the member for Everton had a skerrick of understanding of the act or the functions of the commission he would know, and potentially he does know, that the commission continued to conduct inspections of building work and has never suspended that work. It continued to conduct early dispute resolution. It continued to assess building work. The only thing that it was required to do for a short period of time was suspend directions to rectify.

The member for Everton has been in this House this week claiming that he is not attacking employees of the commission. In the last financial year alone those employees of the commission considered 168,400 insurance policies for residential construction work and approved \$31.3 million in insurance claims paid in full under the scheme. That meant that 98 per cent of claims were fully compensated under the scheme, ensuring that those homeowners were supported during what is often the biggest financial investment they make in their lifetime.

The assessment of the transitional provisions that were made by this parliament, and I note that the member for Everton was here in 2019 and did not speak against those, the member for Everton did not raise it—

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr de BRENNI:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I think I have an opportunity to be heard. The member for Everton complains about regulations that are made by this parliament, but is too lazy to move a disallowance motion. All he seeks to do is grandstand and exploit the disadvantaged. All of those Queenslanders who have sought a direction to rectify or have been required to have a direction to rectify have been through a period of great emotion and the member for Everton exploits the circumstances of vulnerable Queenslanders time and time again. He would serve Queensland better if he stopped identifying vulnerable Queenslanders who have had misfortune and sought to exploit their circumstances for his own base political gain. Even when he still chooses to do that he gets the fundamental facts wrong. He does not understand the legislation. He does not understand this amendment. I support the amendments moved by the Attorney-General.

**Mr HART:** There is a prime example of a minister who does not know what he is doing. I was hoping that the minister would have an opportunity to answer some of the questions that I would put, but unfortunately now he will not. Possibly the Attorney-General can answer my questions. Interestingly, the minister is telling us that we should have moved a disallowance motion to a regulation that does not even exist. That is impossible. If the minister knew what he was talking about he would understand that

it was his government that put legislation in this place that allowed for the making of a regulation to put a time frame onto these directions to rectify and they failed to do that. They are the ones who took it out of the legislation. It was stated quite clearly in legislation that it would be as per the regulation, but then they forgot to do the regulation.

As we have heard, these have applied to approximately 2,400-odd cases. I would really like the Attorney-General to tell us whether those numbers are, in fact, right. I understand there are about 50 cases underway challenging those directions to rectify. I wonder whether those people have been consulted because, after all, they made applications to look at directions to rectify to see whether they were lawful and they did that with an understanding of the legislation, but now the government is coming in here to validate and change that so they are taking away the rights of those people. It would be nice to know whether those people were consulted at all.

It would also be nice to know why it took this government two years to discover that they had not made the regulation. Was it because people have started to challenge the directions to rectify and have taken some form of legal action to look at this? Why is it that the minister tells us that this has only happened in the past couple of days? The minister comes in here and says that this is technical in nature. This is not technical in nature. This is fixing retrospectively the clear incompetence of the government, which is what this government always tries to do. They make a mistake, they get things wrong and then they try to blame somebody else. It is a wonder that they have not tried to blame the federal government. I am surprised that they have not tried to blame the federal government.

I would appreciate the answer to these questions: have the people who have had a direction to rectify and are challenging it been consulted; what will happen about the costs that they have already incurred; and why did it take the government two years to discover what is clearly a mistake?

**Mr NICHOLLS:** I note that the shadow minister has already said that we will support this because we are about protecting the rights of home owners and ensuring that work is carried out properly by them. However, we must address some of the issues raised by the minister a few moments ago because, frankly, his response was disingenuous. He holds up the illusion that inspections are the issue when, in fact, it is rectification that it is the issue. The issue is the failure of the government to pass a regulation authorising the giving of a rectification notice within a period.

The explanatory notes bell the cat in respect of that. They state that one of the QBCC'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 only problem is that the amendments that this minister brought in in 2017, which came into operation automatically in November 2019, required a regulation to specify the time frame. That is what the explanatory notes state. Therefore, to say that there is an allegation that inspections have not been occurring and that that is causing the problem is completely disingenuous. It is the failure to have a regulation to back up the enforceability of a rectification notice that is the problem. Previously that was stated in the legislation to be 28 days and in the legislation that the minister brought in the government proposed that it would be within a time frame specified within regulation. However, the regulation was never made.

The minister said that the shadow minister is responsible for not moving a disallowance motion, as the member for Burleigh has spoken about, to a regulation that was never made. Then he said that the shadow minister should have asked a question about the regulation at the time when the legislation was introduced, but there was no regulation at that time. How do we know there was no regulation? Because now we have to deal with it here! There had not been a regulation for a period of two years until someone said, 'Hang on a moment. Let's just check that what the QBCC is doing right. There's a rectification gone out. We'd better do something to fix it up.' Then they paused rectification notices going out for a period of seven days and rushed through a regulation seven days later.

The member for Burleigh's question is quite apposite to what we are talking about here. He asks: what brought it to people's attention? Was it departmental officers who finally realised they did not have it or is there a court case, a QCAT case or a dispute underway where a rectification notice is being challenged by someone and the government has finally realised that they had not put the regulation in in the first place? It is incompetence.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I am particularly interested in this clause and this amendment.

**Ms Fentiman:** No, you're not.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** It is true.

**Ms Fentiman** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mrs Gerber): Through the chair, members.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I have been waiting all day to speak on this. I will just find what it is we are talking about here.

**Ms Fentiman:** What does it say? What is the amendment?

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I can tell the Attorney what the amendment is. It is about the QBCC, it is about rectification works and it is about a bungle by the minister for housing that he should have fixed two years ago. Now he is blaming the opposition for not picking up something that he should have picked up two years ago. I feel sorry for the Attorney-General because she is constantly sweeping up the mess of all the incompetent ministers. She had to do it last week and she is doing it this week. Yesterday she rushed in a motion to help out the police minister. Last week she had to fix the Governor's pension and she is sweeping up again today. I have seen a sweep up but this is a double sweep up. It is a double chimney sweep up from the Attorney. I feel sorry for her because she has to continually come in here to clean up the mess of all the incompetent ministers, including the minister sitting next to her. This is an absolute bungle.

I thought it was bizarre when the Minister for Public Works stood up to speak in consideration in detail. The Attorney-General has carriage of this bill, she moved the amendment and she owes it to the parliament to defend the amendment. I have never seen another minister jump up, even when it is about their own portfolio—

**Ms Fentiman:** I tried to. You stood up—

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Because I am interested in this and I am interested in her reply, which she will have an opportunity to make—after lunch perhaps. Here is the crux of what the Minister for Public Works just said: he is blaming the shadow minister. The opposition has 21 or 22 staff. The government has 222 ministerial staff. The minister has a whole department at his disposal. Rather than coming in here and telling parliament the truth—given that his department should have found it or the 222 Palaszczyk Labor government ministerial advisers should have found it—he has in some way concocted the story that it was the fault of the member for Burleigh that we did not fix it. I say this to the minister: given the opportunity, LNP ministers would not have to come in here and do all of this because we would not have had the issue to fix up in the first place. I am sure the member for Chatsworth is going to get up and have a chat about this.


**Ms FENTIMAN:** In relation to the query from the member for Burleigh, I am advised that the QBCC generally issues around 100 directions per month, which is within the context of 168,000 insurance policies. Less than one per cent of those projects typically result in a direction. Home owners were given early advice, there was a public announcement and, to remove any doubt, we are passing these amendments today to validate the directions.

Amendment agreed to.

Clauses 57 and 58, as read, agreed to.

Schedule, as read, agreed to.

### Third 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) (12.58 pm): I move—


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

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

### Long title

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (12.59 pm): I move the following amendment—

#### 41 Long title

Long title, from 'the *Liquor Act 1992*' to '*Property Law Act 1974*'—

omit, insert—

**the Governors (Salary and Pensions) Act 2003, the Liquor Act 1992, the Oaths Act 1867, the Powers of Attorney Act 1998, the Property Law Act 1974 and the Queensland Building and Construction Commission Act 1991**


**Mr BLEIJIE:** This is another provision that particularly interests me. If we look at the long title of the bill that we are debating today, the minister and the minister who just spoke about the QBCC have I think spent more time talking about the amendments to the bill than the actual bill itself. That begs the question: is the only reason they are doing that because of the government's incompetence and, as I said, because the Attorney-General has to sweep up all of the issues associated with the amendments that have been moved today? As I have said, the Governor's pension debacle had to be addressed.

Debate, on motion of Mr Bleijie, adjourned.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.00 pm.

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### Transparency and Integrity in Government

 **Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (2.00 pm): Transparency and integrity matter. Without transparency and integrity, Queensland faces the risk of corruption and maladministration. Every day that hurts honest Queenslanders. Earlier this week the Leader of the Opposition, David Crisafulli, outlined a litany of failures of this third term Labor government which has given up on openness and accountability. Queenslanders are paying that price, be it with a blow-out in hospitals facing waiting lists with patients caught in ambulances, ramping and unable to get in and get a bed, to many other failures, be it the 3,000 Queenslanders caught across the border and unable to come home. This government refuses to release the health advice to justify why 3,000 Queenslanders have been made refugees from their own state. It is a disgrace.


Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk was elected seven years ago saying she would restore integrity and accountability in government, but she has done the opposite. Under Labor and Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk, Right to Information officers in the QBCC have been revealed to not be acting independently when they were found out discussing how much information they could withhold over and above what they should under the act. Then there was the outrageous raid on the Office of the Integrity Commissioner by the Public Service Commissioner's office. The Integrity Commissioner charged with overseeing the lobbyists register raised concerns about lobbyists operating from 1 William Street, the seat of government executive power, during the election campaign. What happened after the election? We saw the Integrity Commissioner under pressure in what appears to be a political retaliation with a raid on her office.

Then there are the abuses of the Office of the Independent Assessor, who was supposed to be a watchdog on local government but who instead went after councillors for minor, frivolous and spurious complaints and also journalists, threatening them with fines if they did not give up their sources. It is completely unacceptable that the Queensland local government watchdog has gone after journalists, using its coercive powers to try and force journalists to rat on their sources or face fines. Apparently, this has happened seven times in the past year.

At a time when journalism has been hit so hard by COVID and new social media platforms undercutting the revenue stream of the free press, it is abuse of power for the OIA to go after journalists just doing their job. Power must have appropriate checks and balances and there must be openness and accountability with it and through the parliament, media, the legal systems and our institutions, but this government is failing them on all these counts.

*(Time expired)*

### Mount Ommaney Electorate, Multicultural Events


 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (2.03 pm): It is October—November even—and that means members of this House are attending a plethora of multicultural events in our holidays. It has been that kind of year, hasn't it? During the past few weekends I attended the Federation of Sri Lankan Organisations' beautiful celebration in my electorate at the Rocks Riverside Park. It was a really spectacular day. We had some really poor weather, but this day was absolutely perfect. It was wonderful to see in addition to the Sri Lankan community a high number of local attendees from Mount Ommaney not of Sri Lankan background who wanted to find out more about this beautiful culture. I place on record in the people's house my thanks to the organisers—Jay Weerawardena, Jayantha Weerasekera, Jayantha Pathikirikorale, Mr Anton Swan, Mrs Gothanmi Meppe, and our fabulous local MC, who was a Riverhills local until recently, Yehanka .

The previous Saturday I attended the Tamil Association Deepavali event, a celebration of good over evil. If ever there was a time that we needed to celebrate light over dark, it must be after the last two years that we have had. I thank the organisers of this fantastic Tamil Association event. It was really well run and organised. There was a turnout I think in the thousands—I did not do a head count—but it was a fabulous event and my thanks to Palani Thevar for inviting me to represent the Premier at this wonderful event and the Muslim school in the electorate of Inala for hosting it. I was also privileged to be able to celebrate Diwali in the private home of one of my local Riverhills residents, Ravi, along with his family and friends. What an honour it was to be able to enjoy this private family celebration.

At all of these events throughout October and November, I did not miss the opportunity to remind all attendees to get vaccinated. I thank the organisers of both of those last two events for their support of this important message. My community now has established a permanent vaccination hub that opens at 10.30 am and closes at 5.30 from Tuesday to Saturday on Railway Parade in Darra. It is run by the fantastic Jon and his great team from Metro Health South. They now are doing over 100 doses a day on a regular basis of which up to 80 per cent are first doses. He has asked me to mention that he is running the vax hub at Carole Park in the neighbouring electorate this Saturday. Thank you Mount Ommaney for getting vaccinated.

*(Time expired)*

### Toowoomba, Youth Crime


 **Mr JANETZKI** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (2.06 pm): I represent a beautiful city. I represent a beautiful part of the world. I join the member for Toowoomba North in doing so. However, the month of November has seen an alarming spike in crime in our community. Time and time again in my office I hear serious complaints spread right across my electorate, into the Toowoomba North electorate and across Condamine. I am sick of it. The community is sick of it. The police said that there has been a spike in crime. We must be doing more to address it.

Just this month—and I note it is only 18 November today—there are streets across the 42 square kilometres of Toowoomba South in which robberies have occurred. Cars have been stolen. Hammers have been used to break down screen doors and front doors. Aggression and violence are involved in these thefts right across the city. I will quickly highlight some of the streets that have been publicly affected since the start of November: Boundary Street, Leslie Street, Burton Street, Paperbark Drive, Mackenzie Street, Elliot Street, Hennenlotter Court, Culliford Drive—twice—Melody Drive, Velodrome Estate, Hursley Road, Anita Drive, Long Street, Smythe Street, McInnes Crescent, Peachy Street, Cohoe Street, Geddes Street. Right across the suburbs of my electorate: Glenvale, Centenary Heights, Darling Heights, Middle Ridge Range, South Toowoomba.

Something must be done. Youth justice has been a serious problem in this House ever since 2015 when this government wound back the Liberal National laws. Time and again the government changed the bail laws. The government took 17-year-olds into the youth justice system, resulting in a blow-out in watch houses. We have seen them come back in and change the bail laws again to address some of these problems. Then they decide to blame the magistrates, but it is not the magistrates' fault; it is the fault of this Labor government that continues to get the law wrong in Queensland.

We have been talking for a very long time about the need to bring back breach of bail. We saw that it was working, but now the community in Toowoomba is very concerned about the levels of crime. We need to change the law. It is not just a matter of changing the law; we need to better target police resources to address the causes of crime and of crime right throughout the community. We need to be getting behind neighbourhood watch—and I note the member for Toowoomba North is starting a neighbourhood watch as have I—but people are sick of this crime. They are sick of the spike in crime. It is up to the government to get the law right. They have changed it time and time again throughout the past seven years. Our communities right across Queensland in Toowoomba and beyond deserve so much better.

### Fitzroy River Barra Bash

 **Mr O'ROURKE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (2.09 pm): One of the great jobs that I have is attending the Fitzroy River Barra Bash. Since this event started in 2018, it has continued to grow in strength and it was great to see it even bigger and better in 2021. With an expanded program of events and hundreds of participants, it is putting Rocky on the map as a fishing mecca. Events like this keep bringing people to our region. I acknowledge the great work of all Queenslanders and the event organisers for being able to deliver this event in a COVID-safe way.

About seven years ago the Labor state government ended net fishing in the Fitzroy River with the aim of increasing recreational fishing opportunities and thereby supporting tourism and economic growth. This event has increased year on year and is a boost to our local economy via tourism for Central Queensland.

The Frenchville Sports Club brought us our bigger and better Fitzroy River Barra Bash. I must congratulate chairman Paul Brady OAM, general manager of Frenchville Sports Club Damien Massingham and all staff and volunteers involved for a great weekend. The 2021 Fitzroy River Barra Bash three-day event kicked off on Thursday, 28 October. It was a great competition for keen anglers lure fishing for barramundi and threadfin salmon and over \$25,000 in cash and prizes. Over the three days anglers caught 308 barra, with 32 over a metre, and 121 threadfin salmon. The river was going off.

There was also a celebrities fish off on the Wednesday prior that I could not attend due to a parliamentary sitting week. I asked Councillor Drew Wickerson to step in on my behalf with Mayor Tony Williams. I am very pleased that they did not catch anything. I would have been very disappointed if they had cleaned up. There was also a family fun day, giving families a good excuse to get out on the water and cast a line. There was also a boat raffled off.

It is wonderful to be part of a government that supports local events like this. It brings tourists to our areas. It is one of the best fishing events. I encourage people if they have time to come to the barra bash. It is a great competition. All people do is catch fish. It is wonderful. Well done to the Labor government for thinking that far ahead and removing the nets from the Fitzroy River because it created an event like this. Now we have seven or eight charter boat businesses on the river which is great to see.

### Waste, Management Reports



**Mr O'CONNOR** (Bonney—LNP) (2.12 pm): Last week was National Recycling Week—a time to raise awareness about cutting our impact on our environment by reducing waste and increasing resource recovery. The most exciting part of the week for me, as shadow environment minister, which is probably admittedly a reflection on my definition of exciting, was the release of two major reports from the most significant players in our waste system—the industry body WRIQ and the Council of Mayors SEQ which cover most of where our state's waste is being made.

Both reports clearly showed the state government is not on track to reach its targets. They exposed a lack of policy direction from the environment minister on what could be the most significant reforms to rubbish collection in a generation. The first was the Waste Recycling Industry Association Queensland's report titled *Untangling Queensland's waste levy conundrum*, which I will table for the benefit of members.

*Tabled paper:* WRIQ report, dated November 2021, titled 'Untangling Queensland's Waste Levy Conundrum: WRIQ's proposal to create equitable solutions for Queensland' [\[1967\]](#).

It said—

The Queensland Government's current approach sees us lagging behind almost every jurisdiction in Australia on several fronts ...

It also states that the government—

... appears to be largely focused on maintaining the status quo rather than tackling Queensland's waste challenges.

That status quo has us as one of the worst performing states for recycling in Australia.


The report shows the waste levy under its current settings is just a tax grab for the state government. If we look at the \$100 million in infrastructure funding from the levy to help improve the system, over \$811 million in applications from 289 businesses were received but still only a third of the fund was spent. WRIQ's report shows that those businesses on average spent \$11,000 applying for these grants, making the mismanagement and failure to roll it out even more disappointing. It also highlighted key government reports being released late or not at all. The *Queensland waste & resource recovery infrastructure report* came out over 600 days after it was handed to the state government and only after I requested it at estimates. This secrecy leads to uncertainty and confusion within the waste industry.

The second report was CoMSEQ's waste management plan. It showed that the direction of our waste system is not being driven by our environment minister. In the absence of a clear organics strategy, the major South-East Queensland councils have stepped up and laid out a plan. Again, it clearly showed the current approach of this seven-year-old government will mean we will not reach our waste targets.

These local governments have outdone the government's draft organics strategy because they have released an actual strategy with a detailed plan to transition to FOGO. Organics is such a big opportunity that the state cannot afford to vacate the space on policy. Councils manage our waste at a practical level, but the state government frames the broader policy, set targets, supports infrastructure and can improve education statewide. I urge the minister to take this seriously and to listen to these reports so Queensland can get to where we need to on this key environmental area.

*(Time expired)*

### **Morayfield Electorate, Skilling Queenslanders for Work**

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (2.15 pm): As we continue to unite and recover as we come out of the COVID-19 pandemic and as people are getting vaccinated, the economy is opening up and more jobs are coming online, it is important for the state government to work alongside industry and people in our community who want to get a job. I was pleased to see this week that the next round of Skilling Queenslanders for Work funding has been announced. This will support more than 8,000 Queenslanders find a job. It is a \$70 million funding program this time around. I am pleased to see that communities right across the state will benefit as a result of this program.


Since 2015 we have seen more than 40,000 Queenslanders directly employed as a result of their participation in Skilling Queenslanders for Work. It is making a difference not only to economies but also to the individuals who are getting jobs and the businesses that are employing these people who have participated in a program that gives them skills and qualifications to be even better workers.

I am pleased to see that the Morayfield state electorate will have a number of programs delivered through this \$70 million funding round for Skilling Queenslanders for Work. I would like to particularly highlight the programs that have been successful. Worklinks will deliver general education and training in Caboolture and receive funding of \$52,000. The Institute for Urban Indigenous Health will deliver general education and training in Morayfield and receive funding of \$37,000. The Institute for Urban Indigenous Health again will deliver across Strathpine, Caboolture, Deception Bay and Morayfield a program in business, which is very important for people who are getting into that sector, and receive funding of \$279,000. The Institute for Urban Indigenous Health again will deliver in Morayfield programs in the area of community services and receive another \$90,000.

Reclink Australia will deliver in Caboolture programs in the area of construction and primary industry and receive funding of \$515,000. The thing I like about this particular program is that there is an added benefit to the community because as people are exposed to training and skills they are delivering projects that the community benefits from—for example, renovating park equipment or rejuvenating public spaces. It is an important program.

The Neighbourhood Centre Caboolture will deliver community services general education and training and will receive funding of \$83,000. Better Together will deliver in Caboolture retail programs. That is very important. We know how much the retail sector is looking for good quality employees at the moment. There are more on the way. It will receive \$207,000 in funding. Better Together again in Caboolture will deliver community services programs and will receive funding of \$231,000. Better Together again will deliver in Caboolture general education and training and will receive funding of \$53,000. I am excited about this. It will make a big difference across the Caboolture/Morayfield area in getting people into jobs and supporting business with good employees.

### **Longreach Pastoral College**

 **Mr MILLAR** (Gregory—LNP) (2.18 pm): I rise to condemn the agriculture minister's disgraceful response in question time yesterday about the future of the Longreach Pastoral College. The minister seems to think this issue is funny—that it is an opportunity to have a chuckle and a wink. I guess we should not be surprised by the minister's antics, after all he has form—plenty of form—when it comes to hurting agriculture.

Who could forget that he sat beside federal Labor agriculture minister Joe Ludwig in the Senate and shut down the live cattle trade; that he sat in this chamber and voted in draconian and mean vegetation laws to stop the expansion of agriculture; that he reneged on a promise of \$5 million in funding to eradicate prickly acacia in the Channel Country; and that he introduced regulation after regulation on farmers and drowned them in red tape? He just seems to think this is some sort of funny joke.

Let me tell the House that this is not a joking matter for the people of Longreach. It is not a joking matter to me, as their representative. His response was an insult to agriculture and an insult to Longreach. The day before, Queensland's peak producer group AgForce publicly asked the minister to please retain this one last college. AgForce wants the Longreach Pastoral College restored to its original purpose—workforce training for the agricultural industry.

The Remote Area Planning and Development Board has developed a plan for exactly how that can be done, but this so-called minister for agriculture has refused to fund this business case. AgForce Sheep and Wool President Mike Pratt has said it is imperative that the Palaszczuk government does not sell this valuable campus. Mr Pratt says AgForce surveys show a huge demand for broadacre, agricultural training in northern Australia. This makes the Longreach Pastoral College a truly viable option that is desperately needed in the west and in the north. Instead, this minister tried to flog it off to the Longreach Regional Council. The mayor publicly announced that ratepayers could afford it.

So, as I asked yesterday, what is the plan now? If the minister has no answer, let me give him one. Take AgForce's advice and fund the RAPAD business case. Restore the college to its original purpose. When the drought breaks, the western wool industry will feel the full benefit of the investment in exclusion fencing. We need to get this going. Where are we going to get the wool classers, the roustabouts, and the paddock and shed workers? Every farmhand has to be trained in on-farm workplace safety, even before they can learn on the job.

Watching the minister's glee as he made fun of the matter yesterday reminded me of his tin-eared photo-op in December 2019, smiling as he padlocked the gates. I show the photo here and I do table it. This is the minister's response to agriculture in Queensland—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Table it please, member.

**Mr MILLAR**:—shutting the gates and getting a photo-op—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER**: Table it. Do not use it as a prop.

**Mr MILLAR**: Watching the minister's glee as he made fun of the matter yesterday reminded me of his tin-eared photo-op. He is too tin-eared for a career in comedy. He should get on with his job and open the Longreach Pastoral College.

*Tabled paper*: Photograph depicting the Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities, Hon. Mark Furner [1968].

(Time expired)

### Pumicestone Electorate, Satellite Hospitals



**Ms KING** (Pumicestone—ALP) (2.21 pm): There is nothing more important than health for people in Pumicestone. I am so proud to be part of a Palaszczuk Labor government that is delivering on health for local people. Just today our Premier updated Queensland on our progress on our 2020 election commitments. The commitment that I am most proud of is our commitment to build not one but two satellite hospitals so that the people in Pumicestone can access more and better health care closer to home.

Since September 2020 when our Premier came to Bribie to announce our \$265 million program of seven new satellite hospitals right across South-East Queensland, the progress has been huge. We have identified fantastic sites to build our two satellite hospitals—one at Goodwin Drive and First Avenue next to Bribie Island State High School at Bongaree and the other one at Rowe Street, Caboolture. I have done consultation on what services locals most want to see delivered in the heart of our community by hospital doctors and nurses, and 582 passionate community members got in touch to have their say. I have now submitted those results to the health minister and the Queensland Health planning team.

This week we have also announced that Hutchinson Builders will be the principal contractors to build our satellite hospitals, with Hutchies starting construction next year. Next year is going to be a year of construction of our satellite hospitals, creating over 200 jobs in my area alone.

Just as people stepped up to have their say on the health services our community needs most, Pumicestone is stepping up to keep our community safe by getting vaccinated. Big vax numbers in Bribie and Beachmere are not new, with now over 93 per cent of people having had their first dose, but I am delighted that we have seen a 3.8 per cent jump in rates at Caboolture in just one week, with 82.2 per cent of people now having had their first dose. I congratulate the people of Caboolture, the people of Bribie and Beachmere and the people right across Pumicestone for doing that. I am just so proud of our community.



While we are getting on with delivering new hospitals and getting people vaccinated, the LNP from the Prime Minister all the way down to the Queensland LNP leadership are undermining our strong health message and are focused on nothing but themselves. It is murder on the dance floor in the LNP. This week we have all been watching the dysfunctional duet between the current and former opposition leaders.

**Mr Watts** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Member for Toowoomba North.

**Ms KING:** She is leading the mambo while he is trying to cha-cha. The member for Nanango just will not get out of the member for Broadwater's dance space. She is absolutely playing it up to her fan club of Nats in the cheap seats on the backbench.

**Mr Watts** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member for Toowoomba North, I am going to place you on a warning.

**Ms KING:** While the member for Nanango is clearly having the time of her life, please do not think that any of this makes the opposition leader Patrick Swayze. Every single member of the audience right across Queensland knows that the member for Broadwater is no heart-throb. He will always be the gawky teenager who wandered in late to the party, lonely, uninvited and carrying a watermelon!

### Office of the Independent Assessor



**Ms LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (2.25 pm): It is disappointing that this Labor government only cares about how things look, not how they are. This government will only respond to something under the glare of the media or when the political problem becomes larger than the real problem at hand. Reported again this week is another overreach of the Office of the Independent Assessor. I have held reservations about how the OIA is functioning. I have raised the issue at estimates hearings and in the parliament. We see again the front page of the *Courier-Mail* refers to the case of Natalia Muszkat of Gladstone Regional Council—referred to the OIA for allegedly blocking racial abuse through social media.

The Office of the Independent Assessor is the integrity body established by the Palaszczuk Labor government to ensure trust and integrity in the local government sector. Equally, transparency and accountability are qualities that need to be demonstrated by integrity bodies.

I wish to inform the House of the concerns I have received from a councillor in relation to the answers to the questions on notice that were published in response to a briefing provided by the OIA to the parliamentary State Development and Regional Industries Committee. Questions Nos 3 and 4 related specifically to the self-initiated investigations of the OIA, its own-motions. A councillor has contacted me who has been subjected to two self-initiated—own-motion—investigations, which were subsequently referred to the Councillor Conduct Tribunal, with one being dismissed and the other recommending training. I table a copy of the Councillor Conduct Tribunal responses published on 30 June 2021.

*Tabled paper:* Document, undated, titled 'Councillor Conduct Tribunal: Councillor misconduct complaint—summary of decision and reasons for department's website' [1969].

The questions on notice were specific and encompassing. Neither of the answers from the OIA reference this councillor's cases, despite questions specifically requesting this information. It is an omission and disappointing from an integrity body that is tasked with investigating non-disclosure of mayors and councillors. In this instance, I believe the OIA has not met the standards that it expects of others—the standards it expects of mayors and councillors. I am concerned, as is the councillor, that the members of the parliamentary committee have not been provided with full disclosure by the Office of the Independent Assessor. I will be writing to the committee with my concerns and how the omissions in the answers are misleading given the information is already published and available.

### Sandy Strait State School



**Mr TANTARI** (Hervey Bay—ALP) (2.28 pm): I rise this afternoon to inform the House of a great outcome that has been achieved by one of my local school community P&Cs. When I was elected, one of the first schools that I visited was the Sandy Strait State School—a great primary school in the electorate of Hervey Bay. I was welcomed to the school by the then acting principal Mark Hansen and the P&C president Tarnya Townsend and her hardworking executive, as well as the school business support manager Tanya Brady. During that meeting, Tarnya and her executive showed me around the

grounds and raised with me their hopes and aspirations for the school—a school that I was very familiar with as one of my sons went to the school during some of his primary school years, but that was a long time ago!

Tarnya and Tanya took me to see their senior school playground equipment—which was a little tired, to be truthful—and asked for my assistance in getting the matter raised with Minister Grace and her department to see whether a replacement playground could be achieved. True to her word, I can confirm that when attending regional cabinet in Hervey Bay recently the education minister asked her department to review the condition of the playground and its equipment.

It was with great pleasure last week that I had the opportunity to inform Tarnya and the P&C that, due to their persistent advocacy and after a review of the playground's condition, it will be replaced, with playground equipment scoping, design and planning underway with the P&C and school management. This is a great outcome for the Sandy Straits school community. I wish to acknowledge the tireless work of the P&C president Tarnya Townsend who, in her last year in the role of president before her children move on to Urangan State High School—which, by the way, is another great public school in Hervey Bay—

**A government member** interjected.

**Mr TANTARI:** It is a great school! She got her wish to achieve a replacement secondary school playground during her P&C tenure. This action once again shows the Palaszczuk government listens to our local regional communities and is achieving real and enduring outcomes for the Hervey Bay community. Building better community used facilities is a hallmark of the Palaszczuk government, and the action taken on this matter is a further example of how the Hervey Bay community—in particular, in this instance, the Hervey Bay school community—is getting wins on the board. This playground equipment will provide a better school experience for Sandy Strait State School senior students and will go a long way to making the school day much more enjoyable for them.

I again want to thank the Sandy Straits State School community. Thank you, Minister Grace, for listening to this need, and thank you to Tarnya for her advocacy, which will leave a lasting legacy for the wonderful students and school community at the Sandy Straits State School. This great win is another clear example of a community working together with its community leaders and representatives to achieve an outcome for all. Well done, and keep up the good work!

### **Coronavirus, Queensland Border**



**Mrs GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (2.31 pm): The Palaszczuk Labor government must step up and provide some leadership to our border community. They must release the special arrangements that their own border re-opening strategy has promised to our community. We are not asking for a lot: we are simply asking for this government to do their job and release the plan for the border community, because every day that goes by is another constituent, another business that is suffering under the chaos and confusion—constituents like Paul from Currumbin Waters.

Paul is a fly-in fly-out worker, and he arrived home on Sunday. On Tuesday Paul crossed the border into the non-restricted zone of Tweed Heads to obtain a part he could not reasonably obtain in Queensland. He crossed that border into the non-restricted border zone for an essential purpose, which is defined under the border zone restriction as 'obtaining goods that cannot reasonably be obtained in Queensland'. Without realising it, Paul used his entry pass to try to come back to his home in Currumbin Waters. He was refused entry. He subsequently applied for the correct border pass, but again he was refused entry. He was facing the prospect of being locked out until 17 December, like so many other stranded Queenslanders in the Murwillumbah showgrounds. After my office contacted the health minister's department, the Premier's exemption unit allowed him to drive the 14 kilometres home but issued him with a direction to quarantine. Paul is fully vaccinated, and had he not made the technical error of using the wrong pass I have no doubt that he would have been able to come back home with no problem at all.


These are the challenges, the chaos and the confusion my constituents face every day. I am hopeful that the minister will be able to sort this drama out for my constituents. But ultimately, had the government done its job and released the special plan for the border community, as is promised in the border re-opening strategy, then Paul would not be in this situation.

Just this morning the Premier spoke about the fast-approaching date for the border re-opening. We know that this date is fast approaching, but what we do not have is a plan for our border community. We deserve to know when normal activities can resume, including community sport and free travel, and whether locals who need to cross the border daily will be required to show a negative COVID-19 test

every 72 hours. The prospect of this, along with the substantive cost—upwards of \$150—is causing my community so much stress. We know the Premier did not pay for her own test when she went to Tokyo. Why? Because it was for work. My constituents need to cross the border every day for work also, and they should not be required to pay for the \$150 test either. Release the plan for the border community. The state government must step up and do this. The border needs to be exempt from these—

*(Time expired)*

### Stretton Electorate, Diwali

 **Mr MARTIN** (Stretton—ALP) (2.34 pm): I rise today to wish Queenslanders and the residents of Stretton and their family members around the world a happy Diwali. Shub Diwali to those celebrating the Festival of Lights. One of the greatest things about my local area is the ability to join in with so many different multicultural celebrations that take place in our community. One of the most enjoyable is Diwali. Diwali is the Festival of Lights. It is a true multicultural celebration that is celebrated by Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists and Jains alike. As Stretton is home to so many people of Indian heritage, it is no surprise that Diwali is one of the main events on our calendar.

Diwali is a time for families and friends to come together and light a lamp known as the diya. It is a chance to remember, even in the midst of darkness, that light will ultimately prevail, that knowledge will defeat ignorance, and compassion will triumph over despair. It is also a reminder that each of us has a part to play in achieving this victory over darkness by dedicating ourselves to service to our friends, family, neighbours and the community. Diwali reminds us it is our commitment to each other to lift each other up that will bring us closer to the brighter future we all seek.


Diwali celebrations this year are particularly meaningful in light of the challenges we face brought on by COVID and in particular Diwali's focus on the triumph of knowledge over ignorance. During the many Diwali celebrations I attended it was a common topic of discussion that anti-vax conspiracy theorists and science deniers were threatening our safety and delaying our path to uniting families, many of whom are overseas. On this point I want to recognise the many residents of Stretton who have been separated from loved ones overseas and, like me, look forward to seeing them as soon as the borders are open in a safe and planned way. I also want to recognise the Australian Indian community for their vocal advocacy and support of vaccination.

Diwali is a lot of fun, and I was pleased to join with many local organisations to share fantastic dancing, singing, dress celebrations, and of course the delicious Indian food—in particular the sweets. They do not put chilli in the sweets, which is very good. My favourite is the jalebi, followed closely by the barfi. We are blessed with many fantastic chefs and cooks in Stretton, and I have taken very seriously one of my official roles as an MP, which seems to be official food tester.

I want to recognise: Neetu Singh and the Haryana Welfare Association for organising the home Diwali celebrations in Stretton; a big thankyou to the Bhardwaz family from Stretton, the DJJS family and the Sharma family from Drewvale for opening up your house and warm welcome; the FICQ and Shyam Das; the Gujarati community of Queensland; Desi Rocks; the Indian Cultural & Sports Club; and Indo TV, which did a fantastic job covering all of the celebrations. Happy Diwali to all members in this place.

*(Time expired)*

### Bushfires, Fire-fighting Capability

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (2.37 pm): The Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements highlighted the need to be less reliant on foreign companies for bushfire fighting and the need to attack bushfires when they break out. Thankfully, Queensland is home to three outstanding companies that can assist and have a proven track record in meeting those needs.

First up there is Exci, which uses satellites and ground based cameras to identify bushfires. Real world experience shows Exci can identify 66 per cent of fires within one minute and all fires within a few minutes. Exci can pinpoint the exact location of a fire and provide real-time data direct to emergency services headquarters or directly to the fire controller at the fire front. Queensland firm HQPlantations already relies on Exci's technology, as does the forest service and the Rural Fire Service in New South Wales. Globally, Exci boasts partnerships with government and energy producers, and in March 2022 Exci plans to launch its first Australian satellite from Abbot Point in the Burdekin electorate.


When it comes to responding to bushfires, the importance of aircraft is second only to the brave men and women on the ground. Helitak Firefighting Equipment is one of only three companies in the world that supply underbelly expandable aerial fire suppression tanks which are fitted to helicopters. It

is no wonder that Helitak's products are used throughout the country and across the globe, when a Black Hawk helicopter fitted with a Helitak tank can deliver an astounding 60,000 litres of property and lifesaving water to the fire front every hour and can refill its tanks in less than a minute without landing.

Helitak undoubtedly provides a system that, combined with fixed-wing aircraft like the Dash 8 large aerial tanker, would provide a massive boost when fighting bushfires. McDermott Aviation, based on the Sunshine Coast, are not only the largest employer of aviation apprentices in the country; they are also world renowned for their skills in bushfire fighting, proven by the fact that six of their helicopters were recently called on to help fight horrific fires in Greece. To have a company with a global reputation for bushfire fighting based here in Queensland is a tremendous addition to our ability to protect Queenslanders' lives and property.

Together, Exci, Helitak and McDermott Aviation can make Queensland safer. I call on the minister to embrace the abilities of these three companies because of their skills and their expertise. They are Queensland companies. They provide Queensland jobs. Their expertise and their firefighting ability are second to none. We should be supporting Queensland based companies such as Exci, Helitak and McDermott Aviation.

### Coronavirus Vaccination, Indigenous Communities


 **Ms LUI** (Cook—ALP) (2.40 pm): I rise to speak about the vaccination rollout in First Nations communities right throughout the state—and I show my support for the vaccination rollout—as well as the vaccination rollout in my communities of Cape York and Torres Strait. I had the absolute pleasure of travelling to my Cook electorate last week with the Minister for Health, the Hon. Yvette D'Ath. We visited five communities in Torres Strait as well as the NPA over a couple of days. It was wonderful to have the minister in the electorate talking to communities about the positive messaging around the vaccination.

I want to put on the table today that there has been so much misinformation and so many mistruths shared about the vaccination. It is important that our First Nations communities throughout the state as well as in my part of the world get behind the vaccination rollout. It is not the vaccine that we should be afraid of; it is the virus that we need to be afraid of. The vaccine is safe. Over 50 per cent of the global population have been vaccinated. At the time we did that trip to Torres Strait and the cape last week, over seven billion doses of the vaccination had been administered globally, which is a massive amount of the good stuff going into people's arms.

I acknowledge that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders are most vulnerable to this virus. I would love to see that we all pull through this. I would love for everyone in every single community where there are First Nations people to make the right decisions because it is not only good for us but we have a duty of care to protect our loved ones. Like everyone else in this House, we are all doing it because it is about the people we care about. That is the message that I want to put out to my First Nations brothers and sisters right across Queensland, especially in my communities in the cape and Torres. We have nothing to fear here.

This government is doing everything we can to support all of you to ensure we all pull through this together. It is about people's safety. It is about surviving and coming out of this global pandemic in the best health position we can be in. Most of all, it is about protecting our most vulnerable in this state. Once again, I support the vaccination. I would like to encourage people in my communities to pull up their sleeves and get vaccinated

### Energy

 **Mr KATTER** (Traeger—KAP) (2.43 pm): I want to refer to an article in the paper referring to APA blasting CopperString—with a \$10 billion market capitalisation of APA. It is a \$10 billion company saying, 'We've got a monopoly out there and we want to maintain that in the north-west. How dare anyone connect us to the grid and provide competitive power prices to the north-west to stimulate mining activity.' The minister was here today saying it is fantastic, with Evolution Mining. That is true. That is good, but they do that on the proviso that the government is going to stimulate by spending money on infrastructure and moving forward with these things. We are all stuck on a business case for the transmission line. The government should build the things themselves. The government built the great northern rail line. There is an option there to take over the transmission line right now—take over it, build it and stimulate economic activity in the future.

What interests me with all this talk about hydrogen is that you need some base load. You need thousands of megawatts pumped into the grid somehow to make this hydrogen work. That is a fact. You need thousands of megawatts. That cannot come from renewables. You are not making thousands


of megawatts there. You need base load. As far as I am aware, no-one will be game to build another coal-fired power station, which I have no problem with and the KAP has no problem with. Seriously, no-one here wants to build any more coal-fired power stations, so you have to consider nuclear energy. We have the third biggest deposits in the north-west of Queensland. The technology is advanced well beyond the time when anything else was built. You build the transmission line and you pump this into the grid. It is a nice stable environment in those arid climates where there is not a high population. There are stable environmental conditions. There is a two-kilometre hole in the earth that will not be used in future years as they go to open pit operations out there.

Why are we not talking about that? You are going to need some base load from somewhere to power this hydrogen stuff. Please tell me where it is going to come from. You need the transmission line and you need nuclear energy. That will stimulate manufacturing in the future. We are digging this out of the ground right now in Queensland and Australia. We should be value-adding to it. We held onto the copper smelter just by the skin of our teeth, but we do not have many value-adding plants left.

We need to provide competitive energy. There are high energy prices in Europe now so we can no longer say we have the highest energy price in the world, but we did and we still have extremely high energy prices. Industrial users out in the north-west are paying \$200 a megawatt hour, while someone on the grid is paying \$50 or \$60 a megawatt hour. How on earth are we expected to compete in the future if that is allowed? The way to not do that is onto the grid. APA came out and said this a day before their plant went down and millions of dollars was lost. The whole copper smelter shut down for over a day. Why? Because we are not connected to the grid. Connect us to the grid. Build the infrastructure that we need in Queensland.

*(Time expired)*

### Health System

 **Mr SKELTON** (Nicklin—ALP) (2.46 pm): I rise in support of the Queensland Health service. I wish to acknowledge the hard work of our health workers every day in keeping Queensland safe. As a Queenslanders I am very proud to see the vaccination rates go up. It is not about individuals; it is about doing it for your mates and keeping everyone safe. I would like to express my extreme disappointment in those opposite and some of their rhetoric about our hardworking health service. It is an expectation of every Queenslanders that they have access to a world-class public health system and they do.

**An opposition member** interjected.

**Mr SKELTON:** I take that interjection. I will give the House a bit of a history lesson. Queensland was the first state to legislate then provide a public health system. Legislation was introduced into parliament by the then health minister, Tom Foley, in 1944 with the hospitals amendment act. By January 1946 Queensland's free publicly funded hospital treatment became available to Queenslanders. This is no surprise because at the time it was a Cooper Labor government. The funding for the hospital system, as everyone knows, came from starting the Golden Casket lottery.

**Mr Millar:** Which you guys sold.


**Mr SKELTON:** Well, we did not need it. I will take that interjection. The reason it was no longer required is that in 1975 the Whitlam Labor government created Medibank and provided funding to the states for their hospitals. At this time, Queensland was the only jurisdiction that had a state system. The additional funding to the state created a windfall which was put into infrastructure projects and wisely spent on the cultural arts centre. After the unfair dismissal of the Whitlam government, the Fraser government kept Medibank so that was okay. They imposed a bigger levy than the one they opposed because that is typical of those opposite—they say one thing and do another. It is important to understand the history of our health system and how the tiers of government can work together or hinder each other. It nauseates me to listen to the constant undermining of our health service by those opposite.

Moving on, Hawke introduced Medicare. This was debated for 20 hours and resisted at every turn by the opposition of the day. I cannot recall whether it was Liberal, National, Country or Liberal-National or whichever iteration of conservatives at the time. They keep rebranding because they have to. The attacks continue and have not stopped since. The attacks on our health system never stop.

Just get on with the job of being in opposition and do something. Support your communities, get them vaccinated, keep them safe and support our workers.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): I remind all members to put their comments through the chair.

### Democratic Rights

 **Mr ANDREW** (Mirani—PHON) (2.49 pm): I rise to express my concerns at the ongoing and increasing use of the state emergency powers. They are past draconian laws more suited for a dictatorship country than a liberal democracy such as ours. Each time this House has voted to extend the emergency powers legislation, the government has used them to introduce policies to encroach further and further on the rights and the liberties of Queenslanders. Meanwhile, parliament itself is bypassed while all the powers for providing oversight and scrutiny are either diminished or taken away.

For almost two years I have sat in the House and listened to the endless rationalisations from the government on the need to reduce transparency and accountability in favour of speed and efficiency, all while—


**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Pause the clock. Member, there is a bill that is currently under debate relating to the extension of provisions around COVID-19. You need to ensure that you are not contributing to that particular debate and that particular bill. I would urge you to keep your comments very general and stay right away from the bill that is currently under consideration.

**Mr ANDREW:** Thank you, Deputy Speaker, for your guidance. In my work on the parliamentary committee, I have sat there many times and listened to experts and bureaucratic heads give testimony and display an understanding that the people are something that must be managed somehow. As one said when speaking on a new police powers law, 'We don't want to startle the horses or anything,' the prevailing attitude being that ordinary people are incapable of making correct judgements when it comes to decision-making. They are, in other words, unworthy of participation in our own government. This attitude has now reached dangerous levels in Queensland. Not only do ordinary people not matter anymore; it seems we are being recast as some domestic terror threat.

Can there be a sign of greater betrayal than the sight of honest, hardworking Queenslanders crying out in anger as they watch their whole lives being smashed to pieces by our governments? This is shameful!

I used to think that this House shared my conviction on the superiority and strengths of our liberal democratic form of government that had enabled us, as a state, to build a strong foundation of public trust from which we are then able to overcome the crisis and period of adversity together. My real fear is that all these cruel laws and undemocratic changes have become permanent and that we will have lost our democracy. If that were to happen, the burden of responsibility for its loss would be on the shoulders of every member in this House, including myself, which is why I find it very difficult to work along with some of the matter that is being put through. I find it difficult to reconcile that the democratic process in some ways is not being adjusted in ways that we will look back and say, 'Why did we do this?'

### Mundingburra Electorate

 **Mr WALKER** (Mundingburra—ALP) (2.52 pm): Just over 12 months into my role as member for Mundingburra, I thank my community for supporting me over this period. It has been a turbulent 12 months, but we have achieved a lot together already. We also have so much more to do.

The Townsville University Hospital is an important part of my electorate. It provides world-class health services to not only my community of Mundingburra but also broader northern Australia. I will continue to advocate for our hospital because I know what it means to our community. We are delivering the paediatric cardiology unit, a new 12-bed paediatric emergency department, a jointly funded specialised surgical robot and a vital kidney transplant unit, among a range of other services. This is all part of our record budget for Townsville University Hospital.

Community organisations are the backbone of our community, providing services that make our city the great place it is today. I went to the election 12 months ago with a commitment to increase funding for those essential groups, including sporting groups, P&Cs, not-for-profits, domestic violence service groups and many more. I am proud to say that funding has arrived to the majority of these organisations and we are seeing the outcomes on the ground. I say a big thankyou to all those wonderful volunteers and professionals who help in these sectors.

We are seeing Townsville's world-class velodrome rebuild well underway. We will deliver a world-class cycling facility right in the heart of Mundingburra. I personally cannot wait to see our next Olympic cycling champion come from my community in Townsville.

We are getting on with the job of delivering stage 2 of the Haughton pipeline—listen carefully—unlike our federal counterparts, who all cried foul, spun lies and treated our community as fools over this issue. I thought water security was above party politics, but apparently those opposite and their federal counterparts missed the memo.

We have delivered extra boots on the ground for our Police Service and the community. In fact, another 43 new police graduated at the Townsville Police Academy yesterday—a key commitment of the Palaszczuk government. We back our police, while those opposite sack our police and try to sell our assets like the Townsville Queensland Police Training Academy.

**Mr Last** interjected.

**Mr WALKER:** The member for Burdekin knows that.

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

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): I did hear some unparliamentary language and I ask that you withdraw, member for Burdekin.

**Mr LAST:** I withdraw.


**Ms PEASE:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I am also calling out some unparliamentary language from the member for Burleigh.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I will take some advice. We did not hear the unparliamentary language, but I caution all members to maintain appropriate parliamentary language at all times.

**Mr WALKER:** As one of the hydrogen champions of this government, I am incredibly proud that we have progressed two MOUs at the Townsville Port. This will position our region and our state ready for the hydrogen boom just around the corner.

We are delivering on the funding for Lansdown, the next big job-generating project for our community and the region. The Palaszczuk government has worked collaboratively with Townsville City Council to see this project come to fruition. This is unlike our federal member, Phillip Thompson, who has politically weaponised the project and had to be dragged kicking and screaming to the table, and even then he will not back this project.

### Gabbett, Mr GV

 **Mr McDONALD** (Lockyer—LNP) (2.56 pm): Today I pay tribute to one of Australia's and Queensland's finest, Gregory Vincent Gabbett, referred to as 'the smartest man in the world, GVG' by those who know him. He was born on 25 April 1945 and died 11 November this year—born Anzac Day and died Remembrance Day—we will always remember Greg. These dates may be a coincidence, but if Greg was still here, he would find it a respectful but clever way to recognise those significant days and his coming and going.

Greg was a gentleman, a true Australian larrikin and, to those who knew him best, very generous and devout. One of 11 children, Greg was educated at St Saviour's, St Mary's and St Joseph's in Toowoomba. He was part of the team that won the 1963 and 1964 polocrosse state championships.

Greg did lots of behind-the-scene volunteer work for many groups and organisations, including SPRED, religious education for people with a disability. He made over 400 donations to the Blood Bank. Greg was one of my dad's best mates, and we got to know Greg and his family very well because we effectively grew up together.

Greg was a trainer and fitness conditioner for many great Rugby League teams from Toowoomba but especially his beloved All Whites and Brothers. Greg also had a stellar professional running career with the Gabbett McDonald running stable. Travelling right across Australia, from Queensland to Tasmania, he was a specialist miler, but also won the Oakey Gift, something of which he regularly reminded us.

Despite these successes and contributions, Greg was best known as the premium barber of Toowoomba. For 55 years, he was well-known by many. Mayor of Toowoomba Regional Council, Paul Antonio last week said—

Rest In Peace my friend Greg. My barber, briefly my former running competitor, my friend and my amazing Chief Political advisor.

We will all miss you mate. Thank you so much for your humour, your loyalty and your special friendship through those difficult times.

Mike and Helen Horan said—

One of a kind. The smartest man in the world.

My colleague, David Janetzki, member for Toowoomba South, said—

We have lost one of our finest. Rest in peace, Greg.

My brother, Deputy Mayor of Toowoomba, Geoff McDonald said—


Greg's enjoyment of life and his never-ending desire to make people laugh was second to none. He gave so much and never asked for a thing.

Such a good humoured teller of tales: Did you know they named the Gabba after him, or so he told us a thousand times.

Greg is survived by his children, Dan, Tim, Matthew and Natalie and his grandchildren. On behalf of the McDonald family and all those who were touched by Greg's life: you have fought the good fight, you have finished the race, and you have kept the faith—2 Timothy 4:7.

Vale, Gregory Vincent Gabbett—a true gentleman with a great wit and generosity for others.

### Voluntary Assisted Dying

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (2.59 pm): On 16 September this year this parliament passed one of the most compassionate laws, providing people at end of life the option to access voluntary assisted dying. I again thank everyone for their involvement. The health committee travelled the length and breadth of the state and heard from Queenslanders right around the state, particularly in regional and remote Queensland, that they did not want to leave their communities and wanted to be able to access VAD as a choice.

The committee made two additional recommendations: to amend the Commonwealth government's Criminal Code Act 1995 by inserting a definition declaring that suicide does not include voluntary assisted dying carried out lawfully pursuant to a law of a state or territory; and, as a matter of urgency, the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions issue prosecutorial charging guidelines indicating that the offences in certain sections of the Criminal Code Act will not be prosecuted where a doctor or other person is acting in accordance with the procedure outlined in state or territory voluntary assisted dying laws.

I have written to Senator Susan McDonald, and five weeks ago I wrote to Phillip Thompson. I asked them whether they would stand up for regional Queenslanders and amend the Commonwealth law. I table the letter.

*Tabled paper:* Letter, dated 6 October 2021, from the member for Thuringowa, Mr Aaron Harper MP, to Federal Member for Herbert, Mr Phillip Thompson, and Senator Susan McDonald, regarding the Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill 2021 [\[1970\]](#).

The federal member has not responded. In addition, 12 members of parliament have written to the Prime Minister asking for that particular law to be amended. I table a letter.

*Tabled paper:* Letter, dated 15 October 2021, from various members representing regional Queensland, to the Prime Minister, Hon. Scott Morrison, regarding the Voluntary Assisted Dying Act 2021 [\[1971\]](#).

The Queensland Law Reform Commission said that the uncertainty around that law is unsatisfactory. It said—

It is inherently undesirable that health practitioners should be left under such an apparently unintended grey cloud. If the Commonwealth law is not clarified ...

It asked for this to be resolved urgently. We have a year to implement the framework around providing training, the oversight board and so on. I again ask the Commonwealth to amend the carriage service law so that people in regional and remote Queensland have access and equity. That is exactly what we need to do in this state to make sure everyone has fair access to this particular law. I again ask that the member for Herbert and Senator McDonald answer the letter and stand up for regional Queenslanders on this issue to make sure they have access and equity when it comes to VAD.


## TRANSPORT AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

### Report, Motion to Take Note

Resumed from 28 October (see p. 3248), on motion of Mr King—

That the House take note of the Transport and Resources Committee Report No. 8, 57th Parliament, *Examination of Auditor-General Report 16: 2019-20: Licensing builders and building trades*, tabled on 28 July 2021.



 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (3.03 pm), continuing: In my speech during the last sitting I was talking about minimum financial requirements. It is interesting that Brisbane company Privium has been in the news over the past couple of days. Apparently they are the 11th biggest builder in Queensland. Last year they failed to file a financial report and since August three of their directors have left their roles. I table that for the information of the House.

*Tabled paper:* Article from the *Urban Developer*, dated 18 November 2021, titled 'Surging Costs Blamed as Privium Nears Collapse' [1972].

I thought I would go to the QBCC website to look at that company's licence. I table the search results.


*Tabled paper:* Queensland Building and Construction Commission licence search for Privium Pty Ltd, dated 18 November 2021 [1974].

It is interesting to note that they have no actions against them whatsoever. They are in the category of up to \$240 million, yet apparently they are in liquidation. You just have to wonder how these minimum financial requirements are actually working or whether in fact there is anybody left in the QBCC who is watching any of this, because this sort of thing is happening.

I also raised issues about being able to contact the minister. It appears that unless you are a friend or family member of the minister or you want to talk about a sporting issue, you cannot get a meeting with this minister to talk about issues relating to the QBCC. I table a letter from Damian McDonald—this would have been more appropriate to table last sitting—because he also wrote to the minister and asked for a meeting and received exactly the same email as I tabled on the last occasion I spoke.

*Tabled paper:* Email, dated 28 October 2021, from Mr Damian McDonald to the member for Burleigh, Mr Michael Hart MP, regarding an email from the Queensland Building and Construction Commission [1973].

The minister raves on about the building industry fairness bill passed through the parliament a couple of years ago. He has said over and over again that every subbie will be paid every time, on time. It appears as though that is not going to happen in the case of Privium, so you have to wonder how it is that the minister can tell us one thing when it is not happening in the real world. This minister has completely failed the people of Queensland, completely failed the QBCC and completely failed the building industry. Quite frankly, it is time this minister went. If the minister does not go, the Premier should fire him. In fact, there are a number of ministers who have not been doing their job and they all deserve to go. The people of Queensland deserve better than this government. Hopefully they will get it very shortly.

 **Mr MARTIN** (Stretton—ALP) (3.06 pm): I rise today to speak to the Transport and Resources Committee's report No. 8, *Examination of Auditor-General report 16: 2019-20: Licensing builders and building trades*. As a new member of this place and a new member of the Transport and Resources Committee, I take this opportunity to thank the committee and in particular I thank the committee chair, the member for Kurwongbah, for his guidance and advice. Though I was not part of this examination, I look forward to working with him on future reports and inquiries.

The committee held public briefings with the Queensland Audit Office, the Queensland Building and Construction Commission and the Department of Housing and Public Works. The report looked at the QBCC and how it regulates the building industry by issuing and managing licences in a fair and balanced way. The key point here is that the committee identified that the Queensland Building and Construction Commission is transitioning from a complaints-driven authority to a risk focused, insights-driven regulator. This is important, because the construction industry contributes so much to the Queensland economy. It employs over 230,000 Queenslanders, with around 91,000 licences. As we have heard from the minister many times, it contributes over \$47 billion to the Queensland economy. It provides many young Queenslanders with a great and rewarding career path in the building trades. It is great to see these young people on their way to work early every morning in the CBD on the many different projects that are underway.


Importantly, the Auditor-General's report found that the QBCC has effective processes and probity checks in place to assess whether licence applications meet requirements. I can also advise that the committee is satisfied that the QBCC is taking appropriate action to address the Auditor-General's recommendations.

It is important to note that the context in which the QBCC operates has changed over the years, with new technology and building products. Its role has changed significantly since its inception, with increased complexity and responsibility being introduced. The QBCC has needed to adapt in order to fulfil these additional responsibilities and is transitioning from a complaints-driven authority to a risk

focused and insights-driven regulator. The Auditor-General's report has provided the QBCC with a range of recommendations that will assist in achieving its plan to complete this transition, and the committee agrees with the commissioner's comments that implementing the recommendations will also strengthen controls, improve planning and improve reporting.

The committee also agreed that the finalisation of this process should happen as soon as possible and, as such, the committee has agreed to continue to monitor the progress on finalisation of the audit recommendations and will report again if necessary. This move to a risk focused and insight-driven model will improve outcomes for consumers and it is good to see the QBCC working and keeping pace with changes in the industry, which, as we have heard, has become increasingly complex.

Queensland's building industry has never been stronger and I want to recognise the QBCC's role in that. Confidence in Queensland construction is high, with tradies and subbies confident that they will get paid for their work, home owners confident that they can invest in building and renovating and, importantly, confidence that the products on our construction sites are safe—with an independent regulator now holding everyone in the building supply chain accountable for ensuring products are safe and fit for their intended use to bank guarantees that provide security of payment. I want to thank and acknowledge Minister de Brenni and his staff in the department for their work in this space. Checks and balances on departments and statutory authorities like the QBCC are a vital part of our democracy and transparency of government. Like the committee chair and other members of the committee, I recommend that the Legislative Assembly note the report's contents.

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (3.10 pm): I rise to speak on the Transport and Resources Committee report with regard to the Auditor-General's report into the QBCC. The report says that the QBCC has the right building blocks needed to transform the organisation from a complaints-driven organisation to an insights-driven organisation, but there are a few things that are hindering that that are very important.

**Mr Minnikin:** The minister.

**Mr MANDER:** I take that interjection from the member for Chatsworth; one of them is the actual minister. Other than that, let us go to the substance of the QBCC. The Auditor-General's report says that progress is hindered by a lack of data, resources, skills and capability. It basically says that it has enough resources but it does not have the right skills. Members may not realise that over the last five years the number of staff at the QBCC has increased by 40 per cent. So it definitely has the numbers, but this report suggests that it might not have the right skill mix.

We saw an example of this last night in my contribution in terms of a question on notice which I asked recently—a simple question—on the average waiting time from when a complaint is made and if a decision is made that a defect needs to be rectified. I asked what the average waiting time was. The information that came back from the minister's office was that there was no data available. However, somebody from within the QBCC has said that that is not true and that that information is available, so it obviously does not have the right people who are skilled to extract that information. That is one option. The other option is that the minister does know the answer to that and refuses to give that information because it is something that he is not proud of. That was one of the issues that the auditors raised.

Another issue that is of great concern is that the auditors said that the QBCC customer service centre has not met key performance indicators since 2017 such as average speed to answer a call and percentage of abandoned calls. This is particularly disturbing. This is the first contact that a customer, whether it is a builder or a home owner, would have with the QBCC and it is not meeting its own key performance indicators. Again, one of the issues that we keep raising is that the QBCC is not client focused—that is, it is not there to solve the problems that both home owners and builders have from time to time, and that is an important issue that must be resolved.

I think this one is the most disturbing finding from the Auditor-General's report—that is, that most of the QBCC's performance measurements are based on activity and output rather than outcomes. That is a typical Labor Party bureaucracy—that is, we will measure our activity and not measure our outcomes. That says something about culture, and where does culture come from? Culture comes from leadership, and where does the leadership buck stop? It stops with the minister—the minister who appoints the board. There is no doubt that that is a major barrier to making sure that the QBCC is as efficient as possible.

Earlier the member for Burleigh spoke about Privium, the building company that has just gone under. I checked the licensing this morning and it says that the licence is still open and valid. Somebody could look at this and think that this organisation which has just gone into liquidation still has a valid building licence because things have not been kept up to date or it does not realise. I do not know what

the reason for that is, but those types of things are unacceptable in a professional organisation. I do not blame the staff. They cannot help when the leadership from the minister and the board does not provide the support and the culture that is required to make the QBCC the most effective building regulator in the country. Is it any wonder that during estimates hearings when we looked at stakeholders' view of the QBCC only 65 per cent had confidence? I have zero confidence in this minister's ability to lead.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

### Report, Motion to Take Note



**Mr KING** (Kurwongbah—ALP) (3.16 pm): I move—

That the House take note of the Transport and Resources Committee Report No. 11, 57th Parliament, *Inquiry into vehicle safety, standards and technology, including engine immobiliser technology—interim report*, tabled on 24 August 2021.

This report was delivered as an interim report. We needed a lot longer due to the substantial amount of information that came in, so we will be speaking on report No. 12, which was the actual report tabled to this inquiry. This was just an interim report.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

## COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

### Report, Motion to Take Note

**Mr BLEIJIE**: Madam Deputy Speaker, is the Leader of the House here to move the motion?



**Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (3.17 pm): She is on her way. I move—

That the House take note of the Committee of the Legislative Assembly Report No. 29, 57th Parliament, *Report on the 2021 budget estimates process*, tabled on 8 September 2021.



**Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (3.18 pm): I was happy to move it, I was just allowing the Leader of the House the opportunity to do her job, so that's alright. I rise to contribute to debate on report No. 29 relating to the budget estimates process and join calls for the estimates and committee process to be completely overhauled in the state of Queensland. It has now been 10 years since the committee process was reviewed and one only has to look at the debate that ensued a week or two ago with former members of the House and current members of the House—I will get to you in a minute, member for Logan—such as former Labor member Judy Spence and former LNP member Lawrence Springborg, talking about the need to reform because they have seen how the committee system is used and abused by the Labor government utilising the majority it has in the House.

When I talk generally about the committee system, that applies to the estimates process because that is how committees are undertaking the process during estimates. There should be full and frank discussion, but over the last seven years of the Palaszczuk Labor government what we have seen with the estimates process is chairs completely abusing the process given the majority that they have on the committee.

It has come to the stage where chairs are trying to redraft or reframe questions—as the member for Logan does on many occasions. On a few occasions during this process I pulled the member for Logan up and said, 'Mr Chair, I do not want the question rephrased. You may think you know what the question is or what we are trying to ask, but we are asking the questions.'

Not only do the government get a bunch of Dorothy Dixers, they are now trying to steal opposition questions by reframing them into their own Dorothy Dixers. That is not how it works. The opposition asks the questions. There have been plenty of occasions where the opposition has asked questions and then chairs have ruled questions out of order simply because some Labor member, usually sitting on the end, gets a text message from someone saying, 'We don't like that question. Raise a point of order.' They have no idea of the standing orders. They are just doing what they do like lemmings off a wall just to—guess what?—delay the debate and filibuster. They know the opposition only gets a certain amount of time and when the official opposition, the LNP in Queensland, have X amount of time allocated during the estimates process, and we have to break it up between the crossbench members as well, we now have a situation where government MPs are trying to take time off opposition MPs by rephrasing questions.

It is not the right of the government members on the committee to try to reframe or rephrase opposition questions. Let the record show that one of the chairs said, 'I think what you are really asking is this.' No, we are not. I do not care what you think. What we are asking is this. They may not want the government to answer the question and they may want the protection, but I find in this place ministers are quite able to answer—some ministers, I note the look on the face of the member for Chatsworth.


**Mr Minnikin:** There are some exceptions.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** There are some exceptions, I take the interjection. I note the member would be talking about the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. Putting the transport minister aside, most ministers—other than him—should be able to answer questions within their portfolio. I find that a free-flowing debate is far better for the parliament. We now have reached the situation where so much time is wasted in the estimates process by members being called.

In federal parliament in the Senate, once the member has the call they can follow a line of questioning. They do not get keep getting the call. At estimates here an opposition member would ask a question, the director-general would answer and then what should happen is the member should be able to just keep asking questions. But, no, the points of order come from the Labor members and then they say, 'Stop.' 'No.' 'I call the member for Kawana.' 'I call the director-general to answer the question.' So much time is wasted. Estimates should be free-flowing because it is at the estimates process that Queenslanders get a full appreciation of what is going on behind the closed doors of the government of Queensland.

**Mr Krause:** They should.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I take the interjection from the member for Scenic Rim. They should, but they do not at the moment because the estimates process is broken, the committee system is broken, and until the government sit down with the opposition and say, 'Let's work this out so the people of Queensland can have a proper, effective committee system', it will not happen under the Labor government.

 **Mr BROWN** (Capalaba—ALP) (3.23 pm): This year's estimates process ran smoothly, as it does every single year, but what we hear every single year is that estimates is getting worse.

**Mr Bleijie:** Yes. Hear, hear!

**Mr BROWN:** I take the interjection from the member for Kawana. It is getting worse because we are giving the opposition more and more time. There is a direct correlation. If members look at every single report, year on year we are giving more and more time to the opposition and they are complaining more and more. I have a solution: we give them less time. If they want to complain about it, let us give them less time. Let us make sure that the opposition and the government have equal time on questions. From what I see, the chairs are being fair. I might have to discipline them. I will have a chat to them next year because I think they are giving the opposition too much time. When you give them too much time they complain for too long.

**Mr Butcher:** They run out of questions.

**Mr BROWN:** They do. I remember that classic Friday night where the member for Gregory said that the answer was too thorough. Each year we give the opposition more and more time and each year they complain that the process is getting worse.

**Mr Bailey:** Some of them don't ask questions: Callide!


**Mr BROWN:** I will take the interjection from the minister. The member for Callide tries to be a big man up in the seat, but comes down here and he is a completely quiet mouse. I do not know how he thinks he is going to go down in Canberra because I do not think I have heard him talk for the whole term.

**Mr Whiting:** He is saving himself.

**An honourable member** interjected.

**Mr BROWN:** The explosion is going to happen down in Canberra; he is guaranteeing it. This estimates process and the chairs who look after this estimates process are doing a fantastic job. One criticism I might have is that the opposition do not give the crossbenchers enough time to ask their questions. That is their responsibility. There is an opposition and a crossbench that take up the time. We give more than ample time—more than half; one just has to look at the report. The numbers grow every single year. The crossbench is growing as well. We need to ensure that the opposition are giving them equal time because it is their responsibility to do so. It is not the government's responsibility to be giving the crossbenchers time.

As I have said before, the estimates process is a thorough process. It has been handled well by the chairs each and every year. Each and every year we see the time for the opposition getting longer and they complain about it more. The members on this side, and in particular the chairs, may need to reconsider what they are doing next year because I think if those opposite get less time they might use it more wisely. I will leave my contribution at that.

 **Mr JANETZKI** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (3.26 pm): I start by saying that I am a little concerned at the jokiness of the contribution of the previous member. In fact, the overarching jokiness combined from those opposite. Fundamentally this goes to the question of transparency in this state. Those opposite think it is a bit of a joke. That highlights again their lack of commitment to transparency, their hubris, their arrogance in a third term where they think they can just run the show. Transparency is just a bit of a joke over there. For us it is deadly serious.

The report before the House today is only a statistical report. We have heard from the member for Capalaba about the number of questions asked and the jokiness about the time, but this report only reveals the statistical nature of the estimates process. It does not reveal the tone. It does not reveal the quality or the content of the answers. It does not reveal the plethora of interjections, the mode of obfuscation, as the member for Kawana has said, the committee chairs who seek to re-ask questions that the opposition are phrasing, all delivering wastage of time and a diminution of the quality of the estimates process.

In a one-house parliament the estimates process takes on far more importance than in any other parliament we see around this nation. It is fundamental for the opposition to examine the expenditure and the appropriations of various ministers and their departments. It is fundamental to the transparency that this parliament should be exercising over the executive. The leader of the opposition has committed—after the debacle that was the December 2020 estimates, and we have seen it again most recently in July—that if elected to government in 2024 the member for Broadwater would institute an investigation by the Committee of the Legislative Assembly to investigate the estimates process. There would be a range of issues that would be considered.


The first thing that would be up for investigation is the number of Dixers asked by those opposite.

**An honourable member** interjected.

**Mr JANETZKI:** I take the interjection. We look forward to that day. Frankly, the Dixers from those opposite are a complete and utter waste of time. There should also be an investigation into whether a crossbench or opposition member should chair the committee. Those are commitments that we have put forward. We would bring back accountability and transparency to this parliament and that is what good governments should be doing. They should not be obfuscating or hiding behind process. They should not be misusing the process to cover up their failings when the people of Queensland deserve to know how the appropriations are being spent and should be able to see the proper examination of ministers in this House.

We have also committed to increase the time for the investigation of the expenditure because, as a one-house parliament, ultimately it is this House that is responsible for undertaking those investigations. Recently the member for Southport issued his report into the number of private meetings held by his committee. The Health and Environment Committee held 19 private meetings and eight public meetings. That kind of privacy unnecessarily detracts from the transparency of this House. That issue should also be addressed because it feeds into the cynicism that people have of this House. If our side of the House forms government in 2024, we will not tolerate that because the people of Queensland deserve better.

*(Time expired)*

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (3.31 pm): It is always interesting to listen to members of the opposition. The member for Toowoomba South talks about cynicism, which is a bit rich coming from the LNP when talking about committee processes. I appreciate the member was not in parliament when they were last in government, but his is the party that truncated the entire estimates process into two days. The media had to try to cover every single committee. The committees were all sitting at once, all over the place. The media were jumping from room to room, trying to figure out which committee they would film. That is understandable because the same party is so much about transparency that they stopped filming in the chamber—because we wouldn't want the public watching! Anything they promise to do if elected we have heard before. We can only assume that what they would actually do is exactly what they did last time they were in government. Anyone who believes that if in government they would make a non-government member the chair of a committee is being fanciful.

**A government member:** They sacked her.

**Mrs D'ATH:** They do sack committees, yes. They sacked the PCCC members because they did not like what they were doing.

**Mr Bleijie:** They disclosed committee business on Twitter. That is what they did.

**Mrs D'ATH:** I take that interjection. They released information from a committee. If any members opposite release from a committee anything confidential that should not be released, I assume it will be suggested that they immediately resign from their position. I look forward to seeing that the next time there is a breach of confidentiality from a committee.

As Leader of the House I want to put on the record my thanks to the Queensland parliament for their efforts during the past year in putting in place measures to ensure that the people's house continues to function during COVID-19. It has not been easy. I really appreciate that work, including the work done throughout the estimates process and during lockdowns. I acknowledge and thank the staff.

I agree with what the Speaker said during the estimates hearing. In response to the member for Maiwar, he said—

In terms of the estimates process per se, not particularly. I say that because I do not believe the process is fundamentally broken. I believe that it is a very beneficial process. As always, it is a process that works best when all members who are participating take it seriously and ask important questions. I go back to the point I made that it is not about the politics. It is not about the theatre. It is about scrutiny. In my experience from answering questions and asking questions, the best outcomes of an estimates process always happen as result of that.


I believe that it also comes down to respect.

We did not see much respect from the opposition during the estimates process. We saw grandstanding. There was lots of arm waving. I would not say they were going for the gold Logie but certainly the silver Logie with their over-the-top speeches and attempts at questions. While I can speak firsthand about my estimates, I have also heard from colleagues about the way those opposite conducted themselves in the other hearings. They really should hang their heads in shame. They constantly talked over members, the chairperson and witnesses. Throwing their hands around and storming out were all part of the opposition playbook and theatre at this year's estimates hearings, which was shocking but sadly not surprising.

We tallied the number of times the member for Mudgeeraba and her colleagues interrupted during my hearing alone. I think the member for Logan has already advised the House of this. It was at least 62 times. Every time I tried to speak I was interrupted. Those on the other side say that the report is just statistics and that it does not talk about the quality of the answers or the questions. We could not give an answer without being interrupted constantly. For those opposite it was not about the question or the answer; it was about the theatre, the theatrics and the politics of estimates.

**Mr Brown** interjected.

**Mrs D'ATH:** I forgot about the shark mask. I thank the member for Capalaba and I take that interjection. The shark mask—honestly! Estimates is a serious process and we are there to answer questions and have our representatives there. I saw officials from the department being badgered constantly. When people are verballed and interrupted constantly, the opposition has no credibility.

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (3.36 pm): I was not going to speak on this motion but I was amazed by the contribution from the member for Toowoomba South who must live in a parallel universe. My experience of the committee process was that the chair, the member for Kurwongbah, was always scrupulously fair in ensuring that during the committee hearing everybody got a fair go. He bent over backwards to do so. It is true that government members do not wear stuffed toys on their shoulders in parliament.

I say to the opposition that if they are unhappy then they should ask better questions. Do not run out of questions. Do not be like the member for Callide who sat mute like a church mouse for four hours of estimates. He is paid an extra \$24,000 to be on the committee, but he did not ask me a single question in four hours. The opposition is lecturing us about the committee process when their own members sit mute for four hours—for half a day—and do not say a word or ask a question. They have the hide to come in here and lecture us? It is ridiculous!

I endorse the comments of the health minister. At the committee meeting we often saw lots of interrupting and lots of theatrics. The member for Maroochydore was in there huffing and puffing and interrupting and carrying on like a badly behaved adolescent, to be quite frank. It is amazing that someone who has been in this place for so long would carry on with such amateur theatrics. Obviously


she is getting a little bit of the amateur thespian disease from the member for Kawana. The proceedings are televised. The public can look at them. I say to the opposition: do some work; do some research; ask better questions. If you want to be a government, you have to have the discipline to do that.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr BAILEY:** I note the rising level of interjections. I think we have hit a nerve. Maybe the member for Callide did not get a question in because the member for Chatsworth would not let him.

Maybe the member for Callide was too scared to ask a question because the member for Chatsworth was taking all of his time and bandwidth in not being a team player in terms of giving everybody a fair go. At least the other committee members had one or two questions, but the member for Callide, who is in the chamber, did not say a word. I look forward to him saying a word, because I did not hear any contributions from him during estimates.

In the committee process we need hard work, research, a bit of acumen from the opposition—that would be a change—rather than whinging in here about how hard they get it. In my observation, committees have been chaired extremely well and extremely fairly. There is a responsibility actually to behave well and not to be hectoring directors-general and CEOs. They can hector me in a committee meeting, that is fine and I am not too worried about that; but treat people with a bit of respect, ask good questions, do some research and do your job. Who knows? You might actually get somewhere.


 **Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (3.40 pm): I rise to talk on the report of the 2021 budget estimates process and as a member of the Committee of the Legislative Assembly. First, I acknowledge all the members of the committee and their hard work. I particularly acknowledge the CLA's role in supporting governance in the parliament. I also acknowledge some of the things the CLA has done, particularly in terms of securing an extra staff allowance in previous years.

When I was first elected in 2004 I had 19,000 constituents in my electorate, but that has now increased to 38,000. Some electorates have over 40,000 constituents but still have only two full-time staff plus the staff relief allowance. A lot of electorate officers have told me that workloads since COVID have massively increased. We had 19,000 constituents but now have 38,000. Some electorates in Brisbane have over 40,000 but still only two full-time staff with relief staff. I really believe that there needs to be a review in regards to electorate staff support of members, particularly with the increased workload of COVID.

I believe that the current estimates process really needs to be reviewed. It is supposed to ensure parity of representation in terms of giving MPs an equal opportunity to represent their region and ask questions during the estimates process. This is not the case with the current estimates process which heavily favours the government and then the opposition, with crossbenchers getting the crumbs. It is difficult to justify flying thousands of kilometres to Brisbane to barely get a couple of minutes to ask very important questions during this estimates period. This is because the time is not allocated evenly amongst the 93 MPs.

At the moment, the government gets 50 per cent of the time allocated. Much of this would be what I call Dorothy Dixers in which only a part of the time is allocated, giving no real value to the estimates process. It is the same with the opposition which stacks the hearing, leaving very little time for crossbench members. This is not what we call 'parity' in the parliamentary process. This needs to be addressed urgently, otherwise estimates will become a non-event if it is not already so.

There are a number of other areas that can be tidied up to ensure better transparency and efficiency to ensure equity across all members of the House. I recommend some of the following: allowing questions from non-committee members to be submitted prior to the hearings so that the hearings can be dedicated to follow-up questions; transform the process to allow a free flowing of questions to minister and senior bureaucrats without the severe time allocated that reduces the ability of non-government members to continue a line of questioning; and to remove ministerial statements which simply are a waste of time and do not have any relevance to the estimates process. I thank the Speaker and for the opportunity to address these issues.

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (3.44 pm): We have here a statistical report that talks about numbers and is a bit of a tick-and-flick process that says, 'Oh yeah, everything is running fine.' I want to step back. What is the estimates process for? To make sure that the executive that runs Queensland is held accountable for how it spends taxpayers' money and for how it is acting on their behalf. They have the right to do that because they have the majority in this House. Others in this House also have the right to make sure that they are held accountable for that in an open and transparent way.

We all agree that the estimates process has become a bit of a tick and flick and that there is a bit of a gotcha moment that people are looking for when, in fact, ministers come in with pre-prepared statements and a whole bunch of prepared questions and answers that send the gallery and the rest of Queensland to sleep. We come in to try to dig and scrape at a little bit of information that might be useful to make sure that the government is acting properly on behalf of the taxpayers of Queensland. When we talk to the general public, they are not interested in who had 30 seconds more than someone else; they are interested in a genuine process of question and answer so that they can understand what the executive is doing on their behalf with their money. It is long overdue that this process was overhauled. I am not being partisan.

This process needs to be overhauled for the good governance of Queensland. It needs to be overhauled so that the executive is held accountable and so that it is not some sort of media stunt where the latest policy is promoted. It is an opportunity for the people of Queensland to analyse and understand whether the money that they have paid in taxes and other forms of revenue—and the policies that they were told the government would execute—are being followed. Anyone in this place who disagrees with that principle—that the people of Queensland deserve some truth and honesty from the government and some evidence that the policies they took to an election on which they were elected are being followed in an open and transparent way—should really get out and talk to the general public.


Regarding the statistical nature of number collecting, the chair of my committee, the member for Kurwongbah, was very fair and we did get an opportunity. We did not get an opportunity to really dig into some issues because the time—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Lui): Order! Member for Kawana, member for Chatsworth, order!

**Mr WATTS:** The time is still limited. Yes, the member allocated the time in an overfair way to the opposition. This parliament set a time limit in the first place. We heard from the member for Miller that questions were not asked by other members. There are 93 members in here. If the shadow minister asks some questions and everybody else wants to ask a question, we only have four hours of which 15 or 20 minutes is taken up with a ministerial statement so everybody is euthanised—sorry, anaesthetised in the process—I think they might like to kill us off but they won't get that opportunity! They try to send everybody to sleep so that nobody is paying attention to any questions being asked. To limit the time really devalues the voices of everybody in Queensland. This government should increase the time for every analysis. They say, 'Oh, you didn't get enough questions.' We should just keep going until the questions have finished.

The government should answer every question that a member of this House has about where taxpayers' money has gone and about the good governance of Queensland, because then this House is truly getting on with the job of governing Queensland. This government is not doing that. It is secretive, it is hiding things and it is trying to make sure the people of Queensland do not find out the truth because it is very afraid of the truth coming out.

 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (3.49 pm): It is telling to hear from the member for Toowoomba North that the new policy of the LNP if they were ever to win government would be to have an endless estimates process where all members of parliament could come in and ask questions for as long as they like.

**An opposition member** interjected.

**Mr POWER:** That is apparently the policy. However, what we found out from the member for Toowoomba South, his brother Toowoomba member, is that that was not to be the case at all. Instead it would be an investigation of the issues. We know not what they say in opposition they will do, but we know what they actually did in government.

**An honourable member** interjected.

**Mr POWER:** I certainly watched it on TV and I certainly saw the process. More importantly, you were here. Members on that side of the House should be deeply ashamed. We should never forget that what they did is take all of those committees—

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Lui): Order! Member for Logan, please direct all comments through the chair.



**Mr POWER:** We should never forget that those opposite held those committees over just two days. There were only seven members that they were up against. They were running so scared of them that they packed those committees into as little time as possible so they would have as little media scrutiny as possible and would have as little time for examination as possible. They were scared.

We know that it is not going to be what the member for Toowoomba South pretends is the answer. If that is the case, put that as a policy. We know that their policy is going to be to have an investigation. We saw what they actually did in government—they tried to hide, hide, hide. They sacked committees when they got embarrassed and tried to hide, hide, hide.

I wish to apologise to the House because I gave far too much time to the, frankly, hopeless opposition which had no sensible questions that enlightened anyone about anything to do with the budget. There were 620 minutes of hearing for my committee alone. That is 10.33 hours. If we were to listen to the opposition today we would think that they did not get much of that 10.33 hours of questioning. Instead, they got five hours and 29 minutes of questioning. I have been doing some quick maths and it is pretty obvious that we only got four hours and eight minutes of questioning. They had over an hour and 20 minutes more of question not a few seconds more as the member for Toowoomba South tried to pretend.

The other thing to raise is their strategy. We saw the member for Kawana do a theatrical swoon as he rushed out of the room in order to be captured on camera. When they did not report that he immediately came back to ask further questions. He was so insulted he came back for more. We need to get rid of the cheap theatrics of running out and put serious questions. We also heard the groaning and noises from the Leader of the Opposition which were frankly unbecoming and reflected very poorly on him. We had 62 interruptions. I could not even count the number of interruptions of the ministers that I dealt with. It was simply disgusting that they could not ask a question and allow it to be answered.

We should never forget that in opposition they make noise but in government they hide. We should also note the tone of the hearings. The opposition tried to make a joke. They would ask questions that were well outside the standing orders and when I immediately put those questions to the minister they would be insulted that I had not pulled them up and they could not have a fight over process. I immediately put the question to the minister and the minister then gave the answer. They had over five hours and 29 minutes to ask questions. It is a reflection on those opposite that after those five hours and 29 minutes all they could do when they came out was complain about the process instead of highlight any of the things relevant to the budget.

I take issue with the member for Miller who gave those opposite a hint—do some research, do some work, come with a decent set of questions. Why would the member say that to them? They might do it. We of course know that that will not be the process. Next year we will see more theatrics, more groaning, more running out of the room and none of the hard work that Queenslanders expect.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

## TRANSPORT AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

### Report, Motion to Take Note



**Mr KING** (Kurwongbah—ALP) (3.55 pm): I move—

That the House take note of the Transport and Resources Committee Report No. 12, 57th Parliament, *Inquiry into vehicle safety, standards and technology, including engine immobiliser technology*, tabled on 24 September 2021.

I am pleased to finally be able to rise today to speak briefly on the inquiry the Transport and Resources Committee did into vehicle safety, standards and technology, including engine immobiliser technology. This topic generated a lot more interest from stakeholders than we thought and our time line blew out so much, because of the diversity of engagement we had, that we had to put in the aforementioned interim report to get more time to wade through the submissions and come up with a comprehensive report that I suggest all members read.

The terms of reference were quite broad. They were as follows—

- a. Options to reduce or prevent vehicles being used illegally or dangerously on Queensland roads, including vehicle engine immobilisation technology, non-technology options, operational considerations or other measures;
- b. Lessons learned from other jurisdictions, particularly regarding the implementation of vehicle engine immobilisation technology to the existing vehicle fleet;
- c. The Commonwealth's role in relation to vehicle standards and safety, and measures the Commonwealth could take, including requiring all new vehicles to be fitted with remote engine immobilisation technology;

- d. The effectiveness of any proposed measures in improving road safety, preventing crime and assisting police in operational matters;
- e. A recommended framework for legislative, policy and operational implementation of any proposed measures;
- f. The benefit to and role of insurers in supporting any recommended measures;
- g. Options to improve vehicle standards and safety in Queensland, including in relation to the:
  - i. current Australian vehicle design rules;
  - ii. inspection regime for registered vehicles;
  - iii. pre-sale certification scheme, including measures to reduce fraud and improve consumer safety;
  - iv. management of written-off vehicles and 're-birthing';
  - v. after-market vehicle modification framework, including achieving consistency to ensure best alignment with other Australian jurisdictions.

We made a number of recommendations on this. We did not recommend remote immobilisers. We found from submitters that semantics surround the remote immobilisation terminology. What was actually meant was a secondary form of immobiliser. 'Ghost immobiliser' was the term that mostly came up with submitters when referring to secondary form of immobilisers.

This is what we heard from submitters. If we were to have a remote immobiliser, picture a car cannoning down the highway and someone turns it off. What happens? I know in modern cars with electric steering that the steering would lock. That would be very dangerous. The police would need some line of sight. What if the car stopped in the middle of train tracks with a train coming? What if there was a domestic violence incident, a hostage situation or anything like that? It is not feasible. We heard that autonomous and connected vehicles would be around before this technology would become available to the whole vehicle fleet. The police would need line of sight. They would need to sight the vehicle; they could not just turn it off.

The secondary form of ghost immobilisers are things like a key pad, your mobile phone, a retinal scan, a fingerprint. That technology is out there and is able to be used. Maybe the federal government could make it a condition of importing vehicles. We do not make vehicles anymore, thanks to Joe Hockey telling Holden to leave. It is real, it is feasible and it can be used.

We mentioned in a recommendation to the minister that he look at key security. People should not leave their keys within a couple of feet of the front door. No-one wants to be broken into but the fact is that it does happen. People should look after their keys, because it is hard to start a modern car without keys.

In the time I have left I want to touch on the reparable write-off scheme. We recommended that we do not follow New South Wales and that we keep reparable write-offs. There are a lot of good cars out there that the panelbeating industry and so many others say can be re-used. All we need to do is clamp down on lemons getting back on the road. An inspection regime for reparable write-off vehicles would be a way to fix that.

I thank the hardworking committee. We had several members join our committee—the member for Mount Ommaney, the member for Ipswich and others. If I have forgotten you, I apologise—but a lot of members came through the committee.

Debate, on motion of Mr King, adjourned.

## MOTION

### Order of Business



**Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (4.00 pm): I move—

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

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

## ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

Resumed from 16 November (see p. 3546).



**Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympics) (4.01 pm): Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the address-in-reply of the 57th Parliament. I acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which this House meets and pay my respects to elders past, present

and emerging. I acknowledge the former and current Governors, the Speaker and all of the appointed temporary speakers as well. They do a great job in this House. I would also like to put on record my thanks to the wonderful caucus team. I congratulate all new members elected at the general election. Since then we have also welcomed James Martin as the new member for Stretton after we farewelled our dear friend Duncan Pegg.

I well remember when I was first elected the privilege of being asked to represent my community in this place. I assure all new members that it is something they will never forget and should never forget. While many of us have added responsibilities, we are firstly representatives of our local area. I am immensely proud to be returned as the member for Inala to continue to represent my culturally diverse community. I am extremely honoured to be elected as the Premier of Queensland—the Premier for all Queensland communities—a state of great diversity, rich cultures and great beauty.

At the election Queenslanders again put their trust in my government, electing us for our third term. This is a solemn contract with the people of this great state which we will continue to honour and deeply respect. They trusted our plan to further progress our economic recovery and expansion during one of the most challenging periods that our state has ever been through. We are keeping our promise to work every day for the health and economic wellbeing of Queensland. We are keeping our promise to continue to put Queenslanders first and our commitment to maintain stability and certainty.

This is the first parliament elected for a four-year term—and my government will use that time well. The focus continues to be the wellbeing of Queenslanders and the strength of our economy. Our priorities are clear: safeguarding our health, supporting jobs, backing small business, making it for Queensland, building Queensland, growing our regions, investing in skills, backing our frontline services and protecting the environment. That means more jobs and more skills in more industries and more regions.

If I think about it, it is almost as though all of the building blocks have been put in place over the last two terms and now we are really pushing forward with massive infrastructure happening across our state. We are seeing the fruition of our policies such as the 50 per cent renewable energy target by 2030 but also restoring those frontline services that were so desperately needed, making sure that we have the teachers, the police, the firefighters and the health workers—

**Mr Kelly:** Nurses.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:**—and the nurses. I want to acknowledge all of our frontline staff and also the people who assist those staff. I think we should commend them as well because it takes everybody to make our state function, especially in times of natural disasters and in times such as COVID. People have stepped up beyond their call for duty, if I can be so frank. I know that when I regularly chair the meetings where ministers, directors-general, the Chief Health Officer and other representatives of our agencies are present, they come there with one purpose—and that is to look after this state. At times those decisions weigh heavily on our minds. At the end of the day, it is about putting the people of this state first. They are not easy decisions. They are tough decisions, but that is what we are elected to do. We are elected to make the tough decisions to continue to protect Queenslanders.

Also, too, we are seeing the construction of roads right across our state. I know that the Minister for Transport is always out and about. Whether they are western roads or the Bruce Highway or the M1 or now the Coomera Connector or Cross River Rail, these are significant programs that are about connecting our communities and making sure that people can visit one another and that they can do so safely. It is also about making sure that there is cheaper water for our farmers and making sure that our environment is more highly valued and that our environment is protected.

As I said in my recent State of the State address, we have shown that the stronger the health response to COVID the stronger our economy. Compared to before the pandemic, as I said in this House earlier today, Queensland leads Australia on job creation, with more than 90,000 jobs. This is phenomenal. Our unemployment rate is lower than it has been in over a decade. This is something that I do not think anyone expected during a pandemic—the fact that we have been able to grow jobs during a pandemic, housing approvals are up, people are wanting to come here, tradies are occupied. This sets the state up for the future, especially when it comes to investment and future economic growth.

Our domestic economy grew by 4.6 per cent to June, outpacing the nation, and household spending is up 14.9 per cent. We know that Queensland is the place to be, and the rest of Australia is voting with their feet. Last year, in the midst of the pandemic, Queensland had the biggest net gain of people moving from interstate in 20 years. That is why we are seeing new schools being built across the growing parts of our state. We are seeing the expansion of hospitals and we are building satellite hospitals. This is to make sure that we are keeping up with the infrastructure that is needed—whether

that be infrastructure in electorates as far north as the Torres Strait or out to Weipa, Mount Isa, Longreach, Emerald and all the regional cities and rural and regional communities right across our state. It is a big state—2½ times the size of Texas.

I especially want to put on record my thanks to the caucus because they are always out there engaging with people. That means leaving their communities. It means spending time away from their families to do the job of government—to go out and listen and report back. Whether that is through our community cabinets, our regional forums or the committee work of this parliament, there is huge engagement.

I think we also have to remember that having a representative from the government out in the community for one of their events is highly significant and means a lot to that community. I noticed that the other day when I went out to Cherbourg and Murgon. It was great to be greeted by the council, but they were just so happy to see us there. The fact that my ministers had been there previously shows how much we do care about the communities we represent.

Our economy has grown to \$363 billion, and key pillars like construction, mining and agriculture have never stopped. When I mention mining, what comes to mind is energy. Queensland is such an energy-rich state. This state is set up for such a bright future when it comes to having abundant resources, whether that be metallurgical coal or large amounts of gas, and our huge opportunities in renewables. In the next decade we are going to see a renewable revolution in this state—the likes of which no-one could ever have anticipated. I think Minister Bailey spoke about this over five years ago, but now all of the pillars are in place to take us to that next level. There will be a lot of good announcements coming over the next few years.

Thanks to the hard work of many people in government, soon after the election we fulfilled our promise to bring down a budget and immediately began delivering on more than 1,000 election commitments. As I said this morning when I tabled our update, just over a year ago we were elected and already 30 per cent of our election commitments have been undertaken. This was followed in June by the budget for 2021-22, so that meant a few more estimates for myself and the Treasurer than others, but we always love that time of year.

Some of key aspects include: our \$22.2 billion budget; a record investment in health; \$6 billion in concessions; \$15.3 billion in education, including 10 new schools; and a Jobs Fund of \$3.34 billion, including a \$2 billion Renewable Energy and Hydrogen Jobs Fund.

It is very important that people are able to have a roof over their head, and we have that huge investment fund which will mean 7,400 new social and affordable homes. In representing my community, I know how important it is to make sure that you have a house. It means so much for the family. On top of that, it is really important to have a job. As I always say in this House, there is dignity in having a job. There is dignity in being able to go to work and come home to talk to your family about it. It is something that the opposition should never forget. When they were in office and they cut jobs it had a huge impact on families. That is something that people in this state will never forget. It is a good reminder for future governments as well when we are no longer here: when you attack people's livelihoods you take away their dignity, and it is something they will never forget. It also has impacts on regional communities.

In this term we will see further progress on the Path to Treaty, which is a signature of this government. We have also seen a record increase to screen. Now we have become almost like the home away from home for Hollywood. You cannot get much better than having George Clooney and Julia Roberts filming at Hamilton Island at the moment—one of the best places to be—which is absolutely fantastic, and I understand that Baz Luhrmann's movie about Elvis will be released at the end of June next year. Once again it was filmed here in Queensland with some great local talent, making sure we have good long-term secure jobs.


Finally, I want to mention how proud I am of our Skilling Queenslanders for Work program. This is another signature program that we put back in place. It was something very dear to my heart. When it was axed under the LNP I made a commitment to bring that back, and we did. Now to see hundreds, if not thousands, of people employed, getting work, reaching out into our Indigenous communities, showing how important it is, and that if you get the skills you can get a job. That ties in very nicely with our free TAFE as well.

In conclusion, can I just say that I am incredibly proud of the electorate that I represent and the transformation that has been happening there with money going into new classrooms at Glenala, Durack and Carole Park state schools. We also opened the new performing arts complex at Forest

Lake—which was started under the member for Algester's time—giving those young people those opportunities. The halls that we are building across the state are great community legacies not just for the school—

**Mr Ryan:** Great community assets.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Yes, great community assets that everyone can come in and utilise, which is a huge credit to the investment we are putting in there. With those few words, I commend the address-in-reply and thank everyone for putting their faith and trust in our government. We will work hard each and every day to live up to the trust and respect that we owe the people of this state. It is at the forefront of my mind every time I sit down to make a decision as Premier. I know that my cabinet takes it incredibly seriously, as does every single member of my government.

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (4.14 pm): I rise to make my contribution to the address-in-reply. First, let me say that representing and serving the constituents of any electorate is indeed a privilege and it is a humbling experience to be voted in again, particularly with an increase in the primary vote. I thank the people of Toowoomba North for their confidence in me to be their strong local voice in this place. I look forward to well and truly serving them.

As the elected member, I would also like to pledge my allegiance to Her Majesty The Queen, Queen Elizabeth II, and I wish her well in recovering from her sprained back. To her representative now in Queensland, Her Excellency the Governor of Queensland, I also wish her well in her appointment. To the former governor I would like to say thank you very much for your service. I am sorry I did not get an opportunity to thank you while you were still in office, but here we are.

First and foremost, I would like to very much thank the people of Toowoomba North. We have been on a journey together, and we have seen some significant improvements in the electorate in the time I have been here. There are two previous members, both Graham Healy and Kerry Shine, who also well and truly served the people of Toowoomba North, and I thank them for their service. Kerry is now on the council, and I certainly respect a life well spent in service to the people of my community.

I would also like to thank the leadership team that took us to the last election, both the member for Nanango and the member for Everton. It was a very difficult time for an election. It was very difficult to have any conversation about the future of Queensland when people were really quite fearful about the direction we were heading. We know that this government spent a fair chunk of taxpayers' money researching that. We know that even against the recommendations of the Fitzgerald inquiry they spent millions and millions and millions and millions of dollars ramming home their election message. I do not want to sound cynical about that, but it was interesting to me that the advertising budget wound up shortly after the election whilst the pandemic is still ongoing. Some might say that had an effect on the outcome. We will never know if 9½ or more million taxpayers' dollars for research helped shape the outcome of the election. We have to assume it was all fought fairly.

I would also like to thank my opponents who ran in the election. Unfortunately, unlike the elections I have had against Kerry, which were hard fought on the ground and, in my opinion, very fair but certainly hard fought, this one was a little bit of a bitter campaign. There were some things said. I had signs suggesting that I was a bigot. It is always interesting to me that people think someone who has a different opinion is a bigot, when of course the person with the spray can in their hand is in fact demonstrating their own bigotry by spraying that. I appreciate the apology that Councillor Megan O'Hara Sullivan made to one of my friends for comments that were made during the election. I can only assume that because they were a year later there was an exchange of letters going on, but the withdrawal all the same is appreciated. Let's hope that in future Toowoomba does not see that kind of election and that we see an election fought on ideas and the needs of our community and the desires of the people who live there, because the job that you have when you come into this place is to serve and represent the people.

In particular I would like to thank my campaign manager, Kurt, and Rob. They did a sterling job. Kurt took two months off work completely unpaid to come and do that role, and I will never be able to thank him enough. Rob's analysis was fantastic.

I have too many volunteers to mention but I do thank them all sincerely. We had three pre-poll booths that could not be manned without so many volunteers coming forward so I really do appreciate them. To my office staff at that time—Elysia, Katie and Hayley—I thank you so much for the hard work you put in. I wish both Elysia and Katie well with their careers as they go forward.

I would like to congratulate our new leadership team—the two Davids. In difficult times, we are marching forward well in representing the people of Queensland and bringing ideas to the table so we can all work together to make Queensland a better place. That is the objective of this House—to well and truly serve the people and make Queensland a better place for their lives, their families and their futures.

I would like to thank my wife, Sue, and my children. It was interesting that, because of some of the restrictions of interstate travel, this was the first time I did not have the majority of my children—who are all now young adults—there to help me. That pleased them greatly because, unlike when they were younger and they wanted to put the T-shirts on and wave the banners, they are shyly retiring to the background now and are less enthusiastic about standing on street corners with me. I thank my wife and many of her friends who came forward to help.

I turn now to the electorate. There are several parts of the Toowoomba North electorate that have needed things over a number of years. We have got the Second Range Crossing done. That was set up and funded by our side of the House and the federal government. It was good to see it completed, but the job is far from over. In my maiden speech, I listed some bold dreams, even though people told me not to. I said—

As I start my time of service to the people of Toowoomba, I dream of a time of fast commuter trains—

I see the minister here in the House. I still dream of that fast commuter train, even if it is only to Helidon to start with. I think the people of Toowoomba and the south-east corner would benefit from having the land opened up on the Downs by having a commuter train. I also dreamt of ‘double-stacked container trains’. That project is underway, albeit it is going at the speed of a snail. We are now seeing some progress with inland rail and its journey. I said—

I dream of an airport that can land commercial jets—

The Wagner family should be thanked for making that a reality in my first term. At the time I said those words, nobody imagined that would be possible. I said that I dreamt of ‘an inland port at Charlton Wellcamp’. We see that, and the government has invested money in that Charlton Wellcamp area to help us export and import products, so that is a good thing. I continued—

I dream of a thriving, revitalised CBD, a university that leads the world in speciality areas of research—

The USQ is leading the world in some of the space research and agricultural research. Unfortunately, in terms of the CBD revitalisation, the rail yards have now been sitting there for a number of years and they could do with some funding to kick that project along to see our CBD revitalised.

I said that I dreamt of ‘an entertainment centre ... and a stadium’. Everybody laughed. When we finally get around to building the hospital—and I look forward to the cabinet of the Palaszczuk government funding that hospital, as they should, because it is desperately needed—we will have a vacant block of land in the centre of town. There is a great opportunity with the Olympics coming to look at an entertainment centre and a suitable stadium that is close to the CBD—in fact, walking distance to the CBD. It would have the potential for good public transport using the current heavy rail, which will be less required when inland rail is there. It is a massive block of land and it is a great opportunity to really shape the future of Toowoomba. I encourage the government to talk to me or my community about that and progress some of those things forward.

Wilsonton State School was an election commitment of both sides, and I would like to thank the minister for following through on that. There are certainly a great deal of things that the secondary school needed, and the arts block and the theatre space are most welcome. The upgrade to make the technical facilities competitive with all the other schools in Toowoomba is also a great thing. That is fantastic, but there is a massive problem out the front. I ask the government and the minister again to have a look at what we can do about a scramble crossing so that the thousand kids can get across that one junction more effectively, rather than them piling up on the corner where there is not enough room for them to stand. I look forward to that discussion.

Unfortunately, only one side of politics promised a road that would run from the back of Highfields through to Westbrook. There is a corridor there that currently exists that needs to be protected for the future. I encourage the government to look at an investigation into that. Even if they cannot fund the road, they should investigate it and protect the corridor for the future so that when the money is available we will have an opportunity for that second road that would connect Highfields to the bypass and to the industrial estate of Wilsonton. That would mean the New England Highway would not become completely jammed with traffic every morning. Even if it cannot be funded, let us get the investigation

done, let us understand what is needed and let us protect the corridor because that is what the people of Toowoomba North and Highfields are really looking for. It will make an enormous difference to the community in the long term. As that corridor gets built out, it will get harder and harder to achieve.

Toowoomba North State School are still waiting for their BER hall. This is one of my hardworking schools. They have a big Ezidi community and a big First Nations community. They do not have an enclosed space that is big enough for them. If anybody wants to visit Toowoomba in August and decide whether or not they deserve an enclosed space for their school assemblies, I would encourage them to do so. After one visit, the funding would materialise because it is not a pleasant place to be sitting when the August winds are blowing through. I would like to see the Toowoomba North State School hall be enclosed. It was built in such a way that it can be enclosed and I would like to see that happen.

One of the single biggest things that needs to happen in Toowoomba is the hospital. The planning has been done and the schematics are done. All of the information is in. I urge the minister to put a funding proposal forward or look at a PPP proposal. There are many ways to fund this hospital. Money is still relatively cheap at the moment, although it would appear worldwide it may be getting a little more expensive. It is time now for this hospital to get seriously underway.

I thank the government. Both parties committed to a \$42 million day surgery. That day surgery is well and truly due. I would love to see the construction get underway. I know it is in process, but given where we are at in Toowoomba—with the pressure on one of the hardest working hospitals where the staff do a fantastic job but the built environment is no longer capable of dealing with the demands they have on them—it is time to make the commitment to increase that built environment. The day surgery buys us a little bit of time, but it is going to take some time to build this facility. I encourage the government, the minister and the cabinet to seriously look at funding that hospital and getting that project underway.

We need additional ICU beds. We need to reduce our ambulance ramping. At the moment, we are spending \$7½ million on the travel subsidy. I would like to see those specialists and those services offered in my community. A neurosurgeon would be very useful. We would have fewer helicopter rides for people who are suffering a swelling on the brain and/or losing their life because time is of the essence when they have such an injury. The hospital is a serious thing that needs to be looked at, and I encourage the government to do that.

Crime is unfortunately on the rise around the state, and we certainly have not been exempt from that. We have seen a new facility open at Newtown, but it is not a regular facility that can be used. I ask that that be staffed with the staff who came out of the two previous beat areas so that can serve the community better. I was pleased to see another bipartisan commitment occur, with the police station at Highfields now open and operational. I wish them all the best in driving crime down in that northern part of my electorate. I would love to see some additional Neighbourhood Watch funding. My community has grown very interested in Neighbourhood Watch at the moment because they feel they cannot get the service they are looking for.

The Olympics offers us a great opportunity. The original bid for the Olympics was to bring back infrastructure that would otherwise be built and to accelerate its construction. One of the key components was to try to reduce the travel time around the south-east corner so that we can unlock land and opportunities. In Toowoomba we have jobs and we have opportunities, but it is very difficult because people, for some reason, just do not want to travel west. I firmly believe that if we had a good corridor connecting us to the CBD of Brisbane we would see people arrive in Toowoomba and take those good-paying jobs. Our community would grow and Queensland would be all the richer for it.

It is well and truly time. The original railway line is over 150 years old. It was opened by my predecessor John Watts—no relation. It now takes just a fraction longer to get to Brisbane than it did 150 years ago on a steam train, so it would be really nice to see that opened up.


There is also another opportunity. In Toowoomba, we have almost no female facilities around our sporting fields. The opportunity exists for the Olympics and to grow female sport. For example, one of my AFL teams with 26 players has one pedestal in the changing room. It takes the girls 30 or 40 minutes before a game to get ready to get on the field. It would be really nice to see some dedicated funding to improve the facilities that are available for females participating in sport.

It would also be nice to see mountain bike track upgrades on the range. We have some great opportunities for mountain biking. Toowoomba and the Lockyer have a good proposal which really should be funded because not only is it a great opportunity for people to get fit and healthy; it is also an Olympic sport. We also have a world champion who lives just around the corner. It would be fantastic to see that really grow.

I sincerely thank so many charities and so many people that do so many good things in my electorate. In particular, I would like to pick out Protea Place, Base Services, the Toowoomba Hospice and the Toowoomba Hospital Foundation. These are all services that make up the fabric of our community. They do a fantastic job. There are far too many to mention, but Toowoomba is a very philanthropic community who really support the various charities. I thank the charities for the hard work they do in making our community just that little bit friendlier and just that little bit nicer for those who are down on their luck or in difficult times.

I would like to finish off with a couple of things that concern me about where this House is headed. Last sitting it was celebrated that we had got rid of the upper house. I certainly do not disagree that an appointed house is inappropriate in a modern world, but it unfortunately means that this House is basically a democracy for one day every four years and then, following that, it is a dictatorship where the government get their own way on everything; they have no need to negotiate or have a conversation. That means that the people of Queensland are not served as well as they should be. Any government that becomes arrogant, disconnected and supposedly all-knowing I think is doing a disservice to the people of Queensland.

We know that the Electoral Act was altered before the last election. We know that many of those alterations slipped in little things that just tilt the playing field a little bit more towards one side of this House. That is not serving the people of Queensland. I do not endorse any government that has followed that path, and I certainly do not endorse this government following down that path. We know that the unions have the purse strings. We know that the unions control this government but the people of Queensland should control this government and the executive. I wish this government would listen to some of that.

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (4.34 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the address-in-reply, moved by the member for Stafford. I am very proud of the fact that I am the last member to make a contribution to this debate and this will be the end of the address-in-reply. I am very pleased to make this contribution today.

I acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we gather, the Jagera and Turrbal people, and pay my respects to elders past, present and emerging. I want to acknowledge the past Governor and the new Governor for their oversight and important roles in our state. I wish our new Governor all the best in her role going forward.

I want to acknowledge the Speaker on his re-election as Speaker—he does a tremendous job—and acknowledge all of the members on the Speaker's panel.

Since 22 February 2014 I have had the absolute privilege to be given the opportunity to serve the people of Redcliffe in their house, the people's house, for another term. The 2020 election was the seventh election in which I have been a candidate since 2007. With every election, I am still learning. I am humbled by my community's support for me to represent them and their views and to advocate for positive change for our community. At last year's election the Palaszczuk government and I ran on a platform of positivity and growth, and I am proud that we are getting on with the job of delivering on our election commitments.

There are so many great things happening in and around the mighty Redcliffe electorate, but time does not allow me to list them all. However, some of the investments include a business case to undertake a multimillion dollar upgrade at Redcliffe Hospital, community consultation to design and shape the Scarborough Harbour now and into the future, a \$4 million investment to create a homelessness hub and support service in Redcliffe, and further investment in our local schools and NGOs. We also promised funding to upgrade the lights at the Dolphins' stadium. I am pleased that the Palaszczuk government's investment will help the mighty Dolphins as they continue to go from strength to strength and join the NRL. This, on top of our record investment in health, education and frontline services such as police, fire and ambulance right across Queensland, will also benefit the people of Redcliffe and the wider Moreton Bay region.

As we all know, we do not get to stand in this chamber without the support and dedication of our friends, family and supporters. I have faced many elections during my lifetime—as I say, seven since 2007—and I am amazed that on each occasion my supporters—Labor members, Labor life members and community members—have come out in droves to help me secure the faith of our community to represent them in this House. I would like to thank all of my hardworking and dedicated volunteers, community members, members of the Redcliffe ALP, Labor members and members of the union movement who have always come out and supported me and, in turn, the Palaszczuk government.



I could not do my job without my electorate staff. I want to thank my electorate staff, both current and past. In particular, I want to thank Jenny, Eddie, Olivia and Karl—and I want to congratulate Karl Winchester on going on to become a councillor in the Moreton Bay Regional Council—for all of their support, guidance and dedication to not only their job but also the people of Redcliffe. I want to welcome Joelle to my electorate office since the election. While time does not permit me to read out each and every name—if I do, there is always a chance that I will miss someone—I have just two words to all my supporters: thank you.

I thank my community for a positive campaign and the many thousands of voters who supported the decisions and handling of COVID-19 by the Palaszczuk government at the election in Redcliffe. Many voiced their approval as they went in to vote. At pre-poll, a number of people stopped, turned and just said, 'Thank you. Thank you for keeping us safe.' We heard that over and over again.

While many in this chamber get up and acknowledge their opposing candidates and thank them for a fair contest, I unfortunately cannot do the same. For many elections the LNP candidate, Ms Dooley, has run against me as either a Family First or an LNP candidate. Unfortunately, on each occasion, her team and the LNP have become more desperate which has resulted in a more negative, personal and nasty campaign. While it is acceptable to put forward an alternative policy and call out the perceived faults in your opponent's policies, it is not acceptable to be personally nasty, borderline abusive and malicious against your opponent when talking and dealing with members of the community.

Put simply, Ms Dooley has a non-exclusive relationship with the truth. The recent election was the nastiest of them all—from the LNP putting out misleading and ill-informed material about me and the government to the LNP candidate spreading vicious mistruths and rumours about me. I have also been informed that the LNP candidate and the federal member bullied and intimidated local business owners simply for engaging with me and the government. This behaviour is utterly shameful and a reflection on the individuals but it is not surprising, because we saw this in 2014, 2015 and 2017. Now, with the federal member Luke Howarth coming out and referring to mandatory vaccinations as 'segregation', the behaviour continues.

We live in a democratic society. We all have an opportunity to run for parliament and put our ideas forward. I acknowledge the hard work and goodwill of every candidate who puts themselves forward, no matter what party they come from or whether they are independent. However, that does not give anyone a licence to do anything to win at all costs.

I am proud that my community put their faith in me and the Palaszczuk government to continue to provide more services, infrastructure and support to our community for another four years. It would be remiss of me if I did not spend some time speaking about my ministerial role in the previous term. When the Palaszczuk government came to office in 2015, I was appointed as the attorney-general and minister for justice. I had the opportunity in the first term to also be minister for training and skills. I served in the role of the attorney-general and minister for justice from the 2015 election up until the 2020 election.

As we know, being a minister in any government is a challenging role but one that you do not carry out alone. For many years, I have been surrounded by great advisers and staff. I acknowledge the member for Stafford and congratulate him on securing the support of his community to represent them in this place. It is no secret that the member for Stafford and I have a long connection. He was my first chief of staff, remained my chief of staff right to the end and is the longest serving—some may say 'veteran'—chief of staff. I know that he brings a wealth of public policy experience and enthusiasm for his community to this House.

While they are knocked around a bit, particularly by those opposite, our hardworking and dedicated public servants are truly remarkable. I take this opportunity to thank all of the staff in the Department of Justice and Attorney-General for their dedication, passion, wisdom—

**Mrs Frecklington** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Bush): Member for Nanango, I ask we get through this final address in reply without interjection. I also find what you said to be unparliamentary, and I ask you to withdraw.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I take personal offence and I ask that the speaker withdraw.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Nanango, I have asked you to withdraw what I find to be unparliamentary language.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I withdraw.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I rise to a point of order. I found the member's statement personally offensive and I ask her to withdraw.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The member for Redcliffe?

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** Apologies, yes, the member for Redcliffe.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member, will you withdraw?

**Mrs D'ATH:** My comments were not in relation to any one individual. They were in relation to those opposite. My understanding is that if it is not addressed particularly to an individual they cannot take personal offence.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member, I have sought clarification and you cannot take personal offence in relation to a group comment and remark.

**Mrs D'ATH:** I take this opportunity to thank all of the staff in the Department of Justice and Attorney-General for the dedication, passion, wisdom and advice they gave me and my office for over five years during my time as attorney-general and minister for justice. As the longest continuing serving attorney-general since World War II—most do not do two terms in a row; I wonder why!—I had the pleasure of working alongside some of the greatest public policy minds in our government to ensure Queenslanders have the laws and programs in place to protect and serve them. On a personal note, I thank the director-general, David Mackie, for his unwavering and strong leadership of the department for many years.

While time does not permit me to mention everyone by name, I take this opportunity to thank Leanne Robertson, an intellectual and policy powerhouse, and her team from SPLES; Jenny Lang, who oversees our courts; Victoria Thomson for Liquor, Gaming and Fair Trading; Corynne Scott, the CFO; Greg Cooper, Crown Solicitor; Peter Cook, head of Corporate Services; Carl Heaton, the head of DPP; all the heads of jurisdictions and members of the judiciary; heads of all of the statutory authorities; and many more. I give a special shout-out to the ECQ for running the local government elections just as COVID was hitting its stride and then a general state election during COVID-19. It was certainly a challenge but the ECQ rose to the occasion. Working with them all on behalf of the people of Queensland was truly a highlight of my career to date. On behalf of my staff and myself, I thank them for their support in discharging our important duties. I wish them all the very best, personally and professionally, for the years ahead.

I also acknowledge that since 2017 I have been the Leader of the House, and I want to acknowledge my staff for their support and particularly Darren Cann for his support. I thank the Speaker, the Clerk, the Speaker's panel and all of the staff here at parliament for the great work they do.

Turning to my current portfolio, health is the most human portfolio. Nowhere has that human dynamic been more evident than in the challenges COVID-19 has presented to our health system and the dislocation it has inflicted upon our way of life. I consider it an absolute privilege and honour to take on the role of health minister at this very challenging time. It has been widely acknowledged that Queensland has fared better than most jurisdictions around the world, and I would like to add my appreciation to that expressed by so many Queenslanders to the Premier and our former chief health officer, Dr Jeannette Young, now Her Excellency, for their firm and steady leadership throughout the pandemic.

That success, however, was only possible because of the commitment, diligence and professionalism of our frontline health staff and the patience, compliance and resilience of the Queensland people. I take the opportunity to once again express my gratitude for their contribution to all we have accomplished in the most recent trying two years. From the cape to Coolangatta, from Brisbane to Goondiwindi and from Townsville to Longreach, our frontline public health staff have done an amazing job each and every day to protect the people of Queensland. As Her Excellency Dr Young, now our Governor, has said, we could not have done it without them.

The pandemic has demonstrated what we can achieve when we work together in the face of a common threat. Multiple teams working in multiple labs across multiple countries have delivered multiple options in response to a challenge that just 18 months ago was thought to be impossible: viable effective vaccines against a coronavirus for the first time in human history. Our instinct for discovery, driven by the power of research, has pushed back the limits of our knowledge. The development and progressive rollout of the vaccination program has triggered hope that better days are just ahead, and

Queenslanders are turning out in their droves to get vaccinated. I thank them. For those who have not, I put out a call again: time is running out. Please come forward today, roll up your sleeve and get vaccinated. Getting vaccinated will help protect you, your friends, your family and your community. I encourage all eligible Queenslanders to get vaccinated today.

COVID-19 has had an impact on both people and systems. I want to acknowledge my community and businesses. I acknowledge how hard it has been since the start of 2020 on our school students, on the parents doing homeschooling and on our teachers, who had to so rapidly adjust and modify their teaching programs to ensure that our children did not fall behind in their learning. I acknowledge the cancellation of swimming carnivals, sports carnivals, school formals, graduations and other special events and celebrations.

Everyone thought that 2021 would be so different—and it has been, but not in the way we thought. We did not think of delta. We did not think the virus would become even more contagious, more infectious and a much greater risk; nor did we think it would find our children and spread so easily among our children and through schools. I want to acknowledge all of my local schools and say how amazing they were during that time, both last year and this year.

I want to thank our businesses and acknowledge the challenges and difficulties our businesses have had—those that had to close their doors, those that have not reopened and those that lost a lot of income and some staff. I know that the tourism industry was hit very hard. Tourism is such an important part of the Moreton Bay region. We know that tourism business have done it tough and I acknowledge their hard work. It was wonderful to see some of those businesses and their efforts recognised as nominees at the Tourism Awards the other night. They have done a tremendous job.

So many amazing festivals were cancelled as well as big events. It is not easy as the health minister to come into 1 William Street on a Saturday morning to get a briefing from the Chief Health Officer knowing that you are about to ask for a major lockdown—the biggest one we have had in the state—and know that it is also the start of one of the biggest festivals in your own community that had been cancelled last year but that had started the night before and had record numbers of people expected over what was a beautiful weather weekend. Not only did they shut down, and our announcement was that at six o'clock that afternoon we expected everything to be shut; the moment they heard that announcement at 10 o'clock in the morning, they heeded our advice which was, 'Please go home now,' and they just cleared everyone out at 10 o'clock and said, 'This is the advice of the Chief Health Officer and our government. We are going to listen. We want to keep everyone safe. Go.' I thank them for their efforts.

To everyone who has worked so hard, I thank all of the people who have got vaccinated already at Redcliffe. We have really good numbers. Our seniors have come out in droves—fantastic vaccination numbers—but we have not got the whole community over 90 per cent double dosed, and that is what I want to see to keep us as well as the rest of the state all safe. I want to acknowledge the work that we did when I was the attorney-general working with QPS, health and DPC setting up the enforcement and compliance unit. That has stood us in such good stead because that allowed us to ensure that we could support the thousands and thousands of people who have home quarantined since April last year but also ensure their compliance which made sure that we contained the virus and kept people safe and ended up with the amazing numbers that we have today.

To all of the hotel quarantine workers and the hotels, thank you. I thank the hotels that became our hotel quarantine sites. That is not easy. It is not good to have your name up in lights when there is a breach or an outbreak in the hotel. They have done such a tremendous job and we would not have been able to contain this virus without them. To all of the testing and pathology teams—the public and private pathology teams—thank you for what you are doing and continue to do. For those in the COVID wards and putting yourself on the front line, thanks is not enough and you are absolute heroes to all of us. To every health worker in preparing and being ready every single day for that positive case that could walk in your door no matter where you are in Queensland, I thank you. To the vaccination teams that are doing such a great job, I know we have asked so much of all of you and we are still wanting you to do those hard yards because you are part of making history in keeping our community safe.

It is an absolute privilege and honour to work with each and every one of you every day. I know we have our challenges. I know taking on this portfolio was not going to be easy. I know that we have a lot of pressures on our health system and that is only going to be exacerbated by the virus coming through our community, and it is going to be such a trying time. We think we have had it tough in the last two years. It is going to be a trying time to start living with a virus that we just have not had widely spreading through our communities.

I checked the numbers yesterday and Victoria has had over 86½ thousand positive cases since mid-July. It has overtaken the number of cases that New South Wales has had since that first case on 16 June. There have been over 167,000 positive cases collectively in New South Wales, the ACT, Victoria and New Zealand—all from that one person back on 16 June—so we know what can happen. We know the devastation that can happen to health workforces and I thank the health workforce for coming out and getting vaccinated because they understand that this is about keeping them safe, our patients safe and the community safe and making sure they are there to do their jobs when the time comes when this virus starts moving through our community.

Throughout this most challenging year the Premier has made it clear that the health and safety of the Queensland people is the top priority of her government—our government—and we are so proud of the decisions she made. This was not politically easy. It was difficult. It was hard and these decisions have kept a lot of people awake at night, but that was all so that we could keep the death rate and the positive cases as low as we possibly could, and we have achieved that so far. On 31 October last year Queenslanders reaffirmed their faith in the Premier's leadership and as we work to address the challenges that our health system continues to confront in the face of rising demand we reiterate the Premier's message to them: we will not let you down.

I have said this before, but Redcliffe is not just a collection of suburbs; it is truly a community—a community which we have seen support each other each and every day, particularly during COVID-19. I am truly thankful for all of our community members, our not-for-profit organisations and community organisations that have continued to work together to support each other during the past year. I thank everyone who comes up to me in the shopping centre, everywhere I go—sporting events, community events—just to say thank you and to ask me to pass on their thanks to the Chief Health Officer and ask me to pass thanks on to the Premier and saying, 'Thank you to your government for what you're doing. Stick with it. We know it's the right thing and we support you in doing it.' I am proud to be the member for Redcliffe and I will continue to work each and every day on behalf of the people of Redcliffe and all Queenslanders.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Bush): Honourable members, the address-in-reply will be presented to Her Excellency the Governor at Government House at a time and date to be advised.

## MOTION

### Order of Business



**Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (4.56 pm): I move—

That government business orders of the day Nos 3 to 7 be postponed.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

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

### Long Title

Resumed from p. 3700, on motion of Ms Fentiman—

That the long title of the bill be agreed to.

to which Ms Fentiman had moved an amendment.

Amendment agreed to.

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

Motion agreed to.

## POLICE LEGISLATION (EFFICIENCIES AND EFFECTIVENESS) AMENDMENT BILL

Resumed from 16 September (see p. 2804).

### Second Reading



**Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (4.57 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

The Legal Affairs and Safety Committee has examined the Police Legislation (Efficiencies and Effectiveness) Amendment Bill 2021. The committee tabled its report on the bill on 1 November 2021. The report of the committee makes a single recommendation—that the bill be passed. I take this opportunity to thank the committee members for their examination of the bill. I also wish to express my gratitude to the work undertaken by the committee secretariat in supporting the committee.

As all in this House are aware, the Queensland Police Service continues to do more and more every day to keep the Queensland community safe. The debate on this bill occurs against the background of a global pandemic in which the Queensland Police Service continues to play an integral role in responding to the COVID-19 public health emergency. This government has supported our frontline police by delivering record funding to facilitate their quest in ensuring community safety.

This bill builds upon our support for the Queensland Police Service in the delivery of policing services to Queenslanders by optimising existing systems and processes. It is all about enhancing both the efficiency of police officers and their effectiveness. As I indicated in my introductory speech, enabling senior police officers to witness specified affidavits made by other police will save well over 20,000 hours of frontline officers' time annually. Efficiencies are also gained by enabling saliva testing as an alternative to urine testing for the purposes of targeted substance testing of police officers and certain civilian staff.

The bill enhances the effectiveness of the Queensland Police Service in investigating and prosecuting serious offences. The bill achieves this by expanding the circumstances in which a magistrate or Supreme Court judge can issue a digital access order requiring a person to unlock their digital device or provide police with access to their digital device which, of course, includes items such as smartphones and laptops.

Another change that will improve the effectiveness of the Queensland Police Service is the expansion of the definition of 'critical incident' for the purposes of conducting alcohol and substance testing of police and certain civilian officers. The amendments ensure effective oversight of an officer's actions and aids in ensuring public confidence in the Queensland Police Service is maintained.

The effectiveness of the Queensland Police Service is further supported by ensuring that the Commissioner of Police can authorise special constables and non-state police officers to exercise any or all of the powers that are available to a Queensland police officer. Importantly, the bill also improves the effectiveness of the permanent firearms amnesty in Queensland. This is achieved by enabling the Queensland Police Service to authorise participating firearms dealers to retain and deal with anonymously surrendered firearms and prescribed things where they are approved to do so by an authorised officer within the weapons licensing area of the Queensland Police Service.

Further efficiencies are gained through amendments to the Weapons Act that will enable approved civilian officers to use evidentiary certificates and the extension of the temporary safekeeping of firearms period from three months to six months. Regarding the permanent weapons amnesty, the government consulted closely with all stakeholders to ensure the amnesty not only supports community safety but also works in a way that is in everyone's interests. It is important to note that to support these amendments the Queensland Police Service has engaged with dealers and put in place an operational process for the collection of certain categories of weapons surrendered under the amnesty. I am advised that there is strong support from stakeholders for this process. The Shooters Union Australia president Graham Park has said—

We support the amendments put in place today to assure a workable national firearms amnesty. The shooters union looks forward to continuing to work with government and the Queensland Police Service to assist legitimate firearms users.

Jade Cleaver from the Firearms Dealers Association of Queensland says—

The firearms dealers industry has worked closely with the government to ensure these changes are in the best interests of our members. I'm pleased with where these changes have landed. We have always been a willing partner, working with government to ensure weapons don't end up in the wrong hands because our members are responsible and remain committed to community safety. And we believe the framework in place in Queensland is the best in the nation.

The safety of Queenslanders is paramount to the Palaszczuk government. The vision of the Queensland Police Service is 'Queensland—the safest state', and we will do all we can do to help the Queensland Police Service achieve this goal. This bill serves to underscore the Palaszczuk government's commitment to ensuring our police are operating within an effective and efficient legislative framework so that Queensland communities can continue to enjoy the safe and secure lifestyle we all seek to protect.

I take this opportunity to thank the Queensland Police Service legislation team for their hard work. I thank all departmental staff who have been involved in getting the bill to this point. I thank the committee, the committee secretariat and all those witnesses who appeared before the committee to provide their comments in respect of the bill. I commend the bill to the House and I encourage all members to support it.



**Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (5.03 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Police Legislation (Efficiencies and Effectiveness) Amendment Bill 2021. From the outset let me say that the LNP will not be opposing this bill for one simple reason and that is that the LNP supports our police in the difficult job they do and the LNP recognises the vital role that our police play in addressing crime in our community.

I note the bill includes, inter alia, amendments that authorise senior police officers to witness specified affidavits; amends section 801 of the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act—steps after issue of prescribed authority; access orders for seized digital devices; QPS alcohol and targeted substance testing; the appointment of special constables and non-state police officers to exercise the powers available to Queensland police officers; extending the time period for the temporary possession of weapons to six months; authorising civilian technical officers to issue evidentiary certificates for the Weapons Act; and enabling approved licensed firearms dealers to retain and deal with an anonymously surrendered firearm or prescribed thing. I note the objective of the bill is to improve the delivery of policing services, to reduce administrative processes, streamline police operations, increase productivity and improve the detection, prevention and disruption of crime, and who could argue with that.

It must be said that thanks to this government the job of our police officers is challenging and has become more difficult due to the escalation in crime, especially youth crime. The impact that youth crime is having on a lot of our communities throughout the state and, in particular, our communities in North Queensland, has been well documented. Throughout the state we are hearing about police being stretched, not just to their breaking point but well beyond it. It is an unquestionable credit to our police that despite their workload, exacerbated no doubt by the pandemic, our police have kept fighting the good fight and Queenslanders thank them for that.

As someone who has spent over 25 years in a police uniform I am acutely aware of the need to ensure that our police officers are out there on the street. This is especially relevant in rural, regional and remote communities—the communities where I spent the majority of my career. My personal experience and knowledge of policing in smaller centres is one of the reasons why I support the amendments to section 801 and section 801(4)(a) of the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act. I do, however, seek the minister's assurances that these changes are based solely on maximising the time police spend on operational duties and are not an attempt to cover this government's mistakes when it comes to ensuring police have the sufficient resources that they need to do their job.

I want to take a moment to provide some real world examples of the need to ensure police resources are available in regional centres. This example ties directly to the need for police documents to be witnessed by a JP or commissioner of declarations. This example is not one from my career, instead it is more recent and relates to a tragic event in my electorate of the Burdekin. Out of respect for the families involved I will not go into the specifics of this event that resulted in a coroner's inquest into the deaths of two men. Central to the inquest was the need for police to attend the residence of a justice of the peace to have an objection to bail affidavit witnessed. While it is not my place to comment on the findings of the coroner, this case is a good example where valuable police time was taken up by the need to have documents witnessed by a JP. I do note concerns raised with regard to the removal

of what may be seen as a safeguard. It is important to note, however, that the witnessing of these types of documents involve affirming the veracity of the contents of the document and do not involve any qualitative assessment of the contents by the witnessing officer.

All members on this side of the House, and I am sure all members of this House, find crimes against children abhorrent. As a result, I understand the need to expand the circumstances for the making of a digital access order and I acknowledge the need to ensure our laws keep pace with technological changes when tackling these horrendous crimes. It must also be noted that digital access orders are used when tackling other crime, such as drug trafficking. It is imperative that our police have the powers they need to prevent these types of crimes and the powers they need to bring offenders before the courts.

Once again we see what can best be described as loopholes in legislation and these are loopholes that need to be addressed. In this instance those loopholes are not the operation of the justice system, they are unintended consequences or outdated legislation that leads to offenders either not being charged or escaping punishment. I am sure that most Queenslanders would agree that it seems counterproductive for a judge, especially a Supreme Court judge, to be unable to issue a digital access order when a search warrant that resulted in the item being seized was issued by a JP. It is just as nonsensical for an item seized under the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act to not be covered under existing provisions. I would urge members to consider the example given in the explanatory notes to see just how nonsensical the current situation is.

Even when legislation is outdated we must always ensure rights, such as the right to privacy, are respected. It is, as always, a balancing act between rights and tackling crime. For that reason I welcome the fact that access to devices will be limited by the offence for which the device has been seized. I again urge all members to note the example given: that officers investigating child exploitation material would not be able to, for example, apply for access to bank account information.

I move to the amendments regarding alcohol and targeted substance testing. Critical incidents do occur within the Police Service. Incidents such as discharging a firearm or a death in custody are every police officer's worst nightmare. Public confidence in our police is critical especially in areas where crime is rampant, and those areas are rapidly expanding. The testing of police officers for alcohol and targeted substances is an important part of maintaining that public confidence. However, in a state as geographically large as Queensland it is completely impractical to require staff to travel from Brisbane to where the officer is stationed or working. In some parts of Queensland that travel could take days. Given the use of saliva testing for the detection of drug driving, it is sensible to apply the same technology and testing protocols for police officers. Saliva testing would also reduce the impacts on covert operations in relation to the periodic testing of operatives. An operative would not have to travel to another location to provide a urine sample and an officer authorised by the commissioner to take saliva samples would be able to take and test the samples discreetly.

I move to the issue of special constables and non-state police officers. All Queenslanders recognise the importance of law enforcement and emergency services being able to respond to the threat of or, even worse, an actual terrorist event. Therefore, it makes sense to provide those responders with the same powers as Queensland police officers. I ask the minister to clarify why this ambiguity has taken so long to address. After all, it is now 20 years since the threat of terrorism was escalated here in Queensland and, indeed, throughout the western world. I acknowledge that it is not just terrorism that triggers the need for these changes. Drug offences, child exploitation and other crimes transcend state and even national borders. Any efforts to target those offenders and bring them before a court will, where appropriate, be supported by the LNP. I also seek the minister's assurances that any person appointed as a special constable or granted the powers of a Queensland police officer is subject to the same oversight as Queensland police officers.

As members would be aware, the Burdekin electorate covers a huge geographic area that includes agriculture, horticulture and livestock grazing. Those industries are often impacted by feral animals and the challenges of grazing are all too familiar to anyone with knowledge of them. Given the industries in my electorate, weapons are a work tool for people. It is the amendments to weapons legislation where this government has serious questions to answer—questions that should have been answered and issues that should have been addressed a long time ago. In fact, this government's failure to act is confirmed in the minister's own explanatory notes.

Two years ago, a year before the last election, ministers from across the country agreed to a permanent national firearms amnesty yet here we are addressing an obvious inability to act in accordance with that agreement. We have a national amnesty that allows weapons to be forfeited

anonymously but, due to this government's failings, they have added more work to licensed firearms dealers trying to do the right thing. The explanatory notes state that the approach places 'unnecessary operational burdens on local police stations, many of which are in regional and remote communities with smaller staffing establishments.' In one breath this minister talks about the importance for efficiency when it comes to police but in the next he admits his government has failed police and, therefore, the people who rely on them. Is it any wonder that members on this side of the House have received so many complaints about weapons licensing issues when this minister cannot even get right the implementation of a permanent national amnesty?

Perhaps the minister would like to explain the obvious issues that have and still are affecting Weapons Licensing. It is important to remember that this deals with licensed weapons holders, that is, people who have demonstrated a need, people who have complied with the law in applying for that licence and people this government choose to ignore because the majority of those people live in regional and remote Queensland. Perhaps Weapons Licensing is also suffering from unnecessary operational burdens. Whatever the reason, we would appreciate that advice from the minister here today.

My office and a number of offices of members on this side of the House have been contacted numerous times by people whose renewals were delayed with no reason provided by the government. I have constituents who have been advised that their application for a weapons licence would take four to five months to process. I am sure that members would be as shocked as I am to hear that renewals paperwork has been lost not once but at least twice. Given the personal information contained on a renewal and the fact that the documents were lodged at two different police stations, one would have to wonder exactly what is going on, especially when on both occasions police staff attest to forwarding the documents to the Weapons Licensing branch. The information contained in a weapons licence application or renewal qualifies as sensitive information under the federal privacy act, but on no less than two—if not more—occasions that information has simply vanished. That is not good enough. The reality is that in Queensland under this government and this minister our homes have been put at risk. The safety of our very residences have been put at risk because that information has gone missing.

Currently, a weapons licence holder can store a firearm for other persons for up to three months. After that date the licensee must either acquire or dispose of the weapon. Excuse me for being sceptical but the amendment contained within this bill to extend that time to six months seems to be more about keeping firearms out of an overworked police firearms section than processing the applications in a timely manner. Of course it makes practical sense for approved licensed firearms dealers to retain and deal with an anonymously surrendered firearm or prescribed thing.

Given that the permanent firearms amnesty framework in Queensland does not currently allow firearms dealers who are approved to participate in the amnesty to retain firearms or other prescribed things, it adds even more work to police officers and establishments that are required to receive those firearms. It is the reality that in previous amnesties most firearms were surrendered to dealers. As a consequence, the broad participation of firearms dealers in the permanent amnesty is considered critical to its success. My problem here is not the bill per se; it is the confirmations given in both the bill and the explanatory notes—confirmations that are shown in statements like 'often insufficient' and 'unnecessary operational burdens' included in the explanatory notes tabled in this House.


As I said before, it is time for the minister to explain. It is time for the minister to explain why the backlogs are occurring in Weapons Licensing. It is time for the minister to explain why it took two years to properly implement a national firearms amnesty. It is time for the minister to explain why he has continually batted away questions about weapons licensing raised by members on this side of the House on behalf of constituents. Is it because the majority of them live in regional and remote Queensland? Is it because our Police Service is so overstretched responding to crime that weapons licensing has been overlooked? Is it because most of those people dare to work in an industry where weapons are a necessary tool?

I will not be opposing the bill and neither will the LNP because we value our police. On this side of the House there are numerous members who have donned the blue uniform. We understand the difference police make in our communities because we have seen the difference with our own eyes and contributed to it. Members on this side of the House have responded to crimes of all types. We have comforted victims, comforted their families and done our absolute best to hold offenders to account. Because we have been there, we understand the need for police to have the powers and resources they need to do their job. It is not always a pretty job. It is a job that leaves a mark on each and every person who has taken that oath. It is a job with great rewards and it is a job that can take a horrible toll. Police see the best and the worst of the community. They feel the frustration of victims and



hear of their fears. It is essential that Queensland's police be given the powers, the resources and the support they need to do their job. Queenslanders want and, today more than ever, need police to keep our communities safe. Those communities deserve answers from the minister here today.

I call on the minister to show his support for Queensland's police by providing answers to the issues raised as a result of this bill. I call on all members of the House to show their support for Queensland's police and communities throughout the state by supporting this bill today.

 **Mr RUSSO** (Toohey—ALP) (5.18 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Police Legislation (Efficiencies and Effectiveness) Amendment Bill 2021. This bill proposes a number of important amendments that will bolster the ability of police to do what they do best—that is, disrupting crime and keeping the community safe. The changes proposed in the bill include measures that make it easier for certain documents to be witnessed, particularly in regional and remote areas. This measure alone is anticipated to free up 22,000 hours of police time—valuable time and resources that can be returned to the front line. It strengthens the ability of police to obtain orders that allow access to devices such as mobile phones. This will improve the ability of police to investigate crimes like non-consensual sharing of images, upskirting and filming in change rooms. Criminals need to know that they cannot hide from these crimes behind a passcode.

These measures are further evidence of the commitment of the Palaszczuk government to keep Queenslanders safe. They build on our record investment in police resourcing: \$2.6 billion overall police budget—an increase of almost 20 per cent since we came to government; 2,025 extra police personnel over five years, including 1,450 sworn officers who will be deployed to the front line; more support staff for our police; more Policelink call takers; more police liaison officers; and more support personnel, which includes injury management officers for a new QPS wellbeing centre.

Thanks to this government's continued backing of our police force, we have more police than ever before—12,200—with many more on the way. Our \$300 million investment in the police infrastructure pipeline will deliver new police facilities across the state. This government has got the balance right: we are investing in people, we are investing in police infrastructure and we are modernising our laws so that we can stay one step ahead of criminals. We are creating a more efficient operating environment for our police so that they can get back onto the front line and into our communities.

We have passed tough laws to make the community safer, whether that is for domestic and family violence, sex offenders, stronger parole laws, youth crime, stronger bail laws, specialist courts, saving more children from the clutches of the darknet or new anti-hooning laws. I could go on, but my time is limited.

What is clear, though, from this bill and the other measures we have introduced since we came to government is that community safety is key and we will support our police so that they can continue to keep Queenslanders safe. What we will not do is take the LNP's approach. We will not commit to fewer police, like they did. We will not cut monitoring of sex offenders. We will not privatise prisons. We will not ignore our firefighters. We will not sack police. We will not make them pay for their own body worn cameras. We will not promise funding and then renege, like the LNP did, in relation to safe night out precincts. We will not fund failed boot camps to breed fitter, faster criminals. We will not tell police to tighten their belts. Instead, as we have done, we will give police what they need so they can keep the community safe.

In the time remaining to me, I will now go into more detail in relation to the Police Legislation (Efficiencies and Effectiveness) Amendment Bill and deal with some of the topics that are outlined in the legislation. I would like to compare Queensland with other jurisdictions in relation to the witnessing of affidavits. In the Northern Territory, any police officer can witness an affidavit without any limit with respect to the type of documents. In Victoria, a police officer at or above the rank of sergeant or an officer in charge of a police station can take an affirmation without any limit with respect to the type of documents. Affidavits are able to be witnessed electronically. In South Australia, all police officers, with the exception of probationary constables, may witness any affidavit. The amendments contained in the bill provide for a witnessing scheme that is more limited than the schemes in the jurisdictions outlined. It restricts the police witnessing function to senior police officers and to three types of affidavits.

I will now deal with another very important aspect of police work in relation to bail affidavits. Bail affidavits are completed by arresting officers to hold a person in custody after charging is completed. For a bail affidavit and a bail affidavit annexure to be accepted in the court, the form is required to be sworn or affirmed by the officer before a JP, who then signs the document. In 2020, as part of the Queensland Police Service Alignment Project, a review was undertaken of the work involved in

producing these bail affidavits. A time-in-motion study was completed with plain-clothes units in all the QPS districts to identify the time taken to locate an available JP to finalise these bail documents. The time taken to locate and attend to the JP ranged from 30 minutes to two hours. Workshops undertaken with officers from West Moreton identified that the average time cited by officers to locate and attend to a JP to have their documents sworn and signed was 60 minutes. For 2019, QPRIME recorded 10,982 bail affidavits uploaded onto the system. Bail affidavits uploaded as an external document would not appear in this count.

I would also like to conduct an interjurisdictional comparison in relation to bail affidavits. In Victoria, police officers provide sworn evidence in support of objection to bail. All other jurisdictions require police to prepare a document for the defendant's first appearance that outlines police objections to bail; however, this document is not required to be in the form of an affidavit.

Another important aspect of the bill is the provisions to enable police officers to prove service of documents by way of a memorandum or certificate of service without any witnessing requirements. In South Australia, police can prove service by the completion of a certificate of service and there is no requirement to witness the document. In Tasmania, police can prove service by way of a memorandum of service which is not required to be witnessed. In Western Australia, service can be achieved by a service certificate that is not required to be witnessed. In New South Wales, police can prove service by a statement of service that, again, is not required to be witnessed.

Some other jurisdictions require proof of service to be in the form of an affidavit. In Victoria, proof of service can be achieved by the completion of a statutory declaration or affidavit. Any police officer in Victoria can witness a statutory declaration. A police officer at or above the rank of sergeant or officer in charge of a police station can witness this affidavit. In the Northern Territory, proof of service is by way of an affidavit, with any police officer in the Northern Territory having the authority to witness affidavits. In the Australian Capital Territory, proof of service requires an affidavit.

The bill supports our Police Service to do its job by reducing the number of hours that its members are tied up doing administrative work. It is a positive step forward. As outlined, the bill will help in Queensland police efficiency and will be something that they welcome in their daily work. I commend the bill to the House.



**Mrs GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (5.28 pm): Queensland's police servicemen and servicewomen deserve our appreciation. For almost two years now our local police have been instrumental in executing this government's health directives in an effort to keep Queenslanders safe. In times of emergency, disaster and crisis, it is our Queensland Police Service that we turn to.

While I do not always agree with those on the other side of this chamber, I am sure that the dedication and service of our police officers is something that we can all agree on. I take this opportunity to say a massive thank you to the 1,700 employees currently working for the QPS, both police officers and other staff members alike. The service and dedication of our police officers, particularly at the moment with the added pressure of manning our state borders, deserves acknowledgement.

To every police officer manning our state border I say: your efforts have not gone unnoticed. I know many of them are very much looking forward to day when they can go back to normal duties and put the difficulties of border patrol behind them. I take this opportunity to give a shout-out to officers at my local police stations—the Coolangatta Police Station, the Palm Beach Police Station in the electorate of Burleigh, which covers most of the Currumbin electorate, and the Elanora Neighbourhood Police Beat.

On this side of the House it is our hope that this bill will be a success. Our police deserve our help in streamlining their administrative responsibilities and making them more efficient and effective so our Queensland police officers can get back to what is truly important—keeping our community safe. Administrative tasks should not be occupying the majority of our local police officers' time, which is why it was so devastating to hear during the committee's public briefing how much police time is taken up on the administrative matter of having to find a JP or a commissioner of declarations to witness a police officer's affidavit, particularly in relation to bail affidavits. One of the amendments proposed by this bill will enable senior police officers, which include watch house managers, to witness specified affidavits, including bail affidavits.

To put this into perspective, Deputy Commissioner Smith said that the QPS had calculated that this has the potential to save almost 22,000 hours of frontline police time annually. This is an incredibly significant amount of time. I am sure that the local police officers at the Coolangatta Police Station and the Palm Beach Police Station will be looking forward to having their administrative hours replaced by time in the community.

For us, this could mean police might now be freed up to have a presence in the mornings in Coolangatta to deter the increased number of youth offenders and other offenders under the influence of drugs who are harassing locals and shop owners. Last week I held a mobile office in Coolangatta and heard from Russel who owns and operates a cafe in Coolangatta. He spoke to me about how over the past couple of weeks he has been harassed by drug affected individuals and youths when he goes to open his shop at the crack of dawn. Our police resources are so stretched at the moment. I sincerely hope this timesaving measure will help police patrol local business areas to deter break and enters and violence.

We also need more police patrols in the suburbs of Currumbin and Elanora to protect locals from the escalating incidents of youth crime.

**Mr Lister** interjected.

**Mrs GERBER:** I take that interjection. They could do that. Just last week we saw a 15-year-old Currumbin Waters kid arrested while trying to allegedly break into cars. This youth was also in a fight in a Gold Coast park where he is accused of slashing another teenager's forearm with a weapon. The mother of the victim has stated that her son's tendons, nerves and arteries in his forearm were severed during the attack. This is an horrific incident. It is not the first incident of youth crime in my electorate. I have been contacted by countless locals affected by juvenile crime, particularly theft, hooning and break and enters.

The other measures in this bill include ensuring the Police Commissioner can authorise special constables and non-state police officers to exercise any or all powers available to a Queensland police officer. These are the powers that allow our police, particularly on the border, to exercise their authority in other states. This is particularly important for us on the border. No doubt this amendment has come about as a result of COVID and our state border controls unveiling the difficulties of cross-border policing.

Other measures include: amending the meaning of critical incident for the purpose of triggering alcohol and targeted substance testing of police officers and certain Public Service officers; providing for saliva testing as an alternative to urine testing for police officers and certain Public Service officers in relation to the substance testing scheme for police; enabling a sworn, authorised technical officer to utilise evidentiary certificates in relation to the categorisation of a weapon; and enabling an authorised officer from the Queensland Police Service Weapons Licensing Branch to approve a licensed firearms dealer to retain and deal with a firearm or prescribed thing anonymously surrendered under the permanent firearms amnesty. This is something that was recommended to have occurred at least two years ago.

I turn now to the two areas of the bill that require closer scrutiny. The first relates to the proposed expansion of power allowing a Supreme Court judge or magistrate to make a digital access order within the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act. Currently, the PPR Act allows a magistrate or Supreme Court judge to make an access order for a digital device following the seizure of a digital device in circumstances where that device was seized under an existing search warrant and where further access is required. A digital access order compels a person to provide police with access to information stored on the seized device. Should the specified person fail to comply with the access order, they commit an offence which has a maximum penalty of five years imprisonment.

The amendment overcomes an anomaly in the PPR Act where the current digital access order scheme does not permit a magistrate or Supreme Court judge to make an order where a digital device is seized under a search warrant issued by a justice of the peace or otherwise lawfully seized under the PPR Act. Whilst the expansion of the powers in the bill are designed to simply overcome an anomaly within the context of what is currently permitted, we still must be cognisant to maintain people's privacy. These powers must be balanced with the fact that a search by the QPS of a person's mobile phone device is highly invasive and should be treated accordingly by those investigating.

The second aspect of this bill that needs scrutiny pertains to extending the time frames that a licensed person can temporarily hold a weapon on behalf of another weapons licensee, extending it from three months to six months.

**Mr Stevens** interjected.

**Mrs GERBER:** I heard that yawn, member for Mermaid Beach. There is a massive backlog of weapons licence applications. This amendment is proposed to ease the burden on the state government's already underperforming Weapons Licensing Branch. The fact that this amendment is needed is an admission that the Palaszczuk Labor government has not provided the Weapons Licensing Branch with the resources they need to handle the current workload.

During the committee process the President of the Shooters Union Queensland, Mr Park, stated—

We are deeply concerned that the reason this is being introduced is that the Weapons Licensing Branch are so far behind in the processing of licensing. They are literally months behind any other state in Australia. You can get licence applications processed anywhere from two to 12 weeks around the country. By their own statement, the weapons branch are not even beginning to look at processing an application until at least 20 weeks after it is submitted.


This is simply not good enough. Those are Mr Park's words. There are concerns that by extending this time period it may allow a facilitator further delay in that process. This is something I would like the police minister to address and assure this House that this will not happen. Mr Park raised a further issue, stating—

Our objections are really rooted in the lack of consultation on these amendments which has led, we believe, to poorly worded legislation.

Public consultation is central and foundational to the cornerstone of meaningful policy and legislation. It is an element of the policy development process that society expects their government to rely upon. This is for two core reasons. Firstly, it allows the evidence base to be built. Secondly, it engenders transparency in the process of policy development.

Time and time again we see this government fail in their duty to consult and their duty to be transparent. We on this side of the House know that evidence and transparency are two things this government, after three very long terms, has lost sight of. It is with this in mind that I ask the minister to take care to ensure that the concerns expressed by stakeholders who actually had the opportunity to consult on this bill once it was drafted are taken into consideration. That being said, I am truly looking forward to seeing the other amendments presented by this bill come into effect, especially with the hope that it might free up our police from some of their administrative burdens.

Finally, as the deputy chair of the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee to which this bill was referred, I take this opportunity to thank every member who was involved in the committee process, particularly the chair who was particularly good in his mediation, and all members for their work.

 **Ms BUSH** (Cooper—ALP) (5.38 pm): I rise in support of the Police Legislation (Efficiencies and Effectiveness) Amendment Bill 2021. As I stand to speak about police efficiencies and effectiveness, I am acutely aware of the demand on our police service not only in Queensland but also nationally right now. Mr Deputy Speaker, I would like to just pause for a moment and share a personal reflection.

Coincidentally on this day 21 years ago our family made the decision to turn off the life support for my father, who then subsequently and immediately passed away. He was hospitalised with a subdural hematoma brought about through a domestic assault. I think it is important to share this whenever I speak about police or justice because the work that they do is so vital. As a victim of homicide—in fact, victims of any serious violent assault—it is with you forever. Even 21 years later, it still stays with you. I think that is really important to reflect on. I know that everyone in this House does really appreciate that.

Since that time I have had the opportunity to work with hundreds of men and women serving as Queensland police officers. I am not going to stand here and say that the service or the officers get it right all the time, but what I will say is that in my personal and professional experience our officers are highly professional. They are very courageous. They are devoted to community safety. I would speculate that they will be pleased to see the changes introduced through this bill which will enable them to prioritise what matters most in their area of work—which is keeping people safe.

There are very few professions where you are literally putting your life on the line when you walk out the door—and in fact I have worked with family members of serving officers who did not make it home. So it disappoints me greatly to see some of the social media occurring at the moment actively encouraging civil disobedience—actively encouraging people to occupy places in a deliberate attempt to apply pressure to the resources of Queensland police.

Our officers ought to be out there keeping victims of domestic and family violence safe. They ought to be investigating child protection matters. They ought to be operating random breath testing to keep our roads safe. They have better places to be than to be called out to a cafe to explain why someone is not being served their cappuccino. I share that because I really want to impress on the community the importance of our Police Service and keeping them freed up to do the work that they need to be doing.

The objective of the bill is to improve the delivery of policing services; reduce administrative processes; streamline police operations; increase productivity; and improve the detection, prevention and disruption of crime. Our Queensland Police Service is gold standard. It has kept Queenslanders safe during the pandemic. The incredible work and dedication of our frontline workers, including police, means Queensland is in a position to recover from the pandemic faster than other states.

Our response has been world leading and it is because of the work that the police are doing. It is the reason we can focus on our economic recovery, and this supports jobs and growth. While our police have supported us through the pandemic, we are supporting police with a record investment in police personnel—over 2,000 additional police personnel. As we make this investment, it is also important that our police are given the tools and legislative framework so that they can do their jobs as efficiently as possible because we know this helps keep communities safe.

This bill enhances the way police do things on a number of fronts, freeing up valuable police time so that our officers can spend more time on the front line disrupting crime and bolstering community safety. It also builds on the strong accountability framework for police, further enhancing public confidence in our world-class police service. I will speak to some of the key proposals in this bill first and then outline the benefits that those changes will bring to Queensland.

The objective of the bill will be achieved through amendments to the Oaths Act to enable senior police officers to witness certain affidavits, in addition to a justice of the peace or a commissioner for declarations; enable the Commissioner of Police to authorise special constables and non-state police officers to exercise powers available to Queensland police officers; allow police to apply for an access order to a digital device in circumstances where the device was seized under a search warrant issued by a JP or where the device was otherwise lawfully seized; improve drug and alcohol-testing procedures for police officers involved in critical incidents; extend the permitted 'safe keeping' period under the Weapons Act 1990 to six months; improve the operation of the permanent firearms amnesty in relation to firearms anonymously surrendered to approved licensed firearms dealers; and enable authorised civilians to use evidentiary certificates for weapons classifications.

The key benefit of course, as others have spoken to, is the freeing up of thousands of hours of police time by allowing senior police officers to witness certain documents, rather than requiring police to attend before a JP or a commissioner for declarations. This is particularly important in regional and rural areas where the services of a JP are much harder to come by. In remote localities, the time frames for this work can expand out to an officer's entire shift. This amendment alone is estimated to save up to 22,000 hours of frontline officer time annually. These measures will ensure more hours are spent on the front line to better protect the community.

The bill expands the circumstances where a magistrate or Supreme Court judge may issue a digital access order requiring a person to provide a password or encryption code allowing police to access information stored on digital devices such as mobile phones. This will bolster the ability of the police to investigate crimes such as upskirting and revenge porn and builds on changes to the Criminal Code introduced by this government. We know digital devices are increasingly being used in such offences and it is vital police have the power to investigate and disrupt these crimes.

The bill will amend the Police Service Administration Act to enable the commissioner to allow non-state police officers to exercise powers held by QPS officers so that, where necessary, these officers who are primarily interstate police officers can carry out their duties effectively in Queensland because of their work location or the type of work they are involved in.

The bill will amend the Weapons Act to reduce the administrative burden in certain circumstances such as administration of deceased estates. The Weapons Act will also be amended to strengthen the current firearms amnesty framework to ensure the great results already seen in Queensland under the amnesty can continue.

The bill proposes amendments to the Police Service Administration Act relating to testing police officers and certain unsworn staff when they are involved in a critical incident. Accountability of our service and its officers is important.

What the committee heard was that the definition of critical incident is too limiting when the need for oversight of an officer's actions is legally required and necessary to ensure public confidence in police. We also heard that the act does not currently capture the situation where a police officer accidentally discharges a firearm in circumstances that caused or could have caused injury to a person. Clearly critical incidents create high amounts of scrutiny, as they should, and anxiety for everyone involved.


The committee heard that individual officers want to immediately assure everyone that they are not under the influence of any substance—just as much as the public are seeking that transparency and assurance. The proposed amendments will also provide for saliva testing of officers in these circumstances—a much more rapid and less invasive test to administer.

I want to thank the stakeholders who provided critical feedback to the committee, both through written and in-person submissions. As a result of stakeholder feedback, the bill was amended to restrict the level of police officer who can take an affidavit for prescribed documents to a 'senior police officer'. Additionally, the Queensland Police Service will develop policy to place additional obligations on senior police officers, including to turn their mind to any potential conflicts of interest—if the officer were involved in the investigation, for example.

The bill was also amended to limit the witnessing of objection to bail affidavits under the Bail Act and the Youth Justice Act by audiovisual link only to circumstances where it is not reasonably practicable to take the affirmation and witness documents in the physical presence of the officer.

Like I said, the Palaszczuk government is bolstering the Police Service and community safety not only through the historic investment in personnel and resources but also through efficiencies in the tools and frameworks police use in their daily duties.

I thank and acknowledge the work of my colleagues on the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee and the secretariat for doing another fantastic job. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (5.47 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the Police Legislation (Efficiencies and Effectiveness) Amendment Bill 2021. Before I start I would like to acknowledge the contribution made by the member for Cooper. The experience she had when she was younger I do not think you would wish upon anybody. It would have a lasting impact on anybody. The advocacy work that she has done since I think is respected and admired by all of us in this place regardless of political affiliations.

This bill proposes a number of amendments to streamline various legal procedures. The first of these that I wish to speak to is the amendments relating to the Oaths Act 1867 and the creation of the Oaths Regulation 2021. The explanatory notes state that thousands of hours of police officers' time is consumed by officers having to locate and attend before a justice of the peace or a commissioner for declarations to swear an oath of service or declare or affirm the veracity of information contained in the document. This amendment would allow senior police officers to witness affidavits made by other police officers.

This amendment has been facilitated by the passing of the Justice Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response—Permanency) Amendment Bill, which has amended the Oaths Act. This will restrict the witnessing function of police officers to a senior police officer who is: an officer in charge of a station or establishment or watch house or a police officer nominated to be in charge of a police station or establishment or watch house in the absence of the officer in charge; or a watch house manager, a police officer of or above the rank of sergeant. This legislation will prescribe senior police officers as persons who can witness the affidavit of another police officer in particular circumstances and enable the witnessing of prescribed affidavits on a physical document or in the form of an electronic document, including the use of electronic signatures by audiovisual link.

Affidavits used in bail proceedings are completed by arresting officers to inform the court of information relevant to determining whether a person should be bailed or remanded in custody. The explanatory notes state that the analysis of 6,321 bail affidavits revealed that the time taken to locate and attend a JP range from 30 minutes to two hours—with an average of 60 minutes—to have a document sworn and signed. The impact for policing in remote localities is often more significant. On some occasions, an officer's entire shift is spent driving to a regional centre to have the objection to bail documents witnessed. The QPS stated at the public hearing—

To give the committee some idea of the scope of this work, I can tell you that in the calendar year 2009 some 10,982 bail affidavits were completed by Queensland police. By enabling senior police officers, which will include a watch house manager, to witness bail affidavits, as this bill proposes, we have calculated has the potential to save almost 22,000 hours of police time annually.

In this regard, the bill proposes to amend section 801 of the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act, which would enable the issuing authority to send a copy of the prescribed authority to a police officer or law enforcement officer via email and other forms of electronic communication.

This legislation also amends access orders for seized digital devices. Under the PPRA the police have various powers in relation to the power to examine seized things; however, the Queensland Police Service stated that 'technology has enabled new methods of offending', including that 'enhancements

in encryption and electronic storage of information have made it easier to conceal and prevent access to evidence'. However, the current digital access order scheme does not permit a magistrate or Supreme Court judge to make an order where a digital device is seized under a search warrant issued by a JP or otherwise lawfully seized under the PPRA. Furthermore, if a magistrate or Supreme Court judge makes an order in a search warrant, but for reasons beyond police control the digital device is seized under a provision of the PPRA and not the search warrant, police cannot apply for a further access order. The explanatory notes state—

For example, if police locate a person using a mobile phone to take unauthorised pictures of another person in a communal change room and lawfully seize the mobile phone at that location, they cannot apply for a digital access order.

Other examples include instances where police intercept a person in relation to a matter and subsequently discover drugs, firearms and multiple mobile phones. Although the digital devices were lawfully seized, they were not seized under a search warrant issued by a magistrate or Supreme Court judge and an access order cannot be sought. The police already have the power to seize, examine and search a digital device, but these amendments to the bill extend this to include the power for a magistrate or a Supreme Court judge to make an order where a digital device is seized under the search warrant issued by a JP or otherwise lawfully seized under the PPRA. The bill only permits the making of access orders where a magistrate or a Supreme Court judge is satisfied there are reasonable grounds for suspecting there is evidence on the digital device of a crime scene threshold offence or an offence against the Criminal Code.

In relation to protecting the confidentiality of information that may be accessed on the device, the committee notes the Queensland Police Service's advice that the Police Service Administration Act creates an offence for the improper disclosure of information which has come to the officer's knowledge through their employment in the QPS.

I will now go to the amendments to the Weapons Act, which amend clauses 32 and 33 to extend temporary possession from three months to six months to provide the unlicensed owner with an appropriate time to address the reason for temporary storage, such as when a person's weapons licence expires, is suspended due to court or serious health matters, or during the administration of deceased estates. The bill proposes to do this by amending section 35 and section 36 of the Weapons Act to extend the time frames under which appropriately licensed persons can temporarily hold a licence on behalf of other weapons licensees from three months to six months.


As the member for Burdekin stated, this is something that regional members often have coming through their offices. I have lost count of the number of these cases we have. Sometimes it is just a simple renewal of a licence where the circumstances of the licence holder have not changed and their occupation has not changed, but for some reason they are asked to go through a long process which literally can take months. Anything we can do to speed that up will be supported. My fear is that, as has already been stated by the member for Currumbin, this is being used to cover for a shortfall of resources and funding in the licensing section of the Police Service. This is not going to the root problem. It will help to meet time lines but it is not going to the root cause of these delays, so I would encourage the minister to put some more resources into that department.

We will be supporting all of this bill. If there is anything that can get police officers away from their desks, get them out on active service on the streets on patrol, we will support it. They spend a lot of time going through unnecessary paperwork. I had a chuckle when I read the title of the bill, 'efficiencies and effectiveness', because we have not seen a lot of that out of this government, and anything they can do to streamline the bureaucracy and paperwork that is keeping police officers tied to their desks we will support. We support this legislation.

Debate, on motion of Mr Weir, adjourned.

## COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

### Portfolio Committees, Reporting Dates and Referral of Auditor-General's Reports

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (5.57 pm): I seek to advise the House of determinations made by the Committee of the Legislative Assembly at its meeting today. The committee has resolved, pursuant to standing order 136, that the Economics and Governance Committee report on the Police Service Administration and Other Legislation Amendment Bill by 11 February 2022; and the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee report on the Evidence and Other Legislation Amendment Bill by 11 February 2022.

The committee has resolved, pursuant to standing order 194B, that Auditor-General's Report 3: 2021-22, *Water 2021*, be referred to the State Development and Regional Industries Committee; and Auditor-General's Report 4: 2021-22, *2021 status of Auditor-General's recommendations*, be referred to the Economics and Governance Committee.

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

### Parliamentary Sitting Calendar



**Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (5.58 pm): I am sure members will be very pleased to know that I wish to table the 2022 Queensland parliament sitting calendar.

*Tabled paper:* Memo, dated 18 November 2021, from the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services and Leader of the House, Hon. Yvette D'Ath, to members of the Parliament, advising of the 2022 parliamentary sitting calendar [\[1975\]](#).

## ADJOURNMENT

### Everton Volunteer Awards



**Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (5.59 pm): Last Sunday we celebrated the annual Everton Volunteer Awards which is a great celebration of those in my community who give up their time and sacrifice so much to serve their communities in a whole range of different ways. We have four categories—a community volunteer of the year, a sports volunteer of the year, a school volunteer of the year and a young volunteer of the year, who is under 25—and an overall volunteer of the year. Our overall volunteer of the year this year is Charles Tibbitts, who is president of the Everton Wolves AFL club.

**Mr Stewart:** Yeah!

**Mr MANDER:** Do you know that club?

**Mr Stewart:** I was an original foundation player.

**Mr MANDER:** I will take that interjection from the member for Townsville, an original player of the Everton Wolves. Charles Tibbitts is a great volunteer who gives up so much time to be the president and a jack-of-all-trades. He is a very worthy winner.

Our community volunteer of the year went to David Rees. David is with the Bunya Lions Club. The Bunya Lions Club are unbelievable in their service to my community—whether it is doing sausage sizzles or fundraisers for different charities. We have the community carols by candlelight coming up soon at West Mitchelton which the Bunya Lions are hosting. David is one of those hardworking volunteers and he has done a fantastic job for many years.

Our sports volunteer of the year went to Andrew Chapman from the Albany Creek GPS Brumbies Rugby Club. He has done an enormous amount of volunteer work there. He is a really gracious gentleman. In fact, he had to leave the volunteer awards pretty quickly because he had to go and referee some football games. Obviously, as a referee, he is an incredibly intelligent person and well respected amongst the community.

The school volunteer of the year went to Beki Dixon. Beki is the president of the Everton Park State School P&C and she has done a great job there. One of the things they are doing at the moment is bringing the after-school care back into the P&C which will be a great revenue generator for them.

The young volunteer of the year was Robyn Matthews from the SES at Arana Hills. It is great to see young people giving back to our community in a really positive way. She is a great role model for people of her age.

We were entertained by Blue Sky Harmony, which is an a cappella group. They were brilliant. If you want to go out and enjoy yourself and join an amateur singing group, Blue Sky Harmony is the group for you. Thank you to the volunteers who make Everton the best place to live, work and play in Queensland.

### Logan, Coronavirus Vaccination



**Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (6.02 pm): Queenslanders have the great ability of always rising to the occasion—whether that is on the sporting field, in business or industry, and right now with our state's COVID-19 vaccination rollout. When supply



became readily available for our state after a long wait, our COVID vaccination rates started spiking—first steadily and now significantly. Our state has recently moved past 80 per cent first dose vaccination and beyond 70 per cent second dose vaccination. Those rates are growing every day.

Very pleasingly, the Logan community has been a key driver of our increase in vaccination rates. When the call went out to get vaccinated, the people of Logan answered, as they always do. In the latest vaccination figures released by the Australian government, Logan currently sits at 80.1 per cent first dose and 64.7 per cent second dose.

**Mr Power:** Hear, hear!

**Mr DICK:** I will take the interjection from the member for Logan. This is a big improvement from where we were just one month ago—an increase of 13.1 per cent on first vaccine doses and 17.4 per cent on double doses.

**Mrs D'Ath:** That's fantastic.

**Mr DICK:** I take the interjection from the Minister for Health; it is a fantastic result. This has only been made possible through the collective efforts of our local health workers, schools, GPs, pharmacists, multicultural leaders and community groups. Most importantly, these numbers are a credit to every resident of our great city of Logan who has rolled up their sleeve to be vaccinated. I want to thank each and every one of them for that. By going out and getting vaccinated, residents of the Woodridge electorate—and I want to thank the residents of the Woodridge electorate—and the city of Logan have chosen to protect their loved ones, our community, our state and our nation. It is a simple yet selfless act and one that will save lives.

Our government cannot and will not rest in our efforts to get more Queenslanders vaccinated ahead of our border reopening next month. That is why we are conducting another weekend vaccination blitz at schools across the state. In Logan, this includes Mabel Park State High School, Park Ridge State High School in the electorate of Logan and Shailer Park State High School—hubs that will be operating on Saturday. We saw 9,400 Queenslanders vaccinated at our schools last week—the majority getting their first dose, I am pleased to say—and this weekend we are aiming to deliver 10,000 vaccine doses.

The COVID-19 vaccine is the single best ticket out of this pandemic. As we are reminded by what is happening in large parts of Europe right now, there is a heavy and tragic price to pay for low vaccination rates. To the people of the Woodridge electorate, if you have not already done so, please go and get vaccinated. It is the best possible decision you can make to beat the virus and the best way to keep yourself, your family and our community safe.

### Chatsworth Electorate, Makeables



**Mr MINNIKIN** (Chatsworth—LNP) (6.05 pm): I want to acknowledge the success of a wonderful organisation in my electorate of Chatsworth—that being the fantastic new business partnership between the Smith's chips factory and the Multicap's Makeables team based in Tingalpa. Many members in the chamber tonight may have heard of the organisation Multicap. I think what they do is particularly impactful, as their primary focus is to provide people from all walks of life with every opportunity needed to thrive. In making this happen, they offer several experiences and services that provide creative and social pleasure for their clients, as well as community hubs and housing which are tailored to suit the individual and families' needs.

In their pursuit to help clients with employment and training opportunities, they discovered there was not much out there so they decided to start their own employment service which would fill this gap to facilitate employment pathways for people with disability. They now have three businesses, and one of these is the mighty Makeables team who offer reliable and cost-effective services to businesses who require manual production and distribution tasks to be completed, like packaging and finishing. Every time I visit their warehouse at Tingalpa, I am pleased to learn about the incredible brands and local businesses they have partnered with and the new projects they are working on.

It brought me great delight to hear about Makeables most recent business partnership with the Smith's chips factory also in my Chatsworth electorate. When you are next at your local supermarket reaching for a packet of Red Rock Deli chips, you can put them in the shopping trolley knowing it may have been packed and sealed with love by the Makeables team in Tingalpa.

I want to thank the team leaders and warehouse managers at Multicap who have helped lead, support and mentor the Makeables team since the very beginning. I want to also make special mention of Multicap's general manager, Tony Burns OAM, who has recently been awarded an Order of Australia

medal in the general division for his dedicated service to people with disabilities. When I last visited, he said something to me which I believe is very powerful. He said, 'If you're having a bad day, I guarantee visiting one of our facilities will turn your day around.' I can attest to this, as every time I visit the employees at Makeables, their smiles speak for themselves. It is rare to walk around a workplace and see how genuinely happy everyone is.

Multicap has transformed the lives of so many people with disabilities. It is humbling to support an organisation that continues to make a positive impact within the Chatsworth community and beyond. I look forward to seeing what is next for Makeables. It is safe to say the employees are stoked about their new gig with Smith's chips. Speaking of gigs, I am also looking forward to being their guest DJ at their forthcoming employee Christmas party, and the playlist will be awesome.

### Holmes, Ms E



**Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (6.07 pm): Right now, there are many things to celebrate. We have done an incredible job staying safe in this pandemic. Queenslanders are living their lives with so many freedoms. We have been through so much since the virus first started in 2020, and now we have hope for the future. It is important for us all to recognise how far we have come in the past few months alone.

I was recently reminded of this by a constituent of my local community of Redcliffe. Redcliffe resident Eileen Holmes celebrated her 100th birthday in October, and I am sure the House joins me in wishing her a very happy birthday. What a milestone birthday for Eileen. Her daughter Moira reached out to me and shared with me a very special poem that one of Eileen's friends had penned, and I wanted to share it with the House today. It is aptly titled *100 Years*, and this is it—

This year of 2021, we thought, would end the COVID curse,

But sadly, it would seem, that it has only become worse.

Lockdowns in the southern states surely is an order

Here we look and wonder, will Delta leap the N.S border?

The world, no matter where we look, we see a tale of woe,

And we tend to stay at home as there's nowhere much to go.

But this year has a meaning, a most important date

Because Eileen turns 100 and we all want to celebrate.

She really is a role model, we look on her with respect

She is so very spritely, her yoga discipline effect.

She's been a world traveller, she said the reason why

She'd so much rather travel than sit home and wait to die.

She drives her car, plays scrabble and often has a win

With a family in New Zealand she not often sees her kin.

So we will have a party and, of course a birthday cake

Blowing out 100 candles, is that too much to undertake!

So Eileen, please know we wish you all the best

To reach such a milestone, we all are most impressed.

May you stay well for some time yet, enjoy the celebration

Telegram coming from the Queen, it's truly a great occasion!

I want to thank her daughter and her friend who penned that wonderful poem. I know that it is because we have all done such a brilliant job in getting vaccinated and following the health advice that Eileen was able to have her party and birthday cake, too, with her friends, just as she wanted to. On behalf of all of us, I say happy birthday to Eileen and to all of those who celebrated such a special milestone over the last two years, although not everyone got to celebrate it with family and friends. This is all about keeping all of them safe. Happy birthday, Eileen.

### Theodore Electorate



**Mr BOOTHMAN** (Theodore—LNP) (6.10 pm): Multiple residents have expressed their concerns about the proposed intersection upgrade at Maudsland Road and Beaudesert Nerang Road. Many residents agree that a safety upgrade is needed. They are nonetheless concerned that some logical improvements have not been incorporated into the design. In particular, these residents have requested that the department reconsider the decision not to install a 'turn left at any time with care' lane from Maudsland Road onto Beaudesert Nerang Road. The current design forces motorists wishing to turn left to stop at the intersection and wait for a signal change before they can continue. The installation of a 'turn left at any time with care' lane will reduce queuing and will reduce the amount of time the traffic signals need to be activated. This would allow for a freer flow of traffic on Beaudesert Nerang Road. I believe that these are reasonable requests by residents, and I hope the minister and his department hear these concerns.

Another issue of concern was the Oxenford hard rock quarry. On 21 August 2019, I asked the Parliamentary Library to research the buffer zone requirements for key resource areas in relation to hard rock mining, specifically with regard to dust, noise and vibration. The *State Planning Policy—state interest guideline: Mining and extractive resources* states—

Separation area—the area surrounding the resource/processing area that is required in order to maintain separation from people who may be affected by residual impacts such as noise, dust and ground vibrations of existing or future extractive operations within the resource/processing area. This area is designed to maintain an adequate buffer between extractive operations and incompatible uses.

The minimum distance is 200 metres for resources that do not require blasting or crushing to extract (sand, gravel and clay) and 1000 metres for hard rock resources as blasting and crushing of material is required. In some cases the separation area may be less than the minimum distances in consideration of local features such as topography or existing development commitments.

In reference to a *Gold Coast Bulletin* article, the Gold Coast council officers recommended a full approval, knowing that the quarry is within a short distance of residential properties, far less than the 1,000 metres—about 150 metres—and topographical terrain cannot compensate for a such a small distance. Therefore, what is the point of the state requiring buffer zones around key resource areas—hard rock quarries—when council officers simply ignore them?

### Food Connect



**Mr RUSSO** (Toohey—ALP) (6.13 pm): I rise tonight to talk about a great enterprise in my electorate. The Food Connect Foundation is a not-for-profit organisation based in Salisbury. Food Connect's vision is for a world where all people have access to healthy, nutritious food that is fair to growers, the planet and everyone in between. Food Connect has been doing this by advocating for a fairer food system through events and demonstration projects and supporting small food and farming entrepreneurs.


Food Connect's name is synonymous with local ethical value chains, and the establishment of the first small-scale milling operation in modern Brisbane is an extension of that vision. The Salisbury flour mill represents a unique opportunity to embrace and refine old skills related to the trade of hands-on flour milling. The flour mill will be used to process lower volumes, specifically to provide local artisans and households with the freshest flour possible. It is a chance not just to revive an old craft but to be part of a new, shorter supply chain, one with stronger connections between grower, baker and the community that you will not find in large industrial mills. In doing this, Food Connect will improve local food resilience and cultural connections to native grasses.

Thanks to a successful grant from the state government's Gambling Community Benefit Fund, the Food Connect Foundation was recently able to buy a small-scale flour mill that is housed at the Food Connect shed in Salisbury.

It is important to highlight Food Connect's vision for its flour mill. Grain will be sourced from local regenerative growers, with an emphasis on native grasses and organic cereals, to create fresh flour products for sale, both wholesale and direct to the public, through its sister organisation Food Connect, and for use in the shed's commercial kitchen. The grant funded Food Connect to commission the manufacture of the mill by Woodstock Flour and will allow Food Connect to focus on wraparound support for a trainee miller, a young Indigenous trainee, along with mill room infrastructure and marketing and sales support. Stage 2 of the project will see an onsite baker, and the mill will be commissioned by third parties to create custom flour blends for local restaurants and food makers.

The mill came into being as a collaboration with Woodstock Flour, which has been running its own small-scale flour mill in Berrigan in New South Wales. Rob from Food Connect teamed up with Ian, Courtney and Hamish, who were able to source granite locally in New South Wales, as well as steel and bearings for the mill to operate. When the times comes that can all be replaced with local supplies, in keeping with Food Connect's philosophy.

### Coronavirus Vaccination, Enforcement

 **Mr ANDREW** (Mirani—PHON) (6.16 pm): I rise to make a contribution about the arguably unlawful mandating that is happening here in Queensland. Under the Queensland Human Rights Act 2019, section 17 explicitly rules out 'cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment ... or treatment without a person's full, free and informed consent'. Section 19 of the Human Rights Act 2019 states—

Every person lawfully within Queensland has the right to move freely within Queensland and to enter and leave it ...

Surely 'move freely' means that unvaccinated Queenslanders can go for a coffee with a mate at their cafe. Section 20(2) of the Human Rights Act 2019 states—

A person must not be coerced or restrained in a way that limits the person's freedom to have or adopt a religion or belief.

The COVID-19 Emergency Response Act 2020 specifically states under 'Application of Act'—

This Act applies despite any other Act or law other than the *Human Rights Act 2019*.

This clearly and irrefutably means that the Human Rights Act 2019 cannot be overridden or derailed by emergency response acts. This means that the Human Rights Act 2019 must still be observed, even with the use of emergency powers.


The deceptive narrative at the moment is that if you are not vaccinated, you cannot go to a coffee shop or movie or visit a loved one in hospital, but the fact is that when these mandates violate our human rights we must be exempt from following their directives. This legal right to be exempted, clearly spelt out in our Human Rights Act, has not been communicated to all Queenslanders, especially those who are losing their jobs because of their beliefs.

The Queensland vaccine mandate discriminates against those who object to the vaccine for any belief—for example, a religious or pro-life belief around the association of COVID-19 vaccine options currently available in Australia and aborted fetal cells HEK293. The government needs to respect the rights of Queenslanders and seriously consider other vaccine options that do not have the association with abortion whilst still keeping vaccine as a choice and not a mandate.

An alternative vaccine with no association to abortion is in stage 4 development in South Australia by Flinders University. It is called COVAX-19. COVAX-19 is in the clinical trial stage and, as stated on its GoFundMe page, has already raised \$500,000 from over 5,000 donations. There have been more than 6,000 who have responded to the COVAX-19 clinical trial, showing just how many Australians want an alternative vaccine. To face 6,500—

(Time expired)

### Logan Electorate, Coronavirus Vaccination

 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (6.20 pm): In contrast to the last speaker, I know and Logan residents know that it is a busy and exciting time every day in front of the Grand Plaza shopping centre on Browns Plains Road as a steady stream of Logan residents get vaccinated at the walk-in vaccination centre. Members may have heard me talk about the campaign Race to 80 as Logan residents target a first dose target of 80 per cent. I am so proud of the Logan community because it has quickly exceeded that target and now I am announcing the new campaign—Logan's Race to 90. That is right: the Logan community is heading for a world-leading target of a 90 per cent-plus COVID-19 vaccination rate.

As I said, it is easy to walk right into the vaccination centre at the Browns Plains Grand Plaza shopping centre. It will only take a few minutes in the line. As the member for Woodridge said, excitingly this weekend there is also another vaccination centre at the Park Ridge State High School. There is also an updated list on my website and Facebook of pharmacies and medical centres that are administering the COVID-19 vaccine. Not only is it easy to get the vaccine; the research and the lived experience of over 80 per cent of the Logan electorate is that the vaccine is very safe. While few had a sore arm and have felt a little unwell, the experience is overwhelmingly positive.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr POWER:** We know from data all around the world that those who are vaccinated are much less likely to get COVID-19. If you do not get COVID-19 in the first place, then you will not be passing it on to your workplace, the Logan community or your family. We also know that even if you are unlucky enough to be one of the breakthrough cases of COVID you are less likely to pass it on to others and studies have shown that your family is 40 per cent to 50 per cent less likely to get infected with COVID-19 if they are in a household with a positive unvaccinated person.

Vaccinations reduce the severity of disease and those who are positive are less likely to be hospitalised and less likely to die. To emphasise, there are billions around the world who have stepped up to protect themselves and their families from COVID-19, and now 80 per cent of the Logan electorate have done the same. This is a fantastic result and we are leading the state with the percentage of our community getting vaccinated in recent weeks. Let us keep going, Logan, and finish the job and race on to 90 per cent. It is safe, effective and easy to get vaccinated in Logan. Let us race on from 80 per cent vaccinated to 90 per cent. I am deeply disappointed that there were that many interjections about this important issue and none of the opposition have taken the opportunity to speak about vaccines. It is quite disgraceful.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Lui): Order! Member for Mansfield and member for Everton, you are both warned.

### Refugees



**Dr MacMAHON** (South Brisbane—Grn) (6.22 pm): This evening we are joined in the gallery by Salma and Abdullah Abid. Salma and Abdullah arrived from Afghanistan in August. I want to take the opportunity tonight to extend them our deepest welcome and to share some of the challenges facing the Afghan community in Queensland. I wanted to share some of Salma's words to start—

it's confusing and painful what the world is waiting for? Why not any action? From here, As an afghan refugee who I haven't received my permanent visa yet even, I request to the Australian government and world is, Move on!! Take an action, don't forget the Afghan people! a nation is drowning in a humanitarian crisis.

Today I am safe with my family and I think I can build a relatively good future for myself here, but I am worried, worried about a life I got imposed to left behind in Afghanistan, I am deeply worried about my people, especially, afghan women who are on the verge of a huge distraction.

Thank you, Salma.

My office has been working to help members of the Afghan community who are trying to help friends and family who are still home in Afghanistan and many who are here already but lack the security and certainty they deserve. There is an overwhelming need for the federal government to create at least 20,000 additional humanitarian visas for people coming from Afghanistan. Compared to the seventies and eighties when the Australian government welcomed tens of thousands of refugees, the political climate today is starkly different. We need more support for people on safe haven enterprise visas, temporary protection visas and bridging visas. They risk being overlooked in favour of recent evacuees. Given the complexity of immigration processes, they need help and support to complete humanitarian visa applications for extended family members.

The Refugee and Immigration Legal Service, RAILS, in my electorate recently received \$400,000 from the state government, but it is still drowning in work. The support services are stretched to capacity. Many organisations are refused referrals because they simply do not have the capacity. Mental health is also a serious issue, particularly for people on unstable visas who are extremely stressed about their own security and getting their families to safety. The Queensland government could be funding increased mental health support to help people processing trauma and dealing with sudden relocation.

As for all Queenslanders, access to housing, health and education services is crucial. Without accommodation, refugees can be stuck in hotels for months. Without full funding that covers 100 per cent of the cost of TAFE degrees, cost remains an insurmountable barrier for people to access education. We desperately need to take action on a federal level, but there is so much more that we could be doing here in Queensland to welcome these new arrivals to our community and give them the full opportunity to thrive.

### Martin, Mr W



**Hon. LM LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (6.25 pm): It is a pleasure to stand and draw attention to the achievements of an outstanding member of my local community, Will Martin. Will and his family have lived in the Nudgee electorate since 2013 and Will graduated from Nudgee College in 2017. Will is an incredibly warm, likeable and funny young man, but he is also extraordinarily resilient and determined.

When Will was six years old he suffered a stroke which left him with a tremor in his right arm and blindness in his right eye. I cannot even begin to imagine the fear and distress his lovely family would have felt at that time in their lives. Will went through four months of rehabilitation where he had to learn to walk and talk again and learn to use his left hand for writing—no mean feat when he is right-handed. Because of the stroke, Will was not able to participate in contact sports and became interested in swimming, particularly after he graduated high school. Will started training and made the move to his old school haunt after high school, Nudgee College Swimming, to train under coach David Proud. Will did not think he was particularly fast. He took a break from swimming after high school and thought that this may even be his last year in the pool, but David saw his potential and suggested that Will participate in events that he had never swum before.

In typical Will style, he said he would give it a go—and by 'go' he gave it his all. Will pulled on the green and gold and represented Australia on the international stage in 2019 at the World Para Swimming Championships in London. Will clocked an impressive 58.28 for the 100-metre fly at the Australian Multi-Class Swimming Championships on the Gold Coast in April this year and qualified for the Paralympics team, heading to Tokyo.

In July I dropped by the Nudgee College pool to catch up with Will and his coach David and wish him well for his upcoming Olympic campaign. Will is hard not to love. Our quick catch-up turned into a meeting of an hour and a half with lots of laughs and Will gaining one more fan for life—his local MP. I promised Will I would follow his progress at the games and I knew our local community would do likewise.

In August of this year, Will put all of those 4.30 am starts six days a week to the test on the world stage. Against stiff competition, he competed in the 50-metre free, 400-metre free, 100-metre butterfly—his favourite event—and relay events. With his family excitedly watching from Brisbane due to COVID restrictions and his community and country behind him, Will blitzed the field—three gold and one silver medal. Will holds two world records and one Paralympic record—an absolutely outstanding effort and so exciting to watch.

It was an absolute pleasure to have Will and his lovely mum and dad, Loretta and Greg, at the parliament today for lunch to celebrate his wins but also to celebrate his tenacity, resilience, humility and the example he sets for every Queenslander who faces adversity.

The House adjourned at 6.29 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