



# RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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## FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

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## WEDNESDAY, 25 MAY 2022

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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 RULINGS

#### Motion Out of Order



**Mr SPEAKER:** I refer to the second reading debate on the State Penalties Enforcement (Modernisation) Amendment Bill yesterday afternoon. During the course of the Treasurer's reply to the second reading debate, the member for Everton sought leave to move a motion without notice. The question of leave was put to the House and a division was called. The question was resolved in the negative.

I seek to remind all members that the general rule of procedure is that when a question has been posed by the Speaker and read to the House, the House is in possession of that question and it must dispose of that question in one way or another before it can proceed with any other business.

Standing order 90 provides that a question is superseded by the adjournment of the House on the motion of a member, a previous resolution of the House to pass to some other business, an amendment to the question, or a closure motion. Standing order 237 provides for the adjournment of a debate. However, only a member who gets the call may move the adjournment, and a member cannot simply interrupt a member. Members who are speaking can only be interrupted in limited circumstances, such as a point of order or a matter of privilege—standing order 248—or to extend or curtail speaking time—standing order 247.

To rise on a point of order and then seek leave to move a motion without notice, as the member for Everton did yesterday, is grossly disorderly. There was no point of order, only a tactic that was out of order. It is out of order to interrupt debate on a substantive question and seek leave to move a motion without notice. In this regard I refer to rulings by Deputy Speaker English on 4 December 2008 in the *Record of Proceedings*, page 4,193, and Speaker Reynolds on 11 February 2009 in the *Record of Proceedings*, page 90.

#### Errors in Division



**Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, sessional orders substitute party votes for divisions. Standing order 105(3)(b) provides that the total number of votes cast for each party must not include any member who is not present on the precinct or will not attend the chamber that day.

Yesterday two divisions counted the member for Traeger for the Katter's Australian Party. However, the record of attendance shows that Mr Katter did not attend the chamber yesterday, although he may have been on the precinct. In accordance with standing order 105(1)(i) I am reporting this error to the House and directing that the *Record of Proceedings* be altered.

### SPEAKER'S STATEMENTS

#### Queensland Community Foundation




**Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I wish to remind members of the Queensland Community Foundation information session, hosted by Minister Enoch and the member for Lytton from 1 pm to 2 pm today in the Undumbi Room. Staff are also welcome to attend.

The information session will provide members information on how you can assist organisations in your electorates to 'create local legacies' through the work of the foundation. Attendees will also hear from QCF Chair, the Hon. Margaret McMurdo AC, about the work of the QCF.

As Speaker, I have been proud to host QCF Philanthropy Week events here at Parliament for some time because of the good work the QCF does in getting funds to the community across our state. This year's Philanthropy Week event will take place on Monday, 6 June.

Honourable members, I commend today's Queensland Community Foundation information session to the House. I also commend Minister Enoch and the member for Lytton for supporting this function.

### **Armstrong, Ms L**

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, please be advised that Ms Lynne Armstrong, the Parliamentary Library's Director, Information Management Services, has officially lodged her retirement after 44 years of distinguished service with the Parliament of Queensland.

Lynne commenced employment with the Parliamentary Service on 23 January 1978. I was one year old. That puts it into perspective, doesn't it? She commenced this role as Assistant Librarian. Lynne worked in a variety of roles in the Parliamentary Library. In March 1999, she was appointed as Director, Library Information Management Services, a role she has held for the past 23 years.

Lynne has seen many changes to the Parliamentary Service, the precinct and the Parliamentary Library during her career. When Lynne joined the Parliamentary Service her first office was located in the O'Donovan Library, as the annexe had not yet been built. Lynne was with the library when it secured the organisation's first computer in 1975 and introduced an electronic library management system in 1977. What a good year!


In November 2010, Lynne was presented with a Meritorious Service Badge for her contribution to the development of the Parliamentary Library's hard copy and online collections into a resource of excellence for the parliament and its members.

To put Lynne's service in perspective, during her 44-plus-year career there have been: four clerks of the parliament, four parliamentary librarians, five sergeants-at-arms, 10 chief Hansard reporters, 15 speakers from Speaker Houghton, nine premiers from Bjelke-Petersen, and 17 different opposition leaders.

I am absolutely sure that I speak on behalf of the House, in terms of all honourable members joining me, to wish Lynne all the very best in retirement. She is in the public gallery today.


**Honourable members:** Hear, hear!

### **Drinks in Chamber**

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Never to be outdone by an announcement, I have one further announcement I would like to make. Honourable members, it is important that we maintain our traditions. However, members, traditions should not stand in the way of great reforms when their time has come. We have seen great reforms come through the chamber. We have seen the abolition of the appointed upper house, the abolition of death duties and the end of the gerrymander. Today I announce the next great reform.

I am pleased to note that, from tomorrow, members will be able to bring tea or coffee into the Legislative Assembly chamber. For workplace health and safety reasons and heritage considerations, only keep cups with secured lids will be able to be used. If you do not have a keep cup, you can buy them here at the parliament. These can be purchased at a reasonable cost from all outlets at the precinct. Members, I trust you enjoy this brave new reform.

### **School Group Tours**

 **Mr SPEAKER:** I wish to advise members that we will be visited in the gallery this morning by students and teachers from: St Thomas More Primary School, Sunshine Beach in the electorate of Noosa; Concordia Lutheran College in the electorate of Toowoomba South; and Calamvale Community College in the electorate of Algeester.

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

### Alcohol Fuelled Violence, Reforms



**Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympics) (9.38 am): I echo your words for Lynne and wish her all the best for her retirement. It was lovely to see her in the gallery this morning. I think she looks too young to retire. Obviously the years here have not been too hard on her. Secondly, Mr Speaker, congratulations on your reform for allowing tea and coffee into the House. I think it will be greatly appreciated by both sides.

In 2016, Cole Miller and a friend were walking from a nightclub in Fortitude Valley. It was 3.29 am on Sunday, 3 January. Cole and his mate were headed to a cab rank and then home. A stranger who had been celebrating his 21st and drinking heavily picked the pair for a fight. Neither Cole nor his friend responded and did everything they could to simply walk away. Cole was punched in the head from behind without warning. It was the very definition of a coward's punch.

Cole fell to the ground. He never regained consciousness. Cole Miller was just 18. Cole's loss was felt deeply across our whole community. We feel it still. It was so senseless and so pointless. More than 2,000 people gathered in King George Square demanding something be done so that no other family suffers such an awful loss. That 'something' was our government's strategy to tackle alcohol fuelled violence. In July of that same year we began passing new laws with greater controls on alcohol sales, especially in the early hours of the morning. I table the government's response to the final evaluation of the Tackling Alcohol Fuelled Violence policy.

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Alcohol-related violence and Night Time Economy Monitoring (QUANTEM), Final report, April 2019—Final government response [\[704\]](#).

It has found a 49 per cent drop in the number of serious assaults between 3 am and 6 am on Friday and Saturday nights across Queensland and a 52 per cent drop in Brisbane's Fortitude Valley. Ambulance call-outs are down. The report finds that there have been no adverse effects on businesses and no evidence the violence has shifted to venues outside its safe night areas.

We will never stop trying to do better. As a result of this review, today I announce \$500,000 in grants for safe night precinct boards to fund roving security services and taxi marshals to better improve safety in and around licensed venues. We will work to make the list of banned patrons available to all venues that operate after midnight.

I acknowledge the courage, strength and leadership of Cole's family, especially his sister, Kate, and brother Billy, who join us in the gallery today. I recommit to them this government's determination to spread the message that one punch can kill. I also pay tribute to the work done by our former attorney-general and our current health minister as well as a certain Brisbane surgeon. He was so sickened by the endless procession of people in his operating theatre who were victims of alcohol fuelled violence that he stood for parliament to change the laws, and he did. Dr Anthony Lynham is operating right now and could not join us this morning, but his intention to curb these horrible crimes is achieving what he set out to achieve.

I do want to comment on the fact that Dr Lynham came into this parliament with a purpose. We all got behind him on that purpose. We passed the laws and the laws are working. That is an incredible credit to him. I also draw on the point that I can remember my very first meeting with him down at Quay West where he talked to me about this and how serious an issue it was. At the time we were in opposition, and I reflected that our small team supported him because we thought it was the right thing to do. It was at that moment that he said he was thinking about joining our team, and he was elected at a by-election. He has left this place a better place. He came in with that purpose and he achieved it. It has made our community safer and we must continue that work. We must never forget Cole Miller.

### Electric Vehicles, Charging Stations



**Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympics) (9.43 am): Queensland's electric vehicle superhighway is on the move. We have already built 31 charging stations from Coolangatta to Port Douglas and Brisbane to Toowoomba, and today I can announce that new charging stations will be installed across Western Queensland as part of the next phase to extend the Queensland electric superhighway. We are governing for everybody. We are building 24 new fast-charging stations in Western Queensland as part of our commitment to: reduce emissions, improve connectivity for electric vehicle road users as well as create more tourism and economic development opportunities.


**Mr Lister** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Southern Downs.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** We had allocated \$2.75 million to build 18 sites at: Charters Towers, Hughenden, Julia Creek, Cloncurry, Mount Isa, Goondiwindi, Stanthorpe, Winton, Longreach, Barcaldine, Blackall, Emerald, Dingo, Charleville, Roma, Miles, Kingaroy and Esk. Today I am pleased to announce an additional \$1 million to deliver six more at: Richmond, Kynuna, Injune, Rolleston, St George and Cunnamulla. This adds 1,586 kilometres to the network, bringing the total superhighway to 5,386 kilometres in length and extending it from Mount Isa in the north-west to Goondiwindi in the south.

In March we announced a \$55 million package including thousands of dollars in incentives to supercharge clean energy transport in this state. This includes making electric vehicles more affordable for Queenslanders by providing a \$3,000 subsidy for anyone buying an electric vehicle to the value of \$58,000. As more people go electric, we are making sure the infrastructure is there to support it, no matter where they live in Queensland.


### Banana Range Wind Farm

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympics) (9.45 am): Our government has had a long and strong history of supporting renewable energy investment in this state. We have a 50 per cent renewable energy target by 2030. To date, 50 large-scale wind and solar farms have been committed, with more than \$10 billion of investment and 7,900 jobs.

Today I can announce yet another wind farm project to power Queensland towards our target. Publicly owned CS Energy has just signed an agreement with global renewable energy leader EDF Renewables. This partnership will progress the development of Central Queensland's Banana Range Wind Farm. It will sit in the heart of Central Queensland's renewable energy zone with outstanding wind resources and proximity to existing high voltage transmission lines. The 230-megawatt project will generate enough cleaner, cheaper energy to power 15,000 homes and, most importantly, it will create jobs—150 new construction jobs.

The Banana Range Wind Farm adds to the pipeline of renewable energy generation projects diversifying Queensland's publicly owned energy companies, which are helping to drive the energy transformation in our state. We expect construction to kick off in 2024 before coming online in 2026. Our government is committed to our renewable energy target to act on climate change and to power green energy investment, creating local jobs for Queenslanders. A lot of these projects are in regional Queensland. I want to emphasise that because these are jobs for regional Queensland.

### Sheep and Goat Industry

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympics) (9.46 am): Finally, one of the first things I did when I became Premier was to tour drought-stricken areas of Western Queensland. I sat down with graziers and landholders in Charleville, Barcaldine and Ilfracombe—outside Longreach—and they told me about their issues with wild dogs and the damaging impact on their flocks. The situation has become so bad that the number of sheep in Queensland fell from over 8.5 million in 2001 to 1.8 million in 2016, a decline of over 80 per cent. In the same 15-year period Queensland agricultural jobs fell by 28 per cent.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I do not know why they want to interject. This is good news.

**Opposition members** interjected.

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

**Mrs Frecklington** interjected.

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

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** That is why I fast-tracked our election commitment of \$5 million for wild dog control and made it the government's mission to do everything we could to bring back the sheep industry in Western Queensland.

**Mr Dick:** Hear, hear! A great success.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** That is right. Once again, the Palaszczuk Labor government is delivering for the bush. That is right. We are looking forward to seeing what Peter Dutton will do out in the bush.



**Opposition members** interjected.

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

**Mr Bleijie:** What about Winton, the wild dog? He was vicious.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** You are pathetic. That is exactly what is wrong with the LNP. The member for Kawana is exactly symbolic of what is wrong with the LNP.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Premier, I ask you to withdraw that statement—

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I withdraw.

**Mr SPEAKER:**—without asking the member whether he took offence. Member for Kawana, it would help if you were not interjecting.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Since 2015 we have committed more than \$26 million, over 9,000 kilometres of fencing have been approved and 400 sheep-producing properties have been protected from wild dogs. We protected sheep and the livelihood of farmers; we brought jobs to the regions; and we have bolstered economic activity in these communities. We know that if the cluster-fencing project is completed lambing rates and sheep numbers will increase dramatically. For example, lambing rates have gone from 40 per cent to up to 80 per cent, and sheep numbers have almost doubled in the area, with numbers increasing from 270,000 to nearly 500,000 head. Cluster fencing has reduced wild dogs, and sheep and wool prices remain high and demand for their meat is increasing. Because we brought the sheep industry back and because of our strategy to grow the industry, we want businesses to keep pace with the new opportunities this will bring.

**Mrs Frecklington** interjected.

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

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Today I can announce that our \$4 million Rural Agricultural Development Grants program is now open. This means that Queensland sheep and goat producers now have access to up to \$200,000 per business to help enterprises and businesses along the supply chain and businesses that use sheep and goat derived materials in their products or activities. These grants can help businesses—


**Ms Leahy** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** This is good news for Queensland. This is great news for Queensland and all I am hearing is frivolous interjections from those members opposite. These grants can help businesses to develop new products, implement new technologies and/or upgrade equipment or training.

Our government is committed to regional industries that support regional communities. Our cluster fencing program is one of Queensland's great success stories. It is now time to tap into these benefits, which will help these local economies even more. Once again, the Palaszczuk Labor government is delivering for the bush.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I was not going to interrupt the Premier, because that is what the interjections were designed to do, but, member for Nanango, you are warned under the standing orders.

### **Floods, Recovery Assistance**


 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics Infrastructure) (9.50 am): This summer has seen multiple catastrophic floods impact Queenslanders in the south of the state. Many communities are dealing with the compounding impact of two or three of these events. We have moved swiftly to ensure financial support is getting to where it is needed most—to people, families, small businesses, not-for-profits and primary producers. There is personal hardship assistance available for those individuals and families who are doing it tough and a \$558 million grants package for flood-affected small businesses, primary producers, not-for-profit organisations, sporting clubs and councils.

In addition, we have funded the \$741 million Resilient Homes Fund program and a \$30 million clean-up program. Still, there is more to be done. Recovery from major events needs to take into consideration a wide range of factors, and this package will help fund and address elements that have not yet been covered in the \$558.5 million grants package and the \$771 million Resilient Homes Fund and clean-up package.

The next phase is a \$721 million package that will be available across 37 local government areas hit by the three major floods in 2021-22 to help them recover and build back better. The package will be jointly funded by the Australian and Queensland governments under the disaster recovery funding arrangements and brings the total of extraordinary assistance announced this disaster season to more than \$2 billion.

This latest package includes: a \$150 million betterment package; a \$150 million community and recreational assets package; \$177.7 million for human and social initiatives; \$177 million for economic recovery; and \$56.9 million for environmental recovery and management. It will provide a great deal of flexibility for impacted communities for services, grants and programs to help them on their recovery journey. It will see more people on the ground supporting families, farmers and businesses to get back on their feet. It will kickstart the long road to recovery for councils and communities. We are committed to ensuring our communities recover from these catastrophic events and we are committed to building safer, stronger and more resilient communities.


### Economy

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (9.53 am): With the brighter horizon brought by about the election of a federal Albanese Labor government, Queensland's economic recovery continues to flourish. Australian Bureau of Statistics Wage Price Index data for the March quarter 2022 shows that Queensland has, at 2.5 per cent, the strongest annual growth of any mainland state. After years of stagnation under the former LNP Abbott-Turnbull-Morrison government, that is the strongest figure for almost eight years. It is the strongest figure since the last quarter of 2014. For those members opposite, it is the Palaszczuk Labor government bringing it home for Queensland.

That rise in wages is consistent with the remarkable nation-leading jobs growth that Queensland has demonstrated over the last two years. Our government has helped create 145,500 additional Queensland jobs since the start of the pandemic. That means Queensland has created almost as many jobs as New South Wales and Victoria combined over the same period. All this means that businesses in Queensland have the confidence to invest and hire more people. That growing demand for labour is the catalyst for the strongest annual wage growth in more than seven years.

Across the rest of the country, Australians are seeing what is happening in Queensland and they want to be part of it. The latest population data shows that Queensland's net interstate migration has grown by more than 40,000 in the last year to September quarter 2021—the largest increase in the state since 1994. To put this into perspective, the next highest net interstate migration over that period was 6,000 to Western Australia. Quite simply, no other state has navigated this once-in-a-lifetime health and economic crisis as well as Queensland. Our government devised and implemented the right health response to COVID-19. The growth in jobs and wages we are now seeing is a direct result. Now with a federal Labor government in Canberra that will sit down and listen to us, rather than wedge and fight, Queensland's prospects are looking stronger and brighter than ever.

### Alcohol Fuelled Violence, Reforms

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (9.55 am): The Palaszczuk government is committed to keeping Queenslanders safe. Queenslanders should be able to go out for a night with friends without the fear of being assaulted or feeling threatened. We know that it only takes a single senseless punch to claim a life. With late-night venues once again packed after the pandemic, we need to be reminded of this more than ever.

I especially acknowledge Kate and Billy Miller for taking the time to be here today. Their brother Cole's tragic death in 2016 on a night out in Fortitude Valley should never have happened. The Miller family have endured a nightmare, and no family should have to live through this. When Cole was killed, please know that the entire state grieved with you. That is why I am pleased that the Premier today has tabled our government's response to the independent evaluation of the Tackling Alcohol Fuelled Violence Policy.


This policy is all about finding the right balance between making nightclub precincts safer while at the same time limiting the financial and regulatory impact on venues. Our response outlines a commitment to implement further safety measures such as: a comprehensive independent review of alcohol and drug education in our schools; an alcohol awareness campaign; and work to ensure the list of banned patrons is available to all venues that trade after midnight. I am pleased to say that a number

of recommendations have already been implemented, including allowing the use of pass-outs for patrons who have already had their ID scanned on entry as well as the reduction of days that mandatory ID scanning is required for venues closing before 1 am.

Our initiatives to keep Queenslanders safe are working. All of this work is in addition to the support that we give our safe night precincts, and today's announcement of \$500,000 in grant funding for our safe night precinct boards will enable them to continue to run crucial safety initiatives such as security patrols or taxi marshals to ensure patrons can get home safely after a night out.

I acknowledge the former attorney-general and now health minister, Yvette D'Ath, who lived and breathed negotiating these reforms with industry and the community. I also acknowledge the former member for Stafford, Dr Anthony Lynham, who entered politics for the sole purpose of strengthening our laws to tackle alcohol fuelled violence. He would have loved to be here today but, as he said to me, it is his operating day and he could not let his patients down. As a government we are continually looking for ways that we can keep Queenslanders safe, because violence has no place in Queensland.

### Federal Labor Government, Education

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (9.58 am): I join the Attorney-General in acknowledging the Miller family in the gallery. I also acknowledge the great work of the previous attorney-general, the current Attorney-General and Dr Lynham. I particularly acknowledge ChaplainWatch, which does a fantastic job—along with the police force and others—in relation to the safe night precinct in Fortitude Valley.

I spoke yesterday of the opportunities for workers with the election of an Albanese federal Labor government when it comes to rights and entitlements, particularly stagnating wages. There is great news for Queensland schools, too. Federal Labor has a suite of education and early childhood policies that complement what we are doing in Queensland already, especially in terms of student wellbeing and supporting teachers.


The Albanese Labor government has committed \$200 million for extra mental health support as part of its \$446 million COVID bounce-back plan. This complements our own \$100 million Student Wellbeing Package. As part of this package we have 80 new wellbeing professionals, mainly psychologists, now employed in Queensland schools from Thuringowa State High School to Currumbin Valley State School and there are more to come—up to 464 across the state.

On support for teachers, federal Labor will invest nearly \$100 million to boost teacher numbers and improve student outcomes. Becoming a teacher in Queensland is one of the most rewarding things you can do, as the member for Bundaberg knows, and as do others, such as the member for Mansfield, and all the other teachers who are in the parliament. Sorry if I am not mentioning you all. There is also Minister Stewart. They all are educators and very proud of it. There is Minister Enoch as well. My goodness, now I have started a run. Of course, there is the member for Mackay. My goodness, I am stopping there, Speaker, or else I will get into trouble. It is a rewarding job. We need our brightest and best in teaching so our younger generations can reach their full potential.

I am delighted to advise the House that today we will be announcing the recipients of nearly \$500,000 in scholarships and grants to attract and support aspiring teachers. More than 70 pre-service and beginning teachers will receive generalist graduate and STEM teacher scholarships and be appointed permanently to a regional, rural or remote state school. Recipients of our Pearl Duncan scholarships and grants will get up to \$20,000 each. They are named after Dr Pearl Duncan, an Aboriginal teacher who has dedicated her life to improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in education—a worthy cause indeed.

The TJ Ryan Memorial Medal and Scholarships program is for year 12 school leavers who graduated last year in 2021, with up to \$10,000 to support them in their journey to becoming a teacher. Under our Aspiring Teacher Grant program, high achieving students commencing an initial teacher education program will receive up to \$5,000. In total, nearly 200 students and beginning teachers are being supported by the Palaszczuk Labor government this year alone. This is what Labor governments do, whether at state or now federal level: back our students, back our teachers, every educator step of the way.

### Coronavirus, Update; Influenza, Vaccination

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (10.02 am): Today Queensland reaches a tragic milestone. I can advise the House that as of today we have now reached more than 1,000 COVID deaths. With 10 additional deaths reported overnight, the number of

lives lost in Queensland through this awful virus stands at 1,008. These numbers are not just statistics, they are people. On behalf of all Queenslanders I extend our condolences to those who have lost loved ones to COVID-19. Nothing we can say will ever ease their pain.

While we mourn those who have passed, we must also be clear and proud of what we have all achieved together. The initial projections of the deaths we would see from the virus stood at 10,000. The projections of the curve that could have occurred without our public health interventions would have meant our hospital system would have been significantly overwhelmed, as we saw in so many countries around the world. To put this into perspective, right now as reported there have been over 526½ million cases and 6.28 million deaths globally. The pleasing statistic though is that 11.48 billion vaccinations globally have been administered to tackle COVID. Yet still, in the last 28 days, 15.8 million cases of COVID have been reported and there have been 56,647 deaths globally.

We know our success did not occur alone; it occurred because of the hard work of everyday Queenslanders. Queenslanders' efforts in following the health advice and staying safe meant that we were able to prevent mass circulation of the virus until we had been able to vaccinate the majority of our population. Our vaccination rate now stands at 93.87 per cent first dose and 92.3 per cent second dose for those 16-plus years and we are now at 91.04 per cent double dosed for 12-year-olds and above. This ensured that even as the virus spread throughout our community the vast majority of us had significant protection against serious illness arising from infection.

While we have passed through the worst of the first Omicron wave, our hospitals continue to deal with record demand and the threat of COVID-19 is still with us. That is why I remind Queenslanders that our booster rates currently are at 62.9 per cent and our five- to 11-year-old vaccination rates are 43.51 per cent. Queenslanders who are yet to do so should ensure that they get their COVID vaccination and also their booster dose of the COVID vaccine. Those who are entitled to a fourth dose should get theirs as soon as they are eligible.

I also want to update the House on how the COVID-19 virus will impact this year's influenza A outbreak. I am advised that our clinicians are seeing people presenting to our hospitals with a co-infection of COVID-19 and influenza. These cases can be particularly acute. I understand we have two people suffering from co-infection currently in critical condition in our ICUs. The best way to protect against this critical infection is to ensure you are protected against both viruses. With both vaccines now being free, there is no reason for people to delay getting vaccinated. Our decision to subsidise the flu vaccine has already seen a significant increase in demand. This demonstrates that cost was proving a prohibitive factor to Queenslanders who wanted to protect themselves.

While there have been some reports of delays in communications reaching some of our GPs and pharmacies across our large decentralised state, there has been and will continue to be communications going out from peak medical and pharmacy groups to provide further information.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Ms Grace:** I think they stood beside you.

**Mrs D'ATH:** I take that interjection. The AMA Queensland and the Pharmacy Guild stood with us. On Tuesday Queensland Health met with GP Alliance to answer any outstanding questions and provide certainty about how this initiative will work. All providers can be assured that they will be reimbursed by the state government for any flu vaccine they administer between now and 30 June. I ask the public to be respectful to our GPs, pharmacists and their staff who are working collaboratively to deliver this free vaccine. I thank the health professionals for their willingness to make this rollout a success. It was important that we moved quickly, with a doubling of cases every week. Every day counts and we need people to get vaccinated as soon as possible.

### Sheep and Goat Industry



**Hon. ML FURNER** (Ferry Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities) (10.07 am): As every member of this place knows, there has never been a greater friend of Queensland agriculture than the Palaszczuk Labor government.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr FURNER:** Let me repeat that: there has never been a greater friend of the agriculture sector than the Palaszczuk Labor government. We have stood by them in the depths of the COVID-19 pandemic, we have stood by them through flood and fire—we have stood by them every single day.

Today the Premier has announced more strong support, with \$4 million in Rural Agricultural Development grants over two years to support the sheep and goat industries. It is critically important for this state that we have a Premier who understands the importance of agriculture. That is exactly

what we have here in this government. Even in opposition, the Premier saw the opportunity that cluster fencing could bring to our state's sheep and goat industries. From 2015 she led the introduction of funding programs for cluster fencing and the result has been transformational. We are bringing the sheep industry back to Queensland and we are seeing significant growth in the goat industry as well.

The \$4 million in grants announced by the Premier this morning will go a long way to making sure the production chains of these industries can grow as well. The Rural Agricultural Development grants of up to \$200,000 per business will see the value of the industry double. This supports our sheep and goat meat strategy that I launched last year in Ilfracombe at Beaconsfield Station. Eligible activities under the grant program include developing a new market for sheep or goat products; developing a niche product or brand for the sheep and goat product markets; and expanding the capabilities of businesses in the supply chain, for example, by providing specialised training or equipment.

Applicants for the grant program will need to submit an expression of interest and match any funding with a minimum co-contribution of 50 per cent. If deemed suitable they will then be requested to proceed to a full application. The Palaszczuk government will always back Queensland farmers to succeed and to take advantage of the opportunities we have helped to create.

### Tourism Industry



**Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Tourism, Innovation and Sport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics and Paralympics Sport and Engagement) (10.09 am): The Queensland Tourism Industry Council, QTIC, has been quick to congratulate the federal Labor leader, Anthony Albanese, on becoming Australia's 31st Prime Minister. An email to tourism operators this week from CEO Brett Fraser is telling of QTIC's experience of almost a decade of LNP government in Canberra. Mr Fraser's email said—

It is affirming to see that the commitments of the ALP demonstrate a considered response to our industry's lobbying and needs.

As the tourism industry continues its rousing recovery from the pandemic, one of the challenges for tourism and hospitality businesses is workforce shortages. QTIC is backing the new federal Labor government's commitment to the \$1.2 billion Future Made in Australia Skills Plan. The Palaszczuk government is helping to fill skills shortage gaps with free TAFE training for under-25s in hospitality, kitchen operations, food processing, baking and the Certificate II in Tourism. Federal Labor's Future Made in Australia Skills Plan complements our tourism industry targeted free TAFE with an investment of 465,000 fee-free TAFE places to rebuild skills in industries hit hard by the pandemic, such as tourism and hospitality.

Securing more tourism staff is exactly why the Palaszczuk government has partnered with Greyhound Australia and Travello. We are saving overseas working holiday-makers from winter in the southern states with an offer to work in paradise in Queensland tourism. There is discounted coach travel to Queensland, free \$200 vouchers for Queensland visitor experiences and 14 moving billboards. Over the next year, 14 Greyhound coaches, such as the one in this photo that is wrapped in a huge image of two snorkelers exploring the Great Barrier Reef, will be on the highway between Melbourne and Cairns. It is a terrific reminder to backpackers of what they could be doing before or after work in Queensland's tourism industry. I will table that photograph because, with around 4,000 tourism jobs online, it shows that Queensland is the place to be for working holiday-makers this winter.

*Tabled paper:* Photograph depicting a Greyhound Bus advertising Working Holidayer scheme [\[705\]](#).

### Banana Range Wind Farm



**Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement) (10.11 am): The winds of change are blowing across this nation: in with the Albanese federal Labor government and out with a government that will forever be remembered as the one that vetoed wind farms in this nation. On this side of the House we love our Queensland wind farms—all eight of them in operation or in construction. In fact, we are big fans of big turbines.

Since Saturday's election result, not even the strongest gale could wipe the smiles off our faces because, as the Premier has announced today, Queensland will be home to yet another wind farm powering our state towards our renewable energy target. There is Kaban in the north, Dulacca on the Western Downs and now the Banana Range Wind Farm for the industrial heartland of Central Queensland.

Publicly owned CS Energy and global renewable energy leader EDF Renewables have partnered to deliver Banana Range, a 230-megawatt wind farm that will create 150 new construction jobs for Queenslanders. That will take our total large-scale wind generation capacity to over 2,000 megawatts with a further 18 projects in the pipeline, totalling 5,000 megawatts. I have asked that the project partners make every effort to deliver employment and training opportunities for communities such as Biloela, Moura and Gladstone. We do hope that Colin Boyce does not mind the 'fantasy' of renewables creating 150 jobs in his new electorate.

As the Premier said, Banana Range will add to the pipeline of projects diversifying the portfolios of Queensland's publicly owned energy companies. It will also demonstrate their important role in driving the energy transformation in this state. With an established presence in Central Queensland, CS Energy can draw on its existing skills to build local capacity as part of the renewable energy transformation.

The agreement with EDF Renewables complements recent investments CS Energy has made in green hydrogen and energy storage—projects such as the 700-kilowatt electrolyser and the two-megawatt battery that are focal to CS Energy's Kogan renewable hydrogen plant near Chinchilla. This demonstrates our commitment to securing a balanced mix of energy sources that not only supports our decarbonisation ambitions but also delivers power system security and reliability. We are putting Queensland one step closer to our 50 per cent renewable energy target and, importantly, supporting more jobs for Queenslanders.

## NOTICE OF MOTION

### Central Queensland, Health Services



**Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (10.15 am): I give notice that I shall move—

That this House notes the widespread community health concerns across Central Queensland, and calls on the health minister, member for Gladstone, member for Rockhampton and member for Keppel to:

1. acknowledge their failure in implementing the Destination 2030 plan developed by the Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service to date.
2. commit to implementing all services and associated infrastructure identified in the report.
3. install a CT scanner at the Biloela Hospital to ensure that the people of Biloela and surrounding areas have access to this basic service.
4. acknowledge the decline in essential health services, like maternity and intensive care beds, across the region.

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

**Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, today question time will conclude at 11.15 am.

### Trad, Ms J, Legal Costs



**Mr CRISAFULLI** (10.16 am): My question is to the Premier. How do Queenslanders benefit from the government's decision not to release the costs of defending Jackie Trad's bid to suppress the CCC report?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** As the opposition well knows, I am not commenting on matters before a court. Secondly, there are legal indemnity provisions that are provided to both sides of politics and are provided to ministers and former ministers and, it is my understanding, in other states and jurisdictions as well.

### Trad, Ms J, Legal Costs

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** My question is to the Premier. Can the Premier inform Queenslanders how government members of parliament voting to stop the public release of legal costs to defend Jackie Trad's suppression bid fits with the Premier's 2015 commitment to run a transparent government and did the Premier, her office or her ministers discuss how Labor members of parliament would vote?

**Mrs D'ATH:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. In relation to that question, there were particular members named and I believe accusations and imputations made in relation to those individuals in that question.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Leader of the House, there are multiple parts to the question. One part deals with your concern around imputations. However, the fact that there has been a public hearing may well negate that as that is now part of the public record. The second part of the question does go somewhat to your concerns. I will allow the question but the Premier will be able to answer that as she sees fit.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I reject some of the premises of that question. I am not going to interfere in committee business and I am not going to reflect on committee business.

**Ms Grace:** Unlike them.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** That is right; I will be getting to that. I am not going to be lectured to by the opposition let alone by the member for Kawana who comes into this chamber and grandstands when the member for Kawana was the architect of sacking that very committee during their term of government. I will say this to the member for Kawana: what happened to Scott Morrison in the federal election is absolutely symbolic of what is still happening with this opposition. They have not changed. They are exactly the same. I stand by my comments of the other day: the public are sick and tired of the adversarial style of politics and it is clearly being displayed by members of the opposition. It is absolutely being displayed by those opposite.

**Mr Crisafulli:** How much did it cost? Don't lie.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I find what the Leader of the Opposition said personally offensive and I ask him to withdraw.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Leader of the Opposition, the Premier has found that offensive. Will you withdraw?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I withdraw.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** If you want to look at the results of the election in terms of why Scott Morrison was defeated, every single one of them is still cut from the same cloth.

**Mr Dick** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** That is right. If you want to have a deep look at yourselves, I notice that Lawrence Springborg has written to all party members reflecting on the federal result. The best thing the LNP and the Nats can do in this state is to divide. The Nats in this House do not care about the bush. It is our government that stands up for the people of the bush. It is our side that stands up for communities and for families. Member for Kawana, please get on the news every single night, because they will be reminded of the three years when you trashed every single pillar of our institutions.

**Mr Crisafulli:** Integrity. Accountability. Laptops raided.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I find what the Leader of the Opposition is saying personally offensive. I ask him to withdraw.

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

**Mr SPEAKER:** I will deal with the Premier's request that a matter be withdrawn. Member, for the dignity of the House, can you withdraw your comments?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I withdraw.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Thank you. What is your point of order, Manager of Opposition Business?

**Mr POWELL:** With respect to the Premier finding those comments offensive, they were not directed at the Premier. They are not personal.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order, members to my right! I will hear the point of order.

**Mr POWELL:** They were not personal; therefore, I question whether they can be withdrawn on the basis of that request.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Manager of Opposition Business, let me be clear: as I requested, for the dignity of the House, by convention, I asked that the comments be withdrawn—not because there was necessarily veracity to everything concerned. It is important that this place does not descend into a slinging match.

### Renewable Energy

**Mr HEALY:** My question is of the Premier and the Minister for the Olympics. Will the Premier update the House on how the Palaszczuk government's investment in renewable energy and other actions are helping bring down emissions as well as create jobs?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the member for Cairns. I know how much he stands up for creating jobs in Queensland, especially in the Far North of our state. Of course, our government embarked on the three renewable energy zones. The one in Far North Queensland is going from strength to strength. It is good to see that construction has started on the Far North Queensland energy zone to connect the 157-megawatt Kaban wind farm and open up renewable resources by upgrading the transition line from Cairns to Townsville. I thank the Minister for Energy, because he has been front and centre of driving these reforms in our state.

I am also advised that four wind turbines are now complete at the \$373 million Kaban Green Power Hub. One again, we are getting on with the job. I just announced an MOU for the Banana Range Wind Farm in Central Queensland. Recently we invested \$192.5 million in the Wambo Wind Farm in the Western Downs, supporting 200 jobs and 252 megawatts of power. We are seeing these green renewable jobs happening across regional Queensland.

We can remember the day when those opposite were against our renewable energy reforms. They were against our plans to build an Electric Super Highway. Today we have announced it is going out west. Recently someone told me that when they were driving from Sydney to Brisbane for a conference they had to stay overnight because they could not find the charging stations along that highway from Sydney to Brisbane. We are putting the plans in place to make sure they are contributing to our 50 per cent renewable energy target.

I will update the House. To date we have 50 large-scale wind and solar farms committed, with more than \$10 billion of investment and 7,900 jobs. If you want to talk about climate action, the action is happening on this side of the House by our government. As well as that, there is \$2 billion in renewable energy. We look forward to seeing any plans or ideas from those opposite. Do they support our \$2 billion of renewable energy? Do they support our Electric Super Highway? Do they or do they not support jobs in regional Queensland? There is silence on that side, but now they have had the federal election they might reflect on themselves.

**Government members** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** That is right: there are no new ideas. I cannot remember the last time they announced a new policy. Maybe we should wait and see the latest policy of the Leader of the Opposition. We are doing the heavy lifting and we are backing jobs.

*(Time expired)*

### Trad, Ms J, Legal Costs

**Mr BLEIJIE:** My question is to the Premier. The member for Cooper said in the public PCCC hearing yesterday that Labor MPs would vote against the motion and that now is not the time for releasing the costs of Jackie Trad's bid to suppress the CCC report. Can the Premier tell Queenslanders when that time will be and why not now?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I have answered that question in the previous answer to the Leader of the Opposition. Let me say this—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! The Premier has the call. Members to my left will cease their interjections.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** As the member for Kawana asked me the question, shall we talk about the member for Kawana's record?

**Mr SPEAKER:** No, you cannot.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Exactly.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Premier, under the standing order 118(b) you will need to be relevant to the question asked, not simply the questioner.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** The member asked the question.

**Mr SPEAKER:** That is not how relevance works, Premier.



**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Okay. We want to talk about the PCCC. What about the darkness of the night? The member did not like what was happening in the committee, so he sacked the entire committee. The member for Kawana sacked the committee. If the LNP were in office, those cameras would not be in the parliament.

**Mr Bleijie** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Premier! Member for Kawana, I understand you may be wounded but I will ask you to cease your interjections. Premier, I ask you also to come back to the question asked specifically around the issues as mentioned.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** That is right: we lived through those three years of the incompetence of the member for Kawana, the worst attorney-general that this state has ever seen.

### Exports

**Mrs GILBERT:** My question is of the Premier and the Minister for the Olympics. Will the Premier update the House on the global demand for Queensland goods and how our exports are helping to support jobs, particularly in regional Queensland?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the member for the question. Of course, the member knows very much from her community how important exports are to our economy and to our state. Our exports have doubled compared to what they were in 2014. Considering that we have been through a global pandemic, our Queensland exports are now worth \$94 billion. This will continue to go from strength to strength. Interestingly, at the moment we are seeing that our exports to Japan and South Korea, especially Japan, are almost equal to our exports to China. We have 7,000 exporting businesses in the state and our exports support one in five jobs.

In the year to March our exports had the highest 12-month total on record. This is more than 60 per cent higher than the same period a year ago. We were also the nation's second largest exporter of goods—exporting more goods by value than New South Wales, South Australia and Tasmania combined. Our beef exports are up 10 per cent. Our cotton exports are up 340 per cent. Our crop exports are up 81 per cent. Our coal exports are up 85 per cent. Our LNG exports are up 63 per cent. Our metals exports are up 19 per cent. Our exports to India are increasing as well. Countries are after what Queensland has, and that means jobs for Queenslanders. That is why we will always back industry.

As the member for Mackay knows, we went to see Real Time Instruments. I remember talking to them with the member for Mackay. They have grown their export markets across the world during the pandemic. They were assisted with a Made in Queensland grant to develop new systems. Its major customers include mining operations, power generators and food processors, including international clients.

This is great news for Queensland. Neither I nor the Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment could have envisaged during the pandemic that our businesses would continue to thrive. Let us not forget that during the two years that we helped keep Queenslanders safe our economy kept going. Not only did our economy keep going, it kept growing. That is great news for Queensland.

### Hunt, Mr J

**Dr ROWAN:** My question is to the Premier. Two years ago former deputy premier Jackie Trad stood down after an investigation was launched into her interference in the selection of a school principal. During this time a deputy director-general was suspended on full pay. How much has Mr Hunt been paid while the investigation has been undertaken and will he be required to pay it back?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** It is standard procedure that if investigations are ongoing public servants stand down until a finding is made one way or the other. This is standard practice. I will not have people in this House, especially those opposite who have a very good track record of condemning our public servants, attacking public servants. It is the same LNP. They have learnt nothing. Remember that in his costing Scott Morrison wanted to cut the public service. It is in their DNA. A massive cut—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** There we go. There is no federal ICAC to do any investigations.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Multiple members will cease their quarrelling across the chamber. There is one person who has the call and that is the Premier.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** What we see time and time again is that those opposite continually attack public servants. My point is very clearly—

**Mr LANGBROEK:** I rise to a point of order, Mr Speaker. I take offence at those words and I ask that the Premier withdraw for the dignity of the House. She is speaking about me. I was a minister and I take offence. I ask that she withdraw.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member, the standing orders do not allow for collective offence, as members are aware. I will not be asking the Premier to withdraw those statements at this point.

**Mr Dick** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! The Treasurer will cease his interjections. I am providing a ruling on the point of order from the member for Surfers Paradise. I will not be asking the Premier to withdraw. However, if there is direct and personal offence that is clearly noted then I will obviously do that, as you suggested, for the dignity of the House. Premier, do you have anything further that is relevant to the question asked?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I am glad the member for Surfers Paradise stood up because he closed schools. That is how much he cared about the education system in Queensland. He closed schools. That is what the member for Surfers Paradise did. We built a brand new school in Fortitude Valley. We build schools. We grow schools. They privatised TAFE. That is how much the opposition cares about education.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Pause the clock. Premier, under standing order 118(b), I ask you to come back to the question asked. Do you have anything further to add that is relevant to the question?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** No.

### Marine Industry

**Ms PEASE:** My question is of the Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics Infrastructure. Can the Deputy Premier please outline to the House what the Palaszczuk government is doing to create jobs in shipbuilding and maintenance and is the Deputy Premier aware of any alternative approaches?

**Dr MILES:** I thank the member for Lytton for her question. I know she is a big supporter of our marine industries, representing seaside communities as she does. The Palaszczuk government has partnered with SeaLink Marine & Tourism to build the state's first hydrogen powered ferry. The new ferry will be built right here in Brisbane, near the member for Lytton's community, creating jobs and increasing skills and expertise in the use of renewable hydrogen for shipping. SeaLink Marine & Tourism will then use the new ferry built here in Brisbane by Queensland workers to ferry workers to the LNG plants at Curtis Island—making four trips a day. What a great example of how the Palaszczuk government is supporting business to create jobs and reduce the carbon footprint of existing industries, all while creating demand for renewable hydrogen. The ferry will carry 200 passengers and travel up to 20 knots.

Then there is our support for the superyacht sector. Queensland is now recognised as a national leader. Our ports and marinas are home to 80 per cent of Australia's superyacht maintenance. The sector has the potential to contribute more than \$2 billion to the Queensland economy and support more than 5,300 new jobs, including in the member for Lytton's electorate. The Queensland government has now updated and relaunched the Queensland Superyacht Strategy and committed \$750,000 to industry funding support. I thank the member for Cairns, our superyacht champion, for his work on that strategy, which he launched last week.

While we are focused on creating new jobs for Queenslanders in the industries of the future, I can advise the House that Sportsbet has just opened a betting market on what Scott Morrison might do next. I am not sure what to wager given he mostly talked about what was not his job. I wonder what his job might be now. We know he will not be a fireman because he does not hold a hose. I think we can rule out children's soccer coach. We do know he loves his Maccas so maybe a McDonald's franchisee is a possibility. My bet is on Hawaiian Airlines CEO or maybe even ukulelist for the Sydney symphony orchestra. The 151 to one outside chance is that he might be the 2023 Bulldogs coach, but given he was only ever pretending to like Rugby League, I do not think that is a possibility. We will continue focusing on real jobs for Queenslanders.

### Influenza, Vaccination

**Ms BATES:** My question is to the Minister for Health. The opposition has been contacted by many GPs and pharmacists saying that the first they heard about the government's free flu vaccine was when Queenslanders began calling them to book. When did the government make Queensland GPs and pharmacists aware they were rolling out the free flu vaccine?

**Mrs D'ATH:** I thank the member for her question. As she is aware, we have thousands of GPs and community pharmacies across this decentralised state. What the government did in making this decision—and we certainly sought advice from the public health officials within the Department of Health—was consider whether we wait to announce it and say it takes effect in a week and then the consequences of that would be people cancel their plans to get vaccinated and wait for a week—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Sorry, Minister for Health. Members to my left, the minister is being responsive to the question asked. I would like to hear the answer.

**Mrs D'ATH:** The consequences of that would have been people delaying getting their vaccine until they could access it for free. Over the weekend my officials worked very hard with AMA Queensland, with the Pharmacy Guild and with other stakeholders—

**Mr Bleijie:** Not the GP association.

**Mrs D'ATH:**—including reaching out and speaking to the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners which we have continued to do.

**Mr Bleijie:** Which they said they knew nothing about. Read the paper.

**Mrs D'ATH:** I take that interjection. It is not correct to say that they did not know. As members should know, the AMAQ and the Pharmacy Guild stood up with us when we announced this on Monday. We have used these peak bodies to communicate with stakeholders across the state. It is not just that. The Acting Chief Health Officer had a GP hook-up across the state yesterday morning at 7.30. We have continued to work with the GP Alliance as well.

As I said in my ministerial statement this morning, we continue to work with these peak bodies, with individual GPs and pharmacies, as well as with the GP Alliance, to work through any issues. This is what is important. The opposition might want to listen to this: what is important is that people have been flooding to GPs and pharmacies across the state since we made this announcement. Why?

The Palaszczuk government stood up and provided free vaccines when no-one else has ever done this before because we knew that the cost-of-living pressures on families was a prohibitive factor for people getting the flu shot. We know that this will have an impact on businesses just as much as the health sector because businesses will have large swathes of staff off sick with influenza A if we do not get our community vaccinated this year. We know it is a priority. We know it is good to protect our economy and businesses, to support our health workers and, most importantly, to keep our community safe. That is why we have done what we have done. We will work with all of the GPs and pharmacies to support them. There is no shortage of the vaccine.

*(Time expired)*

### Path to Treaty

**Ms LUI:** My question is of the Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment. Will the Treasurer update the House on the Palaszczuk Labor government's commitment to delivering Path to Treaty with First Nations people? Is the Treasurer aware of any other approaches?

**Mr DICK:** I thank the member for Cook for her question and recognise the outstanding work she is doing in one of the largest electorates in Australia and also for the leadership role she is playing as our state moves together towards the Path to Treaty with our fellow Australians on the path to reconciliation. As we acknowledge each day this House sits, Queensland is home not just to one but to two of the world's oldest continuing living cultures. Every day we are privileged to share the lands, wind and waters of First Nation Queenslanders.

The Palaszczuk Labor government recognises the momentous role that Path to Treaty plays in redefining the relationship between First Nations and non-Indigenous Queenslanders. To that end, in last year's budget I was proud to announce our \$300 million Path to Treaty Fund to provide an ongoing source of finance for this vital initiative. Having Treaty Advancement Committee co-chairs

Jackie Huggins AM and Mick Gooda in the House that day to hear that announcement was a very great honour. In contrast, the person the Queensland LNP is set to deliver as Australia's next federal opposition leader is Peter Dutton.

**Mr DICK:** Back in 2008, on a momentous day for our nation—

**Mr Mander** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member for Everton, you are being disorderly. You are warned under the standing orders.

**Mr DICK:** Back in 2008, on a momentous day for our nation, Peter Dutton was the only member of the Liberal frontbench to walk out of the House of Representatives chamber rather than support Kevin Rudd and federal Labor's apology to the stolen generation. Today Peter Dutton is the only remaining federal MP from that group of six who opposed the apology. Of around 50 MPs in their party room today, the coalition wish to be led by the only one who walked out of the apology. It is typical of the LNP. When Scott Morrison was asked if he would have a referendum on the Uluru Statement from the Heart, his answer was, 'Why would I?' The state LNP had a Young LNP member shamefully denigrate Indigenous culture and then they put him on polling booths at Redcliffe.

The Greens political party are no different. They want to block the referendum. They want to put the referendum at the back of the queue against the wishes of Australians and First Nations people. It is symbolic of the Greens and their wish to lecture and hector others from the position of white, middle-class privilege but, when it comes to listening to the voice of First Nations people, they deliberately and wilfully ignore them.

It is the same for the Leader of the Opposition. Australia deserved more than Scott Morrison, and Queensland deserves more than this leader of the LNP. The members for Clayfield, Moggill and Chatsworth should be listening carefully. Unless the Leader of the Opposition disavows the racial disrespect that Peter Dutton and Scott Morrison have shown to Indigenous Australians, then they will own it, and own it all, and they will be condemned for their political position.

### Influenza, Vaccination

**Mr JANETZKI:** My question is to the Minister for Health. GPs and pharmacists have contacted the opposition to say they have no government-provided flu vaccine and no timetable for when they will. Why did the government not distribute the vaccines before making the announcement?

**Mrs D'ATH:** I thank the member for his question. I think there is a bit of confusion. GPs and pharmacies are already approved to deliver flu vaccines. They already have flu vaccines in stock. What we are going to do is reimburse them for the flu vaccines they have already purchased. They are not waiting for us to send them government vaccines versus non-government vaccines. They have purchased the vaccines. Guess what? The community are not coming out to get vaccinated because it is too costly so we are now covering the cost of those vaccines. That is what we are doing.

We are also making sure that, if there are GPs and pharmacies out there that need more supply, we will support them in getting that supply. We will also make sure that we work with GPs and pharmacies to ensure they have enough PPE and supplies such as syringes. The comment made to me on Monday was that we need to make sure the Commonwealth is still supplying us with adequate stock. We know how much the Morrison government failed in the rollout of the COVID-19 vaccines, not having PPE, not having syringes and not having adequate supply of the vaccines. We know and they know that the Morrison government—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mrs D'ATH:** They are probably a bit anxious because they saw how badly the Morrison government handled the COVID vaccine rollout. They are probably saying, 'Please don't be like Morrison.' We are making sure that we are supporting our GPs, that we are supporting our pharmacists. I know that they all want to help their communities.

If we do not get the community vaccinated, what our GPs will see is an overwhelming number of the community knocking on their doors saying, 'I am seriously unwell. My child is unwell. I need to see a doctor,' and they are not going to be able to see them. They are just not going to be able to cope with the demand that is going to come in their door with influenza A because we know that our GPs are already seeing significant demand as it is. We need to support them. That is why we will reimburse GPs for the vaccines they have already bought but have not administered yet. We will provide financial support to them.

**Mr Crisafulli** interjected.

**Mrs D'ATH:** I take that interjection. Does the Leader of the Opposition support this decision? Does the Leader of the Opposition support a free flu vaccine or not? New South Wales and Victoria are jumping on board. They are all having conversations. They are all considering following Queensland's lead—

**Mr Crisafulli:** Worst since Nuttall.

**Mrs D'ATH:**—because they understand that this is a smart thing to do to protect the community and to protect the economy.

**Ms Palaszczuk:** Take personal offence.

**Mrs D'ATH:** I ask the member to withdraw. I take personal offence at his comments.

**Mr Bleijie:** You didn't hear it! The Premier just told you what it was.

**Mr SPEAKER:** If a tree falls in the woods, it still fell, member for Kawana. Will you withdraw?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I do, Mr Speaker.

### Yarrabilba Primary School

**Mr POWER:** My question is for the Minister for Education. Can the minister update the House on the Palaszczuk government's plan to construct a new primary school at Yarrabilba, another educational facility, and is the minister aware of other policy approaches that might hurt growing areas of Queensland where young families are moving in?

**Ms GRACE:** What a fast-growing area Yarrabilba is. I was there in 2018 with the Premier when we visited the new Yarrabilba primary school. We have invested more money—

**Mr Crandon:** Not as fast as Pimpama!

**Ms GRACE:** I hear the member for Coomera. You are welcome for the new schools in your area too, like the Foxwell Special School. We are going all over the electorates. You are welcome, member for Coomera.

Member for Logan, we have now turned the sod on the second Yarrabilba primary school. The current school has around 1,000 students. We have also invested in additional general learning area buildings worth tens of millions of dollars. What a magnificent school it is. We stood there together at the site turning the sod. What a beautiful site it is there at Yarrabilba. We are very proud that in the fastest growing areas of Queensland we are creating jobs. We are investing in schools. We have now turned the sod on the \$68 million second primary school at Yarrabilba. There are others at Ripley. The Premier and I are looking forward to turning the sod at Ripley. They are on their way. We turned the sod on Augustine Heights and Palmview. The Palmview State Primary School will be fantastic.

**Mr Mickelberg** interjected.

**Ms GRACE:** I take that interjection. Those opposite are never happy. No matter what you do it is complain, complain, complain. They are so out of touch it is not funny. Even when we announce free flu vaccinations they complain. It is absolutely amazing.

**Mr Mickelberg** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Buderim, I appreciate that you are the target of some of the minister's comments but you will cease your interjections, particularly at that volume.

**Ms GRACE:** Do not worry, Mr Speaker; I can outyell him any day.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Let's not do that, Minister.

**Ms GRACE:** They are never happy about anything. They whinge and wine. We air conditioned every classroom, every staffroom, every library, and what do we get from them? Complain, complain, complain. They cannot even once say thank you for policies this Labor government provides to students, teachers, communities and all of the parents and families in Queensland's fastest growing area. For non-government schools we also provide funding through our block grants for air conditioning. Students in the galley, if you are from a non-government school—and I wave to you—you too can get air conditioning in your schools. We have built new halls. We have built performing arts complexes. We have done this all over Queensland. What do we get from those opposite? They are so out of touch. They groan and moan, but I would be worried if I were them too. The last election proved the Liberals are suffering badly at a federal level—

*(Time expired)*

**Mr SPEAKER:** I will issue a general warning: when your allocated three minutes are up you will resume your seat.

### Influenza, Vaccination

**Mr PURDIE:** My question is to the Minister for Health. The government has now corrected their initial failure to cover GPs for the cost of private flu vaccines they held. Will the government now reimburse Queenslanders who have already done their bit and paid to have a flu jab?

**Mrs D'ATH:** Every year there is a flu vaccination rollout across the country. Every year people have had to pay for those vaccinations unless you fall into certain categories. That is covered by the National Immunisation Program under the Commonwealth government. This year what we have seen—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mrs D'ATH:** It is appalling that they think a severe outbreak of influenza A in this state is a joke. People will die of influenza A in Queensland during this winter season. What we are trying to do is save lives.

**A government member:** Vulnerable people.

**Mrs D'ATH:** I take that interjection. It will be older people. It will be vulnerable people. It will also be fit young people in our community because that is where we are seeing the surge right now. Every year we call on the community to come forward and get a flu shot. What we are seeing is a rapid escalation of cases, doubling in more than a week, and a very low take-up of the flu vaccine. In our most vulnerable cohort, 65 plus, only 54 per cent have been vaccinated this year so far and of our children six months to five years, only six per cent. The in-between group, the majority who have to pay, is less than 14 per cent. We have stepped in and done the right thing. We want more people to be vaccinated and we are offering a free flu vaccine. What does the opposition do?

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Members to my left, I am not sure how I can say this in any other way. The minister is being responsive to the question asked. I am listening to the detail being provided. I ask that you listen to the answer or I will start naming members.

**Mrs D'ATH:** The opposition comes in here and plays politics over something that should be supported in a bipartisan way. The Leader of the Opposition said, 'I'll be a new leader. I'll be a different leader. When something good is done, I'll stand up and acknowledge it.' What a load of rubbish! The Leader of the Opposition could never, ever bring himself to support a good initiative when he sees he can play politics. He will always play politics.

I am very pleased at what I have seen posted on social media this morning. Premier Daniel Andrews said, 'The government is working with the Pharmacy Guild and the AMA to make flu shots free for all Victorians. Queensland has made them free for people aged six months and over and New South Wales is considering a similar arrangement.' Whether it is a Liberal government or a Labor government, they all understand that Queensland is leading the way. They are willing to see a good idea and support that good idea, as opposed to coming out and bagging it and finding holes to punch in it. It is something that will help support our economy and small business and keep the community safe.

### Health Infrastructure

**Ms RICHARDS:** My question is to the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services. Can the minister update the House on how the Palaszczuk government is getting on with delivering health infrastructure for Queenslanders, and is the minister aware of any alternative approaches?

**Mrs D'ATH:** I thank the member for Redlands for her question. I know how excited she is to see her satellite hospital coming out of the ground. It was a pleasure to recently join members from Redlands, Springfield, Morayfield and Pumicestone at the sod turnings of our hospitals. Of course, that was at Redlands and Caboolture, but we have seven satellite hospitals being built across South-East Queensland, as we committed to do at the last election. We will be building satellite hospitals in Redlands, Eight Mile Plains, Caboolture, Ripley, Kallangur, Tugun and Bribie Island. I know that all of those members are very excited about the fact we are starting to see sod turned. This marks a really exciting step in the progress of these projects.

They are not just health initiative projects but they are great job-generating projects as well. We are supporting local businesses, supporting jobs and building the health infrastructure we need into the future. These satellite hospitals are on top of the infrastructure we have been delivering since we came into government. Yesterday I mentioned Blackall, Roma and the Kingaroy Hospital. I know the member for Nanango must be thrilled to have the state-of-the-art \$92.5 million Kingaroy Hospital. We have built

new mental health facilities, palliative care, maternity care and we have new theatres. We are putting CTs and MRIs into our hospitals, more renal dialysis chairs, and we have a pipeline of projects going forward because we understand the importance of investing in this infrastructure.

While we did all of this—and we continue to do this and plan for our health demands into the future—those opposite continue to pepper us with questions around patient off-stretcher times and free flu vaccines and our response. Can I just remind the House: ‘Long delay for treatment leaves patient in agony’. When was this? August 2012. ‘Ramped patient should go to GP, says Minister Lawrence Springborg’, now president of the LNP—August 2012. ‘The system has let them down’—2012. ‘Emergency shakeup: health minister Lawrence Springborg says ramping will continue in Queensland hospitals even after banning on bypass starts next year. Springborg also admits that elective surgery has been postponed in some hospitals due to an increase in severe flu season’. ‘Flu stretches hospital resources, with the RBH, Logan, Caboolture, Redland, Prince Charles, QEII and PA Hospital all put on bypass during the flu season’. They come in here and criticise us for providing flu vaccines to keep people out of hospitals. I am happy that I am part of the Palaszczuk government.

### **Australian Country Choice, Land Use**

**Mr KATTER:** My question is to the Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning. The Queensland government claims a commitment to protecting and growing Queensland’s critical supply chains and manufacturing industries. Will the minister then intervene to mitigate the serious risk posed to the future of the ACC abattoir and its 800 employees—and the broader Queensland meat production industry—by the Brisbane City Council’s approval for developers to build a gym and cafes across the road?

**Dr MILES:** I thank the member for Traeger for his question. It is a really important one and something that I have been working closely on. Again, it is disappointing to see the LNP not standing up for agricultural industries and their supply chains, as is the case with Australian Country Choice. It is important that our planning systems ensure that people can work close to their homes. Australian Country Choice have invested hundreds of millions of dollars in their Brisbane abattoir facility. They have been there more than 100 years. They have been consistently supported by Labor governments. More than 2,000 people work there. Their current concern—and what is slowing their plans to invest further—is the continued approval by the LNP at a Brisbane City Council level of inappropriate developments nearby. It is putting jobs at risk. It is putting millions of dollars at risk. It is putting our value chains right across the state at risk.

When I first took over this role, one of the first things I did was direct the Brisbane City Council that all future non-industrial development approvals must be forwarded to the state government so that we could monitor the ongoing approvals of developments within the TradeCoast. After continued concern from landholders about the lack of protection for their investments, in June 2021 I introduced a temporary local planning instrument that limited the ability of Brisbane City Council to continue to approve inappropriate land uses. I am aware that the Brisbane City Council wants to review its industrial land planning across the city, and I have offered to support that and resource that. I share the concerns of the member for Traeger that we will see a disruption in our value chains and we will see jobs lost if Australian Country Choice cannot continue to invest there. In April I wrote again to the Lord Mayor, and I table the letter for the benefit of the member for Traeger.

*Tabled paper:* Letter, dated 17 April 2022, from the Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics Infrastructure, Hon. Dr Steven Miles, to the Right Honourable the Lord Mayor of Brisbane, Councillor Adrian Schrinner, regarding the status of the future planning for the Colmslie Road Industry Precinct [\[706\]](#).

I urged them to expedite their review of industrial land uses, I urged them to properly deal with compliance issues that have been raised and I offered further support from the state to work with them to achieve that. In answer to the direct question from the member for Traeger—of whether the state will intervene—I can say that we have been intervening and we will continue to do so because we think saving these jobs is really important. We acknowledge how important this asset is for the whole state and we will continue to work on it.

### **Federal Labor Government, Integrity**

**Mr RUSSO:** My question is to the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence. Can the Attorney-General update the House on how Queensland’s integrity institutions will be complemented by an Albanese Labor government? Is the Attorney-General aware of any alternative approaches?

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I thank the member for Toohey for his question. I know he was out there working hard with the re-elected Labor member for Moreton, Graham Perrett, and talking to his constituents about why we needed a federal ICAC. I am delighted, like all members of this House—

**A government member:** All Australians.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** All Australians! I take that interjection. I am delighted that we will finally have a federal ICAC. Despite it being an election promise of Scott Morrison, they absolutely refused, and I wonder why. Was it the sports rorts, was it the community grants rorts, or was it Christian Porter? Who knows. They did not want a federal ICAC. In fact, it was so bad that last week over 30 esteemed former judges said that enough was enough and that a federal ICAC was essential to halt 'the serious erosion of our shared democratic principle'.

Of course here in Queensland we have robust integrity institutions like the CCC and our courts. It is interesting that the member for Kawana comes in here quite regularly and seems hell-bent on underpinning and disregarding the law and our institutions, including the CCC and including the courts. Earlier this year, under the cover of parliamentary privilege, he came in here and said something which, if he had said it outside, would clearly be contempt of court. In fact, the former chief justice of Queensland made a rare statement before she left office condemning his behaviour. That is no surprise though, because we know that the entire judiciary has no respect for the member for Kawana—being the worst attorney-general in Queensland's history.

Earlier this month, he asked repeatedly for the acting chair of the CCC to release this report, even though the report was subject to ongoing legal proceedings and the acting chair said that it would be acting illegally. The member for Kawana wants the CCC, wants the government, to act illegally. This is the former attorney-general of Queensland. It is not just ignorance; it is a malicious attack on the foundations of our justice system.

**Mr Bleijie** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Kawana.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** He sacked the PCCC in the middle of the night. He comes in here or it would be contempt of court. You have got the former chief justice and the CCC chair saying he would be acting illegally. In fact, when the member for Kawana was on this side of the House he talked a lot about the importance of ministerial indemnity—he talked a lot about how important it was for him to get indemnity—but it seems that now he is in opposition he is happy to play politics.

*(Time expired)*

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Kawana, again, you were surprisingly vocal, given the content of much of the minister's answer! However, you did one thing fundamentally wrong and that was you did not put your comments through the chair. You are warned under the standing orders.

### Emissions Reduction

**Mr BERKMAN:** My question is to the Premier. Last weekend Queensland voted for real climate action, yet Queensland Labor is essentially still pushing Scott Morrison's emissions reduction target of only 30 per cent by 2030. How many more seats does Labor have to lose before it will lift its emissions reduction target to match the science?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Obviously, the member has not been listening to everything I have been saying today in this House about this government delivering. It is all well and good for the member for Maiwar to stand up and have these grand ideas, but there is no real action because the action happens when you are in government—not on the sidelines and not beating your chest, but by taking real action when you are in government.

**Mr Dick** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I will take that interjection—opposing Kevin Rudd back in 2009. That is what the Greens did. That was their history. We would have had it for 10 years.

**Mr Furner** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Minister Furner remembers that well. Let me say very clearly that we have a very strong renewable energy target and we are acting on that. I said today phenomenally \$10 billion worth of investment is happening in this state. We are getting on with the job. Business is getting on with the job. The agricultural sector is getting on with the job. The only people who failed to hear the community's calls were those opposite. Scott Morrison put his head in the sand, along with everyone else, and they failed to back renewable energy projects in regional Queensland where there are jobs.



**Dr Miles** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** That is right. We still do not know what the Nationals think about that.

Let me say also that the Liberal and National parties really need to think about—it is a challenge for Peter Dutton now as it looks like he is going to become the leader—what will be the LNP's policy on renewables and climate action. What is their policy?

**Mr BERKMAN:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance. The question referred only to the—

**Mr SPEAKER:** The Premier has sat down and she has finished—

**Mr BERKMAN:**—emissions reduction target and the answer—

**Mr SPEAKER:** There is no point of order—

**Mr BERKMAN:**—went nowhere near emissions reduction.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member! Member, there is no point of order. The Premier has ceased her contribution and I give you guidance that the next time I ask you to come to order, you will do so instead of continuing with your point of order.

### **Electric Super Highway**

**Mr BROWN:** My question is to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. Could the minister update the House on Queensland's Electric Super Highway and its expansion into regional Queensland?

**Mr BAILEY:** I thank the member for Capalaba, a strong supporter of action on climate change and decarbonising our transport sector. This is part of our government's commitment to act on climate change; to decarbonise the transport sector. It makes up 14 per cent of emissions across the economy, so we have to be moving into clean energy. People would be aware that we have 31 electric vehicle charging stations across the state. We have added another 18 as part of the budget last year, and we are, I am very happy to announce, consistent with what the Premier said earlier on, adding another six today which are all in Western Queensland—Cunnamulla, Canoona, St George, Rolleston, Richmond and Injune. All of those areas will now be covered with electric vehicle charging stations. We are happy to look after them. We will have 55 fast-charging locations amounting to 5,300 kilometres in length. We have the longest electric vehicle superhighway in one jurisdiction anywhere in the world, and we have just added to that.

We see that the LNP have undermined that transition to clean energy every step of the way, saying that it would 'end the weekend' and that you could not tow your boat nor tow your trailer. We all remember that. It featured a lot in our advertising recently.

What we need now is cooperation with a federal Albanese Labor government that understands the transition to clean energy. We have announced our \$3,000 subsidy for people who buy electric vehicles. With the federal Albanese government commitment of \$2,000, we will see a substantial rebate for people going into their pockets to get electric vehicles into the economy, and the sooner we get the new units in there, the sooner we get a second-hand electric vehicle market as well in a couple of years time. We are making up for lost time after the lost decade under the LNP and the federal government.

With regard to our target, we are committed to net zero. Those opposite still have no commitment to net zero. The only major political party in Australia, the Queensland LNP, the perennial election losers, are not committed to net zero and it is to their shame and their embarrassment. If you want to understand the economy, you have to understand the energy transition.

The Leader of the Opposition holds himself up as something different, something new, but it is the same old LNP negativity, running the economy down, not understanding where the jobs are and not understanding that clean energy transition is key. They have no policy on climate and no policy in terms of net zero commitment whatsoever. He is one of the most conservative opposition leaders this state has ever seen. He does not understand the economy because he does not understand action on climate change. I look forward to the next election when he comes and puts forward what he will cobble together with the old Nationals there—

*(Time expired)*

### Bundaberg Hospital, Clinical Incidents

**Mr BENNETT:** My question is to the Minister for Health. Media reports and whistleblowers have raised concerns about many patients being given non-prescribed medication on multiple occasions by several nurses at the Bundaberg Hospital. Will the minister now tell the people of Bundaberg how many staff and patients are involved?

**Mrs D'ATH:** I thank the member for his question. As I said yesterday, this is a serious issue and I can advise the House that I am aware of two separate issues at Wide Bay Hospital and Health Service at Bundaberg Hospital. With regard to the first incident, I can advise that the HHS recently conducted an internal review into these concerns and determined appropriate practice had not been undertaken in regard to a single incident with a standard prescription drug, which is the one I mentioned yesterday. The HHS implemented a number of remedial actions and, as a result, the nurse involved is no longer able to administer medications. The internal review of this incident indicated there was no patient harm as a consequence of her actions, but there was disciplinary action taken.

With regards to the second incident which is completely separate from the first, an appropriate HR process was undertaken. The staff member is no longer working for the HHS and two other nurses associated with this incident are undergoing appropriate disciplinary actions. This matter has resulted in increased emphasis on regular ward auditing and meetings with ward nurses regarding medication management and adhering to procedures. The internal review indicated there was no evidence to indicate there was patient harm related to the incidents and a review into drug management on medical ward level 3 has been conducted by the health service.

As I said yesterday, although there have been no findings of any harm to individual patients, there is a review currently being examined by Clinical Excellence Queensland which will determine any further steps. Until this examination occurs, I will not be going into any further detail, but we want to make sure, in addition to the disciplinary action and the reviews that have occurred locally, that it is also being overseen by Clinical Excellence to satisfy ourselves that there are not any ongoing issues.

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

## TRADING (ALLOWABLE HOURS) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

### Introduction



**Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (11.16 am): I present a bill for an act to amend the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006, the Education (Queensland College of Teachers) Act 2005 and the Trading (Allowable Hours) Act 1990 for particular purposes. I table the bill, the explanatory notes and a statement of compatibility with human rights. I nominate the Education, Employment and Training Committee to consider the bill.

*Tabled paper:* Trading (Allowable Hours) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022 [\[707\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Trading (Allowable Hours) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022, explanatory notes [\[708\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Trading (Allowable Hours) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022, statement of compatibility with human rights [\[709\]](#).

I am pleased to introduce the Trading (Allowable Hours) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. The bill implements a recommendation of the recent inquiry by the Queensland parliamentary Education, Employment and Training Committee to fine-tune the operation of Queensland's current trading hours arrangements and provide ongoing confidence and certainty for our vital retail sector, businesses, workers and consumers alike.

The committee, expertly chaired by the member for Redlands—and I thank all committee members and the chair—was asked to conduct a five-yearly legislative review of the Trading (Allowable Hours) Act, particularly the impact of the trading hours reforms introduced by the Palaszczuk government back in 2017.

As the House would recall, the 2017 trading hours amendments were a landmark reform modernising the streamlining of Queensland's previously complex trading hour laws which had been acting as an often confusing handbrake on jobs and business expansion for far too long.

Successive governments had put trading hours in the too-hard basket for over 20 years, but the Palaszczuk government tackled the issue head on, working diligently with stakeholders and the crossbench at the time and passing amendments that reduced 99 different trading-hour zones across the state to just 12.

To provide a period of stability and end the merry-go-round of trading hours applications in the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission, the 2017 amendments also included a moratorium on changes to trading hours for a period of five years with a requirement for a review at the end of those five years, which leads us to the bill before us today. The committee found in its review that the current trading hours arrangements introduced in 2017 had operated effectively, providing consistency and stability which has benefited individual businesses, consumers and workers as well as the retail sector as a whole. The committee did not recommend any wholesale changes or significant deregulation of current trading hours. Instead, it recommended a range of amendments aimed at reducing the regulatory burden and fine-tuning current trading hours arrangements.

The committee made nine recommendations, all of which the government has accepted and the bill now gives effect to these recommendations. I thank the committee again for its work and the extensive process it undertook to hear the views of stakeholders and communities across the state. The committee's inquiry received 28 submissions across all relevant stakeholder groups including union and employer groups, small business representatives, tourism groups, industry and regional bodies, local councils and other interested parties.

The committee also facilitated four public briefing sessions and seven public hearings in both metropolitan and regional areas. I think that that was appropriate. It was really good to go out to these regional areas to conduct these public hearings and hear firsthand how the trading hours were operating. It was a big change to reduce 99 different trading-hour zones to 12. I think the committee did a good job in collecting the information for the recommendations it made regarding the bill. I now turn to the details of the bill.

At the centre of the bill are four new simplified and streamlined core trading-hour areas for larger non-exempt shops, largely modelled on existing trading hours. The new type 1 trading areas category has the most expansive trading hours: 6 am to 10 pm Monday to Friday, 7 am to 10 pm on Saturdays and 7 am to 9 pm on Sunday and public holidays except for closed days such as Christmas Day and Easter Friday. Type 1 covers non-exempt shops in locations which already enjoy those longer trading hours—these have been a part of decisions that have been handed down—such as the Cairns CBD, New Farm in Brisbane, the Gold Coast tourist area and the Pacific Fair shopping centre. The type 2 trading areas category continues the existing trading hours arrangements for the remainder of South-East Queensland, which are 7 am to 9 pm Monday to Saturday and 9 am to 6 pm on Sunday and public holidays.

The type 3 trading areas category covers mainly the larger cities and centres in regional Queensland and continues their current trading-hour arrangements, including 8 am to 9 pm Monday to Friday, 8 am to 6 pm Saturday and Sunday, and public holiday trading from 9 am to 6 pm. An exception to this will be the Townsville tourist area, which will retain its own unique 7 am start from Monday to Friday. The type 4 trading areas category combines the former 'seaside resort' and 'any other area' categories into a single category, which I think was a really good recommendation. In doing so, the type 4 trading area adopts the more favourable permitted hours of the former seaside resort category. This will mean that 21 smaller regional towns will have public holiday trading for the first time but will obviously continue to have no Sunday trading. By making that small change, we have really assisted some of these regional towns. They will be able to open for public holidays for the first time, and I know the committee heard the submissions made about that in that area.

To provide continued stability, the four core trading-hour areas will remain fixed in the legislation. We want to make sure it is simple. People can go in and know their area and they will know when they are trading; it is fixed in the legislation. The committee found that the moratorium and reforms to restrict the QIRC's power to vary prescribed core trading hours have been effective in achieving stability and certainty for industry stakeholders. I do not know what feedback other members receive, but that is certainly the feedback we receive; it has provided stability in what have been unprecedented times and provided them the ability to grow their businesses in a stable environment without threats of constant changes to trading hours. I hear about that from these businesses all the time when I am out and about in Queensland and when I am liaising with stakeholders.

We will not be returning to the previous system pre-2017 where applications could be made to the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission to set new trading hours or vary the prescribed hours in the act. This created an unworkable hotchpotch of almost 100 trading-hour zones across the state spread over 40-plus pages of QIRC decisions. Imagine trying to find which category of trading hours someone fit into when they had to plough through 40 pages of decisions and nearly 100 trading-hour categories. I am pleased to say this bill cleans that all up, which we started to do in 2017.

Instead, the bill will provide a more limited and targeted role for the QIRC to make orders to move a location from one trading type to another. For example, if people are currently in type 3, they may want to move to type 1 or change the prescribed boundary of a particular locality, if needed, to deal flexibly with changing consumer, community or retail needs. If it grows and they want to change their boundaries, they can but the hours still remain in that type set under legislation, which of course will be reviewed in the future.

The bill makes clear that the QIRC can only make an order that increases the core trading hours of a location. It cannot make orders that move the location into a trading hours area that has shorter permitted trading hours. What we do not want to do is be detrimental in this. It can be moved to expand and grow, but obviously the reverse cannot be done. That could have a very detrimental impact on businesses, so applications like that would not be allowed under this provision. That protects those businesses that have bought in those areas. They know what their trading hours are. They have bought as a long-term investment and would not wish to find that an application could possibly take them out of one zone and put them into another which would impact their business. I think that recommendation is very good one. We will do this. The bill confirms this.

The bill also clarifies the QIRC's powers and procedures for making a trading-hour order and ensures transparency and clarity about the criteria the QIRC will consider when making these orders. Some of the feedback has been that it is often difficult to ascertain exactly why certain decisions have been made, so we will make that a little bit clearer for businesses. The criteria the commission will consider include: the needs of industry in the area including the tourism industry, the likely impact of the order on employees and employment, the interests of consumers, and the view of the relevant local government if they are making the application or they seek to be heard. We think that local government has a pretty good understanding of their locations. They, too, can be heard in the QIRC.

Over time, as locations move into new trading hours zones as a result of QIRC trading hours orders, the Office of Industrial Relations will publish and maintain a consolidated reference of all trading hours arrangements. As a department we will consolidate any changes and make them easy to find and easy to read for all concerned.

Under the bill, the QIRC will retain its important function of making special event declarations, which exempt shops in a stated area from trading hours restrictions for a defined period of time. The bill will provide clear guidance about the factors that should be considered by the QIRC when declaring a special event. These factors reflect those recommended by the committee and include a new consideration for the QIRC to determine whether there is a need for extended trading hours during the event; the size of the event; whether it is held at multiple places; predicted attendance numbers; expected media coverage; and the event's contribution to Queensland's national or international reputation.

As a prime example of an event that might attract a special event declaration, the bill provides the example of the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games. At the time we brought in the new legislation, it was known as a 'Commonwealth Games special event'. The Commonwealth Games, the Olympic Games and the Paralympic Games are the kinds of events for which the commission can say, 'You can now trade. This is a significant national and international event. It is an event that is held over a number of areas. There is significant media interest.' Then we can have a special event declaration and free up the hours that shops can trade, which I think is a very good idea. The bill clarifies that the QIRC must consider the views of local government and industrial organisations in determining applications for special event declarations. That is largely under the criteria that I mentioned previously.

We recognise that changes to trading hours can have impacts on retail workers and their families. That is why voluntary work protections are an essential component of the existing trading hours framework in Queensland, ensuring workers are not disadvantaged and can freely elect whether or not to work extended trading hours. We know that this can have significant implications for families. We want to ensure those voluntary arrangements are protected. I am therefore glad to inform the House that the bill will strengthen existing voluntary work protections for employees.

Currently under the act, an employer cannot coerce, threaten, intimidate or harass employees to work extended hours beyond the shop's core trading hours. It is an offence to do so. However, an exemption applies if an industrial instrument provides arrangements for working extended hours. The bill removes this exemption and ensures these offences apply irrespective of any industrial instrument. There were cases of part-time workers who had to pick up children or care for family who could not do so when work was sprung upon them. The industrial instrument provided that they could, so there was a grey area. We are going to make that exemption clear.

We know that most employers and workers are flexible and work these matters out on the ground, but when it comes to the pinch and you simply cannot do it for whatever reason—and they are good reasons—then there should be protections. You should not be made to do something that you are not able to do.

The bill provides that voluntary work protections and related offence provisions apply to future scenarios where extended working hours could be required, such as extended hours that might result from amendments to the act, or if the QIRC makes a trading area order or a special event declaration. For example, if there is a special event declaration that extends trading hours and you are unable to work the extended hours that the facility or business is able to operate, these protections will apply. Often it is great for the business and for those events, but we want to ensure protections for working parents and carers and those who have specific health needs that allow them to work only certain hours in a day.

To allow sufficient time for the changes to be bedded down and to allow industry and the QIRC to adapt, the bill extends the existing moratorium on the making of trading hours orders for a further 12 months, until 31 August 2023. The moratorium has been highly successful in terms of business making plans. They knew that a review of the moratorium would occur after five years, and the committee has expertly conducted that review. To automatically now make changes, without some sort of transitional arrangements, I think would be unfair. The committee has, I think rightly, recommended that we extend that moratorium for another 12 months, to the end of August 2023. It was due to expire at the end of August 2022. The additional 12 months will give businesses the ability to transition to an environment in which they know that changes could happen. The QIRC could be asked to make determinations on, for example, Sunday trading in areas that currently do not have it or on extending an area from one type to another type. It gives people the ability to analyse what that may mean for their business and protects them for a further 12 months. The industry is very grateful for that provision. They were supportive of the five-year moratorium, which will continue for another 12 months. There were submissions to the committee—the chair is nodding—and that recommendation has been picked up. To clarify, no applications can be made to the QIRC in the meantime.

The bill also extends a moratorium which currently exempts all shops in the Mossman and Port Douglas tourist area from trading hours restrictions for a further 12 months, until 31 August 2023. This will ensure continued and vital support for tourism in this region, particularly following the impact of the COVID-19 health pandemic. Once the extended moratorium ends, the Mossman and Port Douglas tourist area will continue to benefit from the favourable tourist area trading hours of the type 1 trading area.

The bill makes some minor amendments to the Education (Queensland College of Teachers) Act 2005 and the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 to make permanent arrangements that were temporarily in place during the COVID-19 health pandemic that have proved to work well. The COVID-19 Emergency Response Act 2020 was passed in 2020 to protect the health, safety and welfare of persons affected by the COVID-19 health pandemic and to facilitate the continuation of public administration, judicial process and activities disrupted by the COVID-19 health pandemic. To achieve these purposes, the act allowed extraordinary regulations to temporarily modify primary legislation. As an example, the Education Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Regulation 2020 was an extraordinary regulation which modified education legislation to ensure appropriate administration and regulation of the education sector during the pandemic.

Prior to its expiry on 30 April 2022, the Department of Education consulted with relevant stakeholders about the implications of provisions in the Education Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Regulation expiring and the potential for them to be made permanent. I thank those stakeholders who were consulted and who provided their views. As a consequence of this consultation, two elements of the extraordinary regulation were identified as having value on a more permanent basis. I am sure that every member of this House will support them.

The first of these elements is a modification to the Education (Queensland College of Teachers) Act to enable online attendance at meetings related to Queensland College of Teachers investigations and allow for production of items required at meetings to occur via post or online in addition to being in person. Previously the regulations did not allow online hearings or submissions to be made. Clearly in COVID-19 times this was often difficult. The regulations allowed it to happen. It has worked extremely well. We are now making that permanent.

The other modification is to the Education (General Provisions) Act and the Education (General Provisions) Regulation to allow P&C meetings required by the legislation to also be conducted via communications technology. Previously all P&C meetings had to be held face to face. During COVID

times it was allowable to do that via Zoom or other online mechanisms and that has worked extremely well. My understanding is that they are getting great attendance online. They are making great decisions. They all submitted they would like to see that continue. We are going to make that permanent as well.

The Queensland College of Teachers advise that the ability to use communications technology to conduct meetings would have continued value given general changes in the use of communications technology. With Queensland's dispersed geography often it is hard for these people to attend face-to-face meetings and various reasons may otherwise prevent someone from attending a meeting. P&Cs Queensland have advised that a continued ability to conduct meetings via communications technology would be helpful given physical attendance can be hampered by distance, on-farm commitments, poor roads and natural disasters.

As we know, the P&Cs must continue on with their meetings. They do a fantastic job. Last week it was great to join the member for Moggill at Kenmore State High School to celebrate P&C Day. The students, teachers and the school community, including the principal, did an excellent job in the celebrations of P&C Day at Kenmore State High School and I thank them. We have listened to this feedback and consequently amendments in this bill will make permanent these sensible, temporary modifications.

The trading hours reforms the Palaszczuk government introduced in 2017 modernised our trading hours framework in Queensland. We worked with stakeholders across the retail sector—large retailers, small and medium operators, unions, as well as the crossbench—to deliver reforms that simplified and streamlined arrangements, cut red tape and removed anomalies. We also have made it simpler and easier for businesses to get the information they require on how to run their businesses. The LNP at the time dealt themselves out of the debate, refusing to have any sensible discussion about reforming trading hours in Queensland.

The committee's inquiry confirmed that this trading hours framework has worked effectively over the past five years and, subject to some sensible recommendations for the fine-tuning and further simplification that is reflected in this bill, continues to serve Queensland well. When I was minister and saw the 40 pages of QIRC decisions and sifted through submissions of an inquiry we had, we thought something needed to be done. It was the Palaszczuk Labor government that had the foresight to tackle this issue and do something about it. We were the ones working with industry when the five-year moratorium came in. It was a great example of working with small and medium businesses to protect their interests, and did it not serve industry well? We did not know back then that we would be hit with a pandemic and its implications. Even during the pandemic we were still able to help. Business were able to open earlier so senior members of our communities could go in to shop alone. They were accommodated under this act.

The committee has done a great job in making sure that these benefits are extended across Queensland. I thank them for their input and their sensible, balanced approach. The 12-month extension of the moratorium gives businesses time to adjust. Good Labor governments listen to businesses and communities and provide for them. The committee's inquiry has confirmed that this trading hours framework has worked very effectively. We are fine-tuning the framework for the benefit of all businesses right throughout Queensland. This is another demonstration of how the Palaszczuk government delivers lasting, practical reforms for the benefit of all Queenslanders, working with stakeholders—and I thank them once again—consulting widely and genuinely.

I thank the committee for the work that they did in consulting and the sensible recommendations that came forward, balancing the needs of workers, businesses, consumers and the general public. These are not easy things to balance. Often workers have very different interests to employers, but we have been able to work through that. The committee did it. We did it when these trading hours laws were introduced in 2017 and we continue to do it. It is not easy, but we have been able to bring about that balanced, sensible approach. We are ensuring that appropriate protections are in place for workers and providing certainty and, more importantly, stability for businesses right around Queensland no matter where they are. I am pleased to say that is the Labor way. We work with stakeholders to find the right path to go down, where everybody feels that they have been listened to and that we are providing a balanced and stable environment for all concerned in a very important part of our economy, the retail sector. The electorate of McConnel has some of the best retailers in Queensland.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Ms GRACE:** I know that not all members of parliament will agree with that statement. I am hearing from other members how great the retailers in their areas are. We are all proud of the businesses in our areas and the work that they do. We want to make sure that when we legislate trading hours, it is a framework that supports them and provides a stable environment. This bill does that. I commend the bill to the House.

### First Reading

**Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (11.47 am): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

### Referral to Education, Employment and Training Committee

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


I remind the following members that they are on a warning: the members for Nanango, Everton and Kawana.

## BUILDING AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

### Second Reading

Resumed from 24 May (see p. 1294), on motion of Mr de Brenni—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (11.48 am): I rise to speak on the Building and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. The bill was referred to the Transport and Resources Committee so ably chaired by the member for Kurwongbah. Many have falsely said that he is the best chair of committees, but I will leave that alone. Very few have mentioned the erstwhile deputy chair. In fact, none of the members have come forward and said he is the best deputy of this chamber—and neither do I.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr POWER:** I am not taking your interjection, but you agree that Lachie Millar is not the greatest deputy chair. I note that we have students here from Saint Thomas More Primary School. As we saw on the weekend with the election result, our young people are passionately interested in the transition of our energy systems to clean, environmentally friendly, renewable energy. I know that the minister is a passionate advocate for that as well.

I refer in particular to a provision identified as ‘ban the banners’ where local bodies corporate or developers have—I think irrationally and unreasonably—restricted the location of solar panels. Those restrictions can be really unreasonable, impractical and against our collective goal—although when I say ‘collective’, I mean those of us on this side of the House—to change Queensland’s energy system to make it more efficient and renewable, enhancing our goal to get to net zero emissions.

One of the most important contributions towards that goal is the installation of solar panels. However, some developers or bodies corporate have put caveats on homeowners that stop them from installing solar panels with the most efficient orientation, that is, facing towards the sun. Depending on the angle of the roof, it will be facing north, east or west—but mostly north. Homeowners have been forced to install solar panels so that they do not affect the street appeal of the house because the developer or body corporate had what I want call a nimby-eyed or a ‘not in my backyard’—or, in this case, ‘not in my front yard’—view of street appeal. Personally, I think solar panels or solar hot-water systems are beautiful because they contribute towards our clean green energy future. They are a part of the energy plan that we have going forward. This legislation will make it absolutely clear that we are committed to the efficient use of solar systems.

I note that not all developers take this approach. We are not in any way attempting to target developers or those with apartment blocks who are making a big contribution in this space. For instance, in my own area, in Yarrabilba the developer gave homeowners an extra \$1,000 to install solar panels

on their roofs. While that was for a limited group of people, it showed the commitment, the support and the positivity of that developer towards solar energy. I know that in Logan there are huge numbers of solar installations because the people want to do the right thing to support our new energy systems and they are passionate about cheaper bills, which is vitally important. I recognise in the House that the 'ban the banners' policy targets those who are making irrational and unfair bans on homeowners. That is something that this government is very passionate about. We want to make sure that people can install solar systems on the north side of their roofs, which is something that I am looking forward to doing.

The one thing that concerns me most about this nimbyism and other irrational attacks is the involvement of the Greens. We have seen Bob Brown campaign against fantastic windmills that can generate power for his home state, Victoria and other places. He campaigned against them. We know that there are trade-offs with these things, but they are so nimby-eyed that they attack the very energy sources that are vital to our future. The Greens are anti-future energy. We are really disappointed that there is such a nimby-eyed attitude to this. The Greens are totally against renewable energy. Whenever they get the chance, they will attack all of the things we want to do to get to a net zero emissions future.

The Greens are so nimby-eyed that they are against all of the positive things that could be achieved with housing. They are against housing developments being located near transport routes, near jobs and near services. They want to push people further and further into the outer suburbs, which will mean greater energy consumption. They are against the necessary trade-offs we have to make to build housing near jobs and transport. As someone who represents outer suburbs, I look with regret at their nimby-eyed attitudes. They are anti the generation of energy through windmills. They are anti the construction of housing in places such as West End, which has really good connections to transport and jobs. Their nimby-eyed attitudes hold them back, just as the 'ban the banners' developers have been holding back reasonable homeowners from doing the right thing for the environment and to reduce their power bills through the efficient installation of solar panels and solar hot-water systems.

The amendments in the bill provide homeowners with certainty that they cannot be pushed back by developers and bodies corporate. The bill also gives certainty to solar installers about where solar panels and hot-water systems can be installed so that they do not have to second-guess after the planning has been done. This is about empowering the homeowner to install solar infrastructure at the preferred location on their roof.

I note the Minister for Education is in the House. She has done a fantastic job in putting air conditioning into our schools through the Cooler Cleaner Schools program. The department is also installing solar panels at our schools. When facing north or the most efficient orientation, solar panels are perfectly aligned with the use of electricity in schools. The Minister for Education absolutely knows how important the orientation of solar panels are because they are being installed at our schools as we speak. I recognise the fantastic investment we are making in our schools to reduce powers bills and to transition to a net zero emissions future. These amendments are vital so that homeowners can also do that with certainty.

It is really important to note how these amendments will affect someone who has been prohibited from placing solar installations at their preferred location. The bill will provide relief for any homeowner who has been prevented from installing solar panels or a solar hot-water system in their preferred location since 1 January 2010, regardless of the unfair caveats a developer may have made on the grounds of aesthetics. As I said, I think solar panels are hugely attractive because they show that the homeowner not only wants to have cheaper power bills but also wants to make a contribution towards Queensland's goal of net zero emissions. Therefore, a court order enforcing an inhibition will cease to have effect on the commencement of these provisions. As the minister has said, this is about empowering the homeowner to make a difference. If a developer has withheld consent to install a solar system in the homeowner's preferred location, the developer must reconsider giving consent if the homeowner requests it.

I ask developers to be reasonable. As I said, the developer of Yarrabilba, Lendlease, offered people \$1,000 for solar installations. Lendlease is not a small developer, but they recognise that, when people drive into a development such as Yarrabilba and see solar panels on the roofs, they know that it is a community that is really committed to changing our energy systems. I commend the Building and Other Legislation Amendment Bill to the House.



**Mr PERRETT** (Gympie—LNP) (11.58 am): I rise to speak on the Building and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. This bill aims to support contemporary consumer expectations about efficiency regarding 'ban the banners' of solar hot-water systems and solar panels, expanding the use of



greywater, and holding tanks for sewage and greywater. It will also enhance the regulatory framework regarding head contractor licensing, sharing information and decision-making, and make minor technical amendments.

The 'ban the banners' provisions relate to solar hot-water systems and solar panels. Following a lengthy legal battle, a developer won a case against a resident in relation to where she could place solar panels on her roof. The state government made assurances that this legislation would stand up. It did not and the minister made an ex gratia payment to cover the excessive legal bill. Simply removing her solar panels left the homeowner with an excessive legal bill. The situation was a direct consequence of the mess created by legislation passed by the Bligh government. Currently, developers can determine where solar panels should be placed on a property. That is regardless of whether the location provides optimal access to solar rays. In other words, they can make the call based on aesthetic reasons and not on providing the homeowner with the best chance to benefit from the solar panels.

The Bligh-era legislation failed to protect residents. The result was that this government put someone through the legal wringer all because yet another piece of legislation was flawed. This is a familiar theme for Labor: it did not get the basics right. One in three homes in Queensland has rooftop solar. There are now 697,000 residential solar systems and many on business premises. It makes no sense to restrict home owners by having rooftop solar placed in shadows and not having peak efficiency. The department advised that this amendment is now needed to protect home owners to gain from the full benefits of their solar panels by clarifying provisions in the legislation 'to both the installation of the solar panels on a roof as well as locating the solar panels at the home owner's preferred location on their roof'.

It is five years since the tragic Grenfell Tower fire in London. The combustible external cladding on the building ensured the fire spread swiftly. It has been five years—half a decade—since that fire, yet the government still has no real solution to address the presence of combustible cladding remaining on private buildings. At the end of April there were nearly 30 government sites, including schools, hospitals, courts and libraries, with flammable cladding; however, the government has no answer on how to fix this problem on privately owned buildings. Every day that this problem lingers it puts people at risk.

The QBCC is powerless to commence prosecutions against those who have committed an offence in relation to the combustible cladding checklist process. Even with the ability to prosecute a building owner for inaction, there may still be a difficulty in compelling the building owner to remove the cladding. Ever since the government's regulation came into effect in 2018, no state government agency has had the authority to prosecute noncompliant building owners. This has been an issue since 2017, and the government still has no clear solution to the problem of combustible cladding on private structures. There are concerns that this legislation will not fully resolve the issue. The Strata Community Association Queensland submission noted—

... the only solution for this ongoing problem is rectification. We urge ... the Committee to seek an appropriate model for rectification as promptly as possible. Safety, the core concern with this entire program, is not assured for affected buildings until rectification occurs. Other states are moving towards rectification, and we urge ... the Committee to seek to look to other jurisdictions in Australia and overseas to provide a model ... that is going to ensure safety as soon as possible.

Recommendation No. 2 from the committee proposes—

... in developing the regulation relating to the head contractor licensing exemptions, the Minister should clearly define the type of work prescribed under the regulation and consider the timing of commencement as suggested by stakeholders.

Daily this government is being defined by its attempts to run from scrutiny and transparency. The head contractor licensing exemptions amendment is just another example of its aversion to openness and parliamentary examination. Stakeholders are concerned that it is premature, considering the government is currently conducting a review into developer licensing, and that this is another attempt to avoid parliamentary scrutiny.

Stakeholders are frustrated that not much is known about what is in that review, that the government frequently engages in games of secrecy in dealing with the sector and that it habitually avoids parliamentary scrutiny by relegating important issues to regulation. The Urban Development Institute of Australia, UDIA, submission said—


... it is premature to be creating a new regulatory framework mechanism while the developer licensing review is not complete and given the commonality of subject matter and industry participants.

The Queensland Law Society then said—

It is critical that regulations are not used as a mechanism for circumventing the legislative process for passing Acts of parliament or for addressing matters which are appropriately dealt with in primary legislation.

I support the bill, but I urge the minister to take note of those legitimate concerns that have been raised by stakeholders.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Krause): Before I call the member for Lytton, I welcome to the gallery visiting students from Concordia Lutheran College, Hume Street and Warwick Street campuses, in the electorate of Toowoomba South. Welcome to the Queensland parliament.

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (12.04 pm): The Queensland government is committed to providing a safer, fairer and more sustainable building and construction industry. That is why I am standing today to talk to the Building and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. Like anything, this starts with strong foundations. This bill seeks to build on the government's record and further enhance the regulatory framework for Queensland's building industry. It will cement Queensland's nation-building position in terms of efficiency and transparency. For example, amendments to the Building Industry Fairness (Security of Payment) Act 2017, Building Industry Fairness (Security of Payment) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2020 and the Queensland Building and Construction Commission Act 1991 will clarify licensing requirements for head contractors who seek to procure commercial building work.

Three amendments operate together to provide this clarification. The first continues the existing licensing exemption. This means that, provided licensed contractors are used, a person can still contract to procure commercial building work as part of a broader contract without needing a licence themselves. For example, a civil contractor undertaking roadworks can still agree to procure the construction of buildings without needing a licence, an electrical contractor can still agree to procure any necessary building work to install air-conditioning without needing a licence and a landlord can still enter into agreements for a lease without needing a licence. These are just three examples.

The exemption facilitates commercial contracting in Queensland. It is in place now and will remain so under the bill. However, two key amendments in the bill address industry's concerns that the exemption can be misused to subvert security of payment and building quality and safety. Firstly, the bill creates a regulation-making power to require the establishment of a retention trust in additional circumstances. This mirrors existing provisions that allow a regulation to prescribe additional circumstances in which a project trust is required. This recognises the range and complexity of commercial contracting while remaining true to the intent of the building industry fairness legislation. It seeks to ensure that the bulk of subcontractors, who are usually subcontractors to a builder, are protected by a trust account regardless of the commercial relationships that exist between the builder and the ultimate client.

Secondly, the bill creates a regulation-making power to displace the exemption in particular circumstances. This would obviously be reserved for situations where there is a clear critical need for the head contractor to hold a licence before offering to procure building work. Specifically, industry suggests that the presence of unlicensed head contractors can mean that industry is less protected from the impacts of company collapse, as no minimum financial requirements apply and downward pressure is placed on building quality and safety.

As we move through the post-COVID recovery we need to be keenly aware of these risks and we need government to be able to respond effectively. The dynamic and complex nature of the building and construction industry also means that the flexibility and agility of a regulation is needed. Any proposed regulation amendments will of course be subject to the usual regulatory impact assessment requirements. This will allow all stakeholders to articulate any potential issues or unintended consequences and ensure the prescribed circumstances are fit for purpose.

I take a moment to acknowledge the great work of the committee. I know that the member for Kurwongbah is regarded very highly for his great leadership as chair. I acknowledge him and all of his great work and, again, acknowledge the great work of the secretariat. Ultimately, the amendment seeks to retain the benefits of the head contractor licensing exemption while also providing government with the flexibility to respond to emerging security-of-payment and safety issues.

While I am on my feet, during the debate of the Public Health and Other Legislation (Extension of Expiring Provisions) Amendment Bill on 31 March 2022, I made a statement that the member for Hill claimed that no-one had died from COVID—it was due to an underlying health issue—and that he alleged that all governments were corrupted by large pharmaceutical companies. I made this statement on my understanding of what the member for Hill had said previously in a variety of speeches. On reflection, I wish to correct the record and withdraw my statement on 31 March 2022 and apologise unreservedly to the House and to the member for Hill. I support the bill.

Interruption.

## DISTINGUISHED VISITORS



**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Krause): Before I call the member for Hinchinbrook, honourable members, I wish to advise that in the public gallery this afternoon we have a very special delegation to the Queensland parliament. Sitting in the gallery is a delegation of Latin American ambassadors to Australia—a delegation which spans the diversity of Latin American nations. The ambassadors are here for the function to launch the Parliamentary Friends of Latin America which will take place from 1 pm today on the River Deck on level 7 of the Annexe. We thank the ambassadors here today for their interest in Queensland and for visiting us in the Queensland parliament. Welcome.

**Honourable members:** Hear, hear!

## BUILDING AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

### Second Reading

Resumed from p. 1330, on motion of of Mr de Brenni—

That the bill be now read a second time.



**Mr DAMETTO** (Hinchinbrook—KAP) (12.10 pm): On behalf of the good people of Hinchinbrook, I extend a welcome to the ambassadors in the gallery. I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the Building and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. From the outset, I acknowledge the \$42 billion that the construction industry brings to Queensland and the 230,000 workers in that industry across Queensland, whether they be subcontractors, tradies or skilled or unskilled workers, who are building this great state. We have seen a boom in regional Queensland as people are moving to those areas. This warms my heart. It also means that the construction industry is doing well in those places.

The KAP will not be opposing this bill. We think it makes some good amendments to current legislation in the building industry and tidies up a couple of things. One of the objectives of this bill is to amend legislation around solar and hot-water systems on people's roofs. 'Ban the banners' is the term being used in that regard. The bill seeks to expand the use of greywater. We have a beautiful state with an abundance of water, but we need to find ways to use it best. The KAP would like to see more dams built. Capturing and using greywater to ensure our buildings in Queensland are more efficient is something that we undoubtedly support. Amendments around holding tanks for sewage and greywater are also part of this bill.

Also contained in the bill are amendments to legislative provisions to ensure the efficacy and transparency of the regulatory framework around head contractor licensing, the sharing of information and investigation outcomes and decision-making. We see as progressive an interdepartmental sharing of information to make sure that those who are not doing the right thing within the building industry are held to account and investigations of people making illegal claims against builders are conducted promptly.

I will now look at a couple of the amendments. If this bill passes, it is great to see that greywater will be able to be used in cooling towers for air-conditioning systems in larger buildings. The bill states that provisions are to be in place to ensure workplace health and safety is adhered to and the health and safety of those who live in those buildings is assured. Greywater can be used for flushing toilets. It is an incredible idea—that is, that we make sure that greywater can be used for flushing toilets instead of pushing it straight into our septic and sewerage systems. The bill will also ensure, through permits of local governments, that toilets and sewerage systems on construction sites have the right tanks for the right thing. Making sure toilets are available to construction workers is a huge cost to those in the construction industry. The provisions in the bill in this regard are a great thing.


I turn now to the provisions around the efficacy and transparency of the regulatory framework. As I said earlier, this bill contains a number of technical amendments. For the layperson in the street, these provisions will make it easier to investigate and deal swiftly with people who are doing the wrong thing.

The bill before the House is an omnibus bill. The Hinchinbrook Shire Council and other councils have been working with the minister's office and the department for some time on issues around part of the QDC and the NCC not marrying up properly, and it disappoints me that this is not included in the bill. One of the problems we have been having across regional Queensland involves sheds over 500 square metres. That is not a very big farm shed. Unfortunately, because the QDC and the NCC do

not line up, farm sheds in Queensland are required to have a stored fire water system of 144,000 litres. This is an incredible amount of water. We have proven to the minister and the minister's department that these sheds would only be used for machinery storage.

The first time the Hinchinbrook Shire Council contacted the minister's office about this was 2020. We are now in 2022. We have had the department send fire engineers out to look at what we are trying to achieve. These sheds are only for the storage of machinery—tractors, harvesters, harvesting equipment, planting equipment. No hot work is done in them and no office space or dwellings are attached them. They are just for the storage of machinery. We are still being made to comply with the fire safety standards that someone wanting to build a shed of similar size in the middle of Brisbane or in a built-up industrial area has to comply with.

I hope work is continuing in the background and that we see this in further legislation before the House. It was a missed opportunity that that work was not completed so it could be contained in this bill. As I said at the start, KAP will not opposing the bill. It contains sensible amendments. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (12.16 pm): I rise to speak in favour of the bill before us. One of the reasons for doing that is that it clearly contains some necessary steps for implementing our Queensland Building Plan. I commend the minister for overseeing the implementation of that plan. I think the point the minister made was right: we need to ensure we have a safer, fairer and more sustainable building and construction industry. This bill goes a long way towards advancing those reforms.

It is clear that the Queensland Building Plan and this bill are needed given the importance of the building and construction industry. As we have heard, this industry supports 230,000 jobs in Queensland. When we convert that to numbers of households in Queensland, that is enormous. The industry is worth \$47 billion. Quite a large slice of Queensland's economy is tied up within this industry.

I pay tribute to the people in the industry, especially the people I see in my home community of Deception Bay. Deception Bay is home to probably more steel fixers than anywhere else in Queensland. I pay tribute to those men and women in my community who work in that industry—for not only doing a job we all need but also always focusing on not just how to get the job done but how to do it safely and ensure people get home safely every day. I commend them for their continual and constant focus on safety.

This industry puts food on the table for so many Queenslanders. This bill is necessary to ensure we are implementing the Queensland Building Plan. This bill makes it clear that we have already accomplished so much under the Queensland Building Plan. The minister has talked about the things the Palaszczuk government has done. For example, we introduced nation-leading security-of-payment reforms. As we have heard the minister say, we are making sure that we do everything we can to make sure people get paid on time every time. That is hugely importantly for this industry, as we know.

We have also introduced the nonconforming building products reform. We have talked a bit about that today with cladding. I point out to the members opposite who have been perhaps criticising us about the cladding issue that cladding is only one part of that. There is a range of building products which we are constantly looking at to make sure that they do conform and that they are safe.

As with the nature of the industry, once they are embedded in buildings it takes a huge effort to extract them in a safe manner. That is something that we need to remember all the time. Our best efforts need to go into making sure that those products are not getting into Queensland buildings in the first place. We are extracting them but it is a huge effort. I pay tribute to all of those people within the industry who work to make those buildings in Queensland safer once again.

I note that under our Building Plan we have modernised the plumbing and drainage laws. The plumbing industry has never been busier. Two plumbers live in my street and I hear how busy they have been. We have also strengthened the minimum financial requirements for licensing and we have strengthened the licensing framework for fire protection and mechanical services work. Once again, these are very much needed reforms. They might not have been the biggest reforms in some people's minds, but they are crucial to ensure we have a healthy industry.

In implementing this plan we strengthened the QBCC, and with this bill we are expanding their investigative powers. I want to take a moment—and we do not hear this often—to pay tribute to the people within the QBCC, the regulator in Queensland. They do crucial work. As the minister said, they oversee I think it is 17,000 engineers with their professional qualifications, and 110,000 contractors in Queensland come under their purview. It is a huge industry, as we have heard. There are very complex issues.

When we look at building integrity and building structures, they are massive issues that the QBCC oversees. I point out that they are working in the area of regulating the assets of so many Queenslanders. In Queensland, our houses are our biggest asset outside of super. Queenslanders have so much invested emotionally as well as financially in their houses. The QBCC is a regulator in that area. They are often in a very difficult position. They are constantly under a lot of pressure. They do cop a lot of criticism because of how much Queenslanders are invested in their properties.

I commend them on their work. Well done. You work hard. Thank you for what you do. I do not think we often thank these workers. I acknowledge the good work they do with the industry groups. When we talk about the plumbing reforms, they have been working with the Plumbers Union and the Master Plumbers. They have done that very well. Adding to the thanks I give to the QBCC, I thank the minister's office once again for driving reform in this sector.

**Ms Boyd:** Aren't you a gentleman!

**Mr WHITING:** Thank you. I take that interjection. That is one interjection I do want to take. As I said, there is not only a huge financial investment in building in Queensland but also a huge emotional investment by Queenslanders.

I will wrap up by saying that I commend this bill because of the support it delivers to Queensland's demand for solar power. We know that we are a world leader in solar panel installation. The biggest solar plant in Australia is on the roofs of Queensland houses and buildings. A lot of us are generating solar and we are part of that generating system. As we heard, one in three homes in Queensland has solar panels on their roof. There is a huge appetite amongst Queenslanders to have solar panels on their roof to produce their own energy to use at home.

That huge appetite is also reflected in the growth of solar energy plants—the bigger ones we have seen growing all around our state. When we first came to government in 2015 there was a very small solar and renewable energy industry. I think only about seven per cent of our power came from renewable sources. That is now at about 21 per cent. That is a huge uptake in seven years. This is something that I think is overlooked—how Queensland has rapidly adopted on every scale renewable industries and solar power. Let us not forget that this industry is a \$10 billion investment in Queensland. We have seen 50 large-scale renewable energy projects since 2015. Let us not forget there are 7,800 jobs in construction in the renewable industry, and most of those jobs are in regional Queensland.

I will finish by saying that this bill accomplishes a lot. I commend the minister and his staff, the QBCC and the department for all that they have done. I commend this bill to the House.



**Mr MOLHOEK** (Southport—LNP) (12.26 pm): I rise to make a brief contribution to the debate on the Building and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. At the outset I acknowledge that there are many people within the QBCC who make an outstanding contribution to the role and services of that organisation. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said of the leadership provided by this government over many years. I want to refer back to the committee report on the original bill in 2017. I note that the member for Murrumba was also on that committee at the time, and I was interested in his contribution here today. In 2017 the minister of the day talked about how important it was to give the QBCC the powers to regulate building products. The explanatory notes stated—

This will achieve improved consumer and public safety and fairness for building industry licensees by imposing duties on all participants of the building product supply chain and providing the QBCC with the ability to appropriately address instances of non-conforming building products throughout the building product supply chain.

It has been five years. Here we are again debating issues of concern around public safety under legislation that the government introduced five years ago, and they still have not delivered and they still have not got it right. That is what we have all come to expect of this all talk, no action Labor government.

I also refer in that report to other statements that were made. Context is very important. People rightly should be concerned about the quality of building products used at some sites. The context of this is that back in 2017 the minister noted in his introductory speech—

... it took less than 15 minutes for a lit cigarette left on a balcony to cause 13 floors of the Lacrosse building in Melbourne to be engulfed in flames. That fire was a result of highly flammable nonconforming aluminium cladding, a cheaper imitation version of a conforming product.

The minister had quite a bit to say about it back then.

We hear there are some sites—in fact, I have heard during the course of the debate about 30 sites across Queensland—that have still not been addressed. I find it incredibly concerning that five years on we are still waiting for these matters to be resolved.

At this juncture I raise concerns around the performance of the QBCC in respect of the support of tradies and subcontractors and the payment of such. I note that in the explanatory notes there are references to the Building Industry Fairness (Security of Payment) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2020. What a wonderful work of fiction that act has been. We are still waiting for further reviews of the initial trial of project bank accounts. We are still hearing stories of significant building failures and collapses. All the while, this government continues to siphon off all of the dividends and premiums paid into the Home Warranty Insurance Scheme to prop up the state budget and fund the activities of the QBCC. I wonder if all of those premiums, rather than being dragged across into consolidated revenue, had been left within the QBCC—

**Mr de BRENNI:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member for Southport, I think we would all recall, is a former shadow minister.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Krause): What is your point of order?


**Mr de BRENNI:** The member is deliberately misleading the House in relation to his statement about the transfer of funds from the insurance fund to consolidated revenue.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** If you want to make an accusation like that there is a process to follow, which is a written process. Do you have any other point of order?

**Mr de BRENNI:** I am alerting you to the fact that I intend to proceed with that process and alerting the member of the same.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister, for alerting me and the House to that. If there is no other point of order I would ask you to resume your seat.

**Mr MOLHOEK:** I will move on from that point. I note also that the legislation deals with matters to do with solar hot-water systems and solar panels. Again we see evidence that a former Labor government got the policy and the legislation wrong. It is frustrating that we have to come back time and time again to address some of these shortcomings and failings. We will not be opposing these changes because we believe they are necessary. I will close with this: it is incredible to think that five years on we are still having to revisit issues of public safety in this matter.

 **Ms RICHARDS** (Redlands—ALP) (12.32 pm): I rise to support the Building and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. I might just point out to the member for Southport that this year is the fifth anniversary of the Grenfell Tower fire in 2017 which drove many of the issues around combustible cladding, but I will come back to that later.

The Building and Other Legislation Amendment Bill is pretty technical in nature. It amends a range of building legislation to strengthen and modernise Queensland's building laws. We know how important the construction industry is to Queensland. We have heard about the significant contribution it makes to our economy. It also makes a very significant contribution to the lifestyle we lead, the amenities we are able to use and the built environment we are all surrounded by.

The bill amends the Architects Act 2002, Building Act 1975, Building Industry Fairness (Security of Payments) Act 2017, Building Industry Fairness (Security of Payments) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2020, Planning Act 2016, Plumbing and Drainage Act 2018, Professional Engineers Act 2002 and the Queensland Building and Construction Commission Act 1991.

There are a number of key features in this bill. Many have touched on solar panels. We know how amazing our Queensland sunshine is and what value that brings, pushing down cost-of-living prices through solar. I know this bill will go a long way to ensure we can continue to capitalise on Queensland's sunshine for residents, communities and businesses. I would like to give a shout-out to REA Solar at Redlands Business Park. They do a fantastic job. They are an incredible provider of commercial and residential solar. I also want to give a shout-out to Minister Grace for the cleaner energy work we have been doing with schools and the solar program. I do not think anyone can underestimate what it means for our students and their learning to not only be in a cooler space but one that is greener through solar installation.

I congratulate the committee for its work on this legislation. The chair and I were talking about festivals, portaloos and whether they needed to be connected up to sewerage if a sewerage line exists. This bill goes a long way to making sure there is a more sensible approach to how we deal with waste from porta-potties at festivals and a number of other events. Well done to the best chair! Good job!

The bill amends head contractor licensing and sharing information on investigation outcomes. It also looks at decision-making for the QBCC around the combustible cladding aspect of the bill. Across the world combustible cladding has been the cause of fires in a wide variety of high-rise and commercial buildings. As I said, the 2017 fire in Grenfell Tower, a 24-storey building, resulted in the deaths of 72 people. Over 70 people were injured, it took 24 hours to control the fire and it took 60 hours to totally

extinguish it. It required 250 firefighters and over 70 fire engines over the course of that period to bring it under control. The building's cladding and its external installation created an air gap between them, resulting in an air stack that fuelled the pace and speed of an apartment fire that was triggered by a fridge in a residential apartment.

Cladding used in high-rise construction has been an issue for decades: in 2007 the Water Club in Atlantic City had a fire caused by cladding; 2009, the Beijing Television Cultural Centre; 2012, the Al Tayer Tower in the UAE; and 2014, as we heard, the Lacrosse tower in Melbourne. It took 11 minutes for that fire to travel up 13 floors before it hit the rooftop. Fortunately, there were no lives lost in that particular fire. In 2021 in Milan, Italy, the Torre dei Moro also suffered a similar fire.

I want to take this opportunity to thank our architects, designers, builders and certifiers for their work in acknowledging the issue that has existed in the supply of this building product. In Queensland we established the Non-Conforming Building Products Audit Taskforce under the stewardship of the late Hon. Terry Mackenroth, which was a very important piece of work. It looked at government buildings in the first instance. I know this to be the case because at that time I was with Cox Architecture, and I know that the site architects in our firm were going 10 to the dozen to review the buildings we built over the course of a very long period of time, including: the PA Hospital in the early 2000s, the Logan Hospital in 1997, the convention centre in Brisbane, the convention centre in Cairns and all of the residential towers.

It has been a really big process to go through the buildings that have been developed across the course of decades which have the potential to contain that building product. You would be kidding yourself if you thought it was going to be a quick process to go through them, review, remediate and rectify. As I said, I really commend our architects, designers and building certifiers for their work in this space. I also thank the QBCC for their work, because it has been an equally massive effort for them when you think about the growth in the number of buildings in Brisbane and the south-east since Expo 88, let alone when you talk about the number of buildings in the entire state that have been affected by aluminium cladding.

The checklist that requires private building owners to self-assess their buildings has been a well-managed process. It ended on 3 May, with 94 per cent of building owners having completed it. Work is continuing to make sure we capture 100 per cent of the buildings that could have fallen foul of this product. This means that those building owners who have completed the process have either been cleared or provided a report from a fire engineer detailing the type of cladding, the extent of the problem and what actions can be taken to mitigate any fire cladding risk before rectifying their building. This is a comprehensive checklist. We had a team of five site architects in our Queensland office alone. I am not talking about across the country, where similar work has been done in architectural offices across Australia.


The buildings that are captured include apartments, hotels, offices, hospitals, shopping centres, car parks, warehouses, factories, schools, assembly buildings, aged-care facilities and laboratories, and the list goes on and on. This has been a huge effort. The first step of this was by our Queensland government. It was a three-phased approach, where it looked at the identification of the issue, the fire and risk mitigation process and then the rectification works. It has been a huge piece of work.

When we talk about the environment, we must think about the amount of this cladding that has had to come off buildings across the country. It is a phenomenal amount. Initially, all of that cladding was going into landfill—just think about the scale of the cladding on those buildings that was going into landfill sites. It is great to see that Queensland and Australian businesses are getting involved in that cladding recycling process. Fairview are one of those businesses. They developed an Ecoloop process and their business is booming at the moment, as they reported earlier this year. They are going from strength to strength.

The issue with the panels is that they typically contain ferrous material in the screws, steel flashing, rods, backing tape, you name it. A range of things were contained within those panels that made it impossible to recycle them. Fairview are just one business in Australia that are doing a great job to make sure we are able to recycle this dodgy cladding, so congratulations to them on that. It will be good to see more and more of the product recycled. We have the potential to recycle 100 per cent of that cladding in that process.

I also want to talk to some of the minor and technical amendments, particularly around the Architects Act. I give a shout-out to the Board of Architects and the team there. They do a fantastic job in regulating the Architects Act across Queensland. The minor amendment to the Architects Act and the Professional Engineers Act will see that they are afforded the same civil liability protections as the Queensland Public Service, and that is great news for our architects.

Consultation on this bill has been extraordinary. I congratulate the committee again for all of their work on this. It is an important piece of legislation to make sure we keep Queenslanders safe. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (12.42 pm): I rise to address the Building and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. I was trying to think of a word I could use around the aspect that I want to focus on that fits within our parliamentary standards of language. I am going to go with 'unglamorous' because I want to focus on those changes to the expanded use of greywater. The explanatory notes state—

Factors such as population growth, which increases demand on existing water supplies; climate change; recognition of the need for more sustainable buildings; and increased demand for green star commercial developments, require more responsible and innovative ways to use resources such as water.

It surprises me that we still need amendments to Queensland legislation to look at using treated greywater in things like cooling towers and flushing toilets, but it is great that we are now getting around to doing that. The explanatory notes also state—

The amendments are intended to facilitate the proposed uses of treated greywater while ensuring public health outcomes are maintained through appropriate regulatory oversight.

It might seem crazy that this is what I want to focus on, given the amount of rain we have received in the last couple of months, particularly in my part of the world around the electorate of Glass House. At the moment, if we get five millimetres, it results in flash flooding in some places because the catchment is so waterlogged. I take the opportunity at this stage to apologise to my northern colleague, the member for Gympie, for what we send down the Mary River every time it rains. I also apologise to my southern colleagues along the Brisbane River for what we send down the Stanley and into Somerset Dam and the Brisbane River.

The reason we are talking about greywater and looking at the amendments today is that with our population growth we need to look at how we use our water carefully and we need to consider future water sources. I will not be specific around what that needs to look at, but we cannot wait for the next drought to respond to that. We need to do a lot more planning because of the huge population growth in South-East Queensland and indeed across Queensland, particularly as a result of COVID over the last couple of years. We need to make sure we have facilities to provide clean, treated water to our growing population.

We also need to look at how we use our wastewater. If I focus on the population growth in the northern Moreton Bay region and the southern Sunshine Coast region, people are rightly asking me where the water is coming from and what we will be doing with our wastewater. These amendments around better use of greywater are certainly welcomed.

I also want to take this opportunity to acknowledge some good work that Unitywater have been doing across my electorate. One of the huge developments that is coming in the southern part of Glass House is the Caboolture West development. Whilst people are very ready to question whether we have the infrastructure in terms of roads and public transport, one of the things they often do not think about is whether we have the water and what we will do with the waste. The great thing that Unitywater have done is look at a way they can prepare for the future that does not involve putting more treated water into the Caboolture River or Deception Bay and the broader Moreton Bay. They are looking at supporting our ongoing agricultural production to the north of the D'Aguilar Highway by instigating the Wamuran Irrigation Scheme.

Stage 1 of that scheme alone is looking to put 2.6 gigalitres of water a year—that is over 1,000 Olympic swimming pools—into agricultural production. That will help my raspberry growers, strawberry growers, pineapple growers, avocado growers and turf farmers across the southern part of the Glass House electorate. That is only stage 1. If that proves successful and if the water continues to be able to be provided at a consistent rate and at a reasonable price, there are up to four stages that potentially could see water stretch right across to the north of Elimbah to some of our nurseries in that part of the world. That is a fantastic use of treated water on a much larger scale than what is being proposed in this legislation, but every little bit helps mitigate our requirement for new water sources.

I also want to mention the work that Unitywater have done in the northern part of the electorate around the Maleny Sewage Treatment Plant. One of the things we started during our term in government when I was the minister for the environment was to look at new and innovative ways to not just invest in hard infrastructure around sewage treatment plants but to look at soft infrastructure—that is, using the natural environment to provide filters for treated water to take it to that next level. One of the first projects was on what we call the Maleny precinct, where Unitywater revegetated a large area



of that precinct, including a number of wetlands, and used the revegetation and the wetlands to filter treated water to a higher degree as it heads down Obi Creek. I would love to see that taken one step further.

Since that project has occurred, the Maleny golf course has been developed. I acknowledge the Minister for Sport in the House at the moment. That golf club was recently awarded \$150,000 for a new irrigation project. Again, that seems crazy at the moment when we cannot get on the golf course because of flooding. This will literally droughtproof the course for the future. As negotiations continue with Unitywater, it would be great to tap into that pipeline as it heads up to those wetlands on the north of the precinct and take it to the golf club. The new irrigation scheme that has been funded through that grant could be used to provide a constant source of water to the golf club at a reasonable price—or ideally it could be free. It would be great if that opportunity was provided to Maleny and the surrounds. I do have to declare that I am both a patron and a member of the Maleny Golf Club.

Those amendments around greywater will continue to expand on our better reuse of this precious resource that is water. I also want to acknowledge that there are changes to the way we deal with holding tanks for sewage and greywater. These are very important amendments given the electorate I represent, where not a lot of the electorate is tapped into the main sewerage system. At present—


If premises are located in an area served by a sewerage system, sewage from the premises must be discharged into the sewerage system. This requirement can be costly and impractical for temporary premises, such as toilets on a construction site.

Where premises are not in an area served by a sewerage system, sewage and greywater from the premises must be discharged into a facility that treats the matter before it can be held in a holding tank for collection and disposal off-site.

As was mentioned by others, this is a huge problem where there is insufficient space on a property to accommodate any sort of treatment facility. These amendments are going to 'enable an owner of a premises, under a permit issued by the local government, to discharge untreated waste and water from a toilet or soil fixture (sewage), or greywater, or both types of waste directly into a holding tank for collection and disposal off-site'. This is a great outcome for a lot of the construction sites around the electorate of Glass House. We will now be able to put that untreated water into a holding tank and take it off-site to be treated. It will be a far more economical outcome and a far more commercially minded outcome, particularly for our builders as they operate around the site.

It is probably surprising that this kind of amendment is required in the 21st century, but then again some of these things fall through the cracks and you do not realise until they get tested or challenged and local governments bring them to our attention. I commend this amendment, as it seems to be bringing in a far more sensible outcome for our business operators around the state, particularly in the south-east and particularly in the electorate of Glass House.

With those few comments, I reiterate the comments made on this side of the House that the LNP will not be opposing this legislation. While there are a lot of technical aspects, some of which others have mentioned around 'ban the banners' that potentially could have been brought forward, it is good to see these amendments, and I do believe, as I said, they will produce a better outcome for the state of Queensland.

 **Mr RUSSO** (Toohey—ALP) (12.51 pm): Before I start my contribution to the debate today, I would like to welcome to the gallery, on behalf of the member for Stafford, Jimmy Sullivan, the principal and school leaders from Wavell State High School. Welcome, Liz. I would also like to extend a warm welcome to the ambassadors from Latin America.

I rise in support of the Building and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. The purpose of the bill is to support contemporary consumer expectations about the efficiency of buildings through amendments to legislative provisions regarding: 'ban the banners', solar hot-water systems and solar panels, expanded use of greywater, holding tanks for sewage and greywater, enhance the efficacy and transparency of the regulatory framework through amendments to legislative provisions regarding head contractor licensing, sharing information on investigation outcomes, decision making, and improve the operation of building related legislation through minor technical amendments.

The department advised that the bill proposes to amend several building related acts and aims to continue building on the reforms already implemented under the Queensland Building Plan 2017 and its update in 2021 to create a safer, fairer and more sustainable building and construction industry. The amendments in the bill are essentially grouped into three themes. These relate to building efficiency, an efficient and transparent regulatory framework and minor technical amendments.

The explanatory notes detail that consultation regarding the two different aspects of the bill was undertaken with each of the stakeholders as follows: the Brisbane City Council, Local Government Association of Queensland, the Institute of Plumbing Inspectors Queensland and Master Plumbers' Association Queensland who were consulted on the amendments for using greywater in cooling towers

for air conditioning. No objections to the proposed amendments were made. The amendments relating to holding tanks for sewage and greywater have been proposed in response to consultation with the Local Government Association of Queensland. The Institute of Plumbing Inspectors Queensland and Master Plumbers' Association Queensland have also been consulted on the proposed amendments.

Industry consultation occurred about the head contractor exemption and the consequential amendments to the BIF Act flowed from the amendment to the QBCC Act in the bill. The consultation confirmed both the extent of existing business models and transactions that rely on the exemption and valid concerns about the licensing exemption. The approach in the bill seeks to balance the benefits of the licensing exemption with safeguarding the licensing framework and security-of-payment protections. Further consultation is proposed in developing regulation amendments. Consultation occurred with the auditing professional bodies concerning the trust accounting requirements in the BIF act.

The department confirmed that stakeholders involved in consultation on the amendments in the bill did not raise any concerns. They also confirmed that industry consultation on the head contractor licensing exemption issues resulted in support for the approach proposed in the bill which seeks to balance the benefits of the head contractor licensing exemption with the need for some contractors to be licensed as well as ensure the security-of-payment protections.

The Queensland Building and Construction Commission advised that the amendments are intended to be minor and clarifying in nature and do not introduce any new powers or responsibilities for the QBCC. The QBCC welcomes and supports the bill and its various amendments to legislative provisions.

It is proposed that the 'ban the banners' provisions will be amended to clarify the original policy intent for the provisions, so a home owner may install a solar hot-water system or solar panels on the roof, or another external surface, of their home or garage without regard to the way it looks. A court decision has affected the efficacy of the provisions, making it necessary to amend the provisions to clarify the original policy intent.

The department advised that the bill will remove the uncertainty around the application of the 'ban the banners' provisions which are in place to protect home owners from developer covenants that seek to restrict where solar panels can be placed on the roof of a home. The banners in this context were people who were seeking to ban. In this instance, it was the developers who were seeking to ban where solar panels could be placed on a house.

The provisions became known as 'ban the banners' because they sought to ban the behaviour of people who were seeking to ban that behaviour. The department advised that the government's intent was and is to achieve optimal placement of solar panels for electricity generation. The proposed amendment limits the purposes for which a developer or body corporate may, through a relevant instrument, such as a building covenant, prohibit a home owner from installing a solar hot-water system or solar panels for purposes that do not relate to the enhancement or preservation of the external appearance of the property.

Under the proposed amendments it will be permissible to prevent the installation of solar infrastructure on the roof or external surface of an apartment building only to the extent that the roof or other surface is common property and—the prohibition—is necessary to preserve the structural integrity of the building; prohibits the owner of a unit in the building from installing solar infrastructure on the surface if there is insufficient space for the owner of each other unit in the building to also install solar infrastructure on the surface; or is necessary to prevent noise from piping for a solar hot-water system causing unreasonable interference with a person's use or enjoyment of the building.

The committee sought additional information from the department regarding the court decision, resulting in the need for the proposed amendment.


The Court of Appeal held, amongst other things, that the determinative question is instead whether the expression 'prevents a person from installing a solar hot-water system or photovoltaic cells on the roof or other external surface of the building' comprehends a case in which the result of the restriction or the withholding of consent is that the photovoltaic cells may be installed only at a location where they will remain viable but will operate at about 80 per cent of the efficiency that would be achieved if they were instead installed at the proscribed location.

The critical word is 'prevents'. As the primary judge considered, and as is common ground between the parties, 'prevents' must bear the same meaning in both sections. At least one of those sections must apply if 'prevents' comprehends the result of the application of clause 1.26 in this case and neither section could apply if that result does not amount to prevention. The conclusion was that the word 'prevents' in the sections bears its common primary meaning of 'stops from happening'.

The Master Electricians Australia, while noting that electricians will provide advice on the most optimal place to install solar panels, will install the panels where the customer wants them placed. There was resistance to some of these submissions from certain property developers.

I commend the bill to the House.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.00 pm.

 **Mr BENNETT** (Burnett—LNP) (2.00 pm): In addressing the amendments to the Building Industry Fairness (Security of Payment) and Other Legislation Amendment Act, I will again prosecute, as I have over many years in this place, the legislation relating to building and security of payments. I have to say it continues to be complicated. I will limit my contribution to the bill as it relates to combustible cladding. Many others have spoken about the nuances of the legislation.

We know that subcontractors have fought for the introduction of a statutory trusts regime in Queensland and I think a lot of them feel the same way about it being complicated. Other affected parties who have been fierce opponents of these sorts of security of payment issues may feel differently. My observation is that the legislation is written by lawyers for politicians to consider and debate. On the passing of the legislation, it is then up to the lawyers and legally qualified persons to talk to stakeholder groups and disseminate information to the general public on its interpretation. What can go wrong? Plenty! There is no surprise that the information disseminated to the general public is legally focused and that that remains a problem. The construction industry is strengthened and, indeed, protected by the laws that do meet community expectations. Lawyers play a very important role in ensuring industry is sustainable for all parties performing work. However, we would all agree that parties that contract for work to be carried out should be protected.

However, legislation is developed, debated and then extensively commented on in this legal bubble which means that the average industry stakeholder has little to no understanding of how it will affect them because it is heavily based in legal language. For years a lot has been said about the rollout of legislation reforms which are complex to the average worker, supplier and contractor. In other words, the language cannot be understood by parties. The issues are serious. There are many recent examples which show why we have significant issues with the legislation, and I do commend that we are trying to fix some things today. We will always be supportive of attempts to make things better. However, I want to bring to the attention of the House a statement from Condev, who unfortunately have recently found themselves in a bit of trouble. The spokesperson for Condev insisted that all subcontractors, suppliers and staff had been paid. I note an article appeared the next day about the liquidator comment. It stated—

Failed building giant Condev owes creditors and other suppliers more than \$30m while its 107 workers are out of pocket for \$2.45m.

In a report lodged with ASIC ... insolvency partner ... said unsecured and subcontractor retentions total almost \$31m—owed to about 700 people and entities—while the Australian Taxation Office is owed \$530,000—

and—

Westpac is owed about \$6.3m.

Unfortunately, there are other high-profile cases currently. I am talking about Probuild and Metricon and their delays. It has been reported in the traditional media that, according to information tabled at a Probuild creditors meeting on 4 March this year, employees are owed \$14 million with an amount yet to be determined owed to thousands of creditors. It is fair that until all the facts on these issues regarding the reasons are known and reported on by respective insolvency practitioners, I put to members that we must reflect on how this happens and how it continues to happen.

It has been the experience in the construction industry for over 25 years that the cash retentions by head contractors, which are mentioned in the bill in terms of the security of payments issue, has always confronted subcontractors. The two main concerns with the cash retentions are: the ability for subcontractors to cover or claim retention amounts held by a head contractor; and the loss of these funds when insolvency of the head contractor occurs. I acknowledge that in 2018 there was a lot of talk about the misuse of cash retentions. It was said that we in this state should perhaps look at a statutory scheme to deal with this issue and not rely on these contractors to get this right.

I want to acknowledge those who have continued to express opinions over the last five to seven years advocating to empower the industry through education and insight rather than continuing to add layers of bureaucracy and regulation. We all have a role to play in making sure the industry is more sophisticated and informed about the issues.

This legislation is enabling prosecution in relation to the combustible cladding checklist. It has been stated—and I think many in the House have acknowledged—there are still 30 government sites where flammable cladding is allegedly still present such as schools, hospitals and libraries. They are listed on the government's website. There are people living and working in these buildings every day. The cladding crisis—and it is a crisis—is a significant issue. We know there are potentially hundreds of buildings in Queensland containing dangerous cladding which, according to a report I read from Master Builders, may cost up to \$300 million to rectify the product that was previously approved to be installed. All members of the House and the federal parliament have known about this issue for decades, and it is now 2022.

Combustible cladding is banned from type A and type C buildings. I think there are still issues within the residential sector in that this material can still be used. I need to put on the record during my contribution that there are still problems with certifying and certification, and an insurance crisis still confronts us. I was talking to a couple of certifiers today who are still very much caught up with the problems of being able to afford to keep their professional indemnity insurance. Even though there is an exemption, it is still a real issue.

As we know, prior to 1998 local governments were solely responsible for building certification. Since 1998 the certification industry in Queensland has been privatised. In 2019 in order for a building certifier to be licensed as a private certifier, they had to hold professional indemnity insurance. This House debated long and hard during that period, and I acknowledge the exemption was brought back. Those policies have caused many to suffer major losses due to this regulatory issue.

In August 2019—and the minister is in the House—the minister brought back in the requirement for the exemption. However, it remains a problem that some certifiers, even with PI insurance excluding external cladding, will still be reluctant to offer their services to clients where the assessment of external cladding is involved. The issues I raise may result in some private certifiers with PI insurance with cladding exclusions declining to assist building owners of an 'affected private building' to undertake necessary rectification work. Obviously those private certifiers who are unable to obtain suitable PI coverage or afford same will also not be able to assist building owners in this regard.

The issue of the number of available licensed certifiers operating in Queensland is irrelevant because there is ample building work out there for them that does not involve any form of external combustible cladding and that gives them plenty of work without getting involved in the quagmire of insurance. There are concerns that private certifiers will decline to assess any form of external cladding in relation to existing projects because of the potential legal and financial risks they are exposed to. It needs to be remembered that the banning of dangerous combustible cladding only applies in respect of new projects, so this initiative, worthwhile as it is, is still a problem. I do not think it will provide comfort to those certifiers working on these unsafe affected buildings.

As I started out, I want to acknowledge that this bill is ticking some of the boxes for reform. The reason for my contribution in which I have talked about the issues, particularly around security of payments and combustible cladding, was to highlight that, as someone who has been in the industry for over 30 years and is still a registered builder with the QBCC, I hear these things daily from colleagues and friends. I have been in this place for a little while and we continue to talk about building reforms and legislative reforms. There is clearly more to be done. It is a good way forward to get this bill on the record to start to tick those boxes.

I would like to see more of these building issues brought back to the chamber. I would love to see all the stakeholders involved in trying to find solutions to stop these perpetual subcontractors being absolutely smashed when we see serious failures of these large project builders, construction firms and commercial firms. It is such a tragedy when we see these builders go down.

I would like to think that this House could consider a statutory organisation that could hold some of this money—like the residential tenancy group that we dismantled yesterday. Something like that may offer people some recourse to get their money back from a head contractor. I will be supporting the bill. I close by saying that we need to do more to protect and, to quote the minister, make sure people get paid on time every time.



**Mr SMITH** (Bundaberg—ALP) (2.09 pm): It is fitting that I follow my regional comrade, as my contribution will focus on the Bundaberg region. I rise to contribute to the debate of the Building and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. Before I go into the details of this legislation, I want to credit the minister and his team for the work they have done in working with the department and stakeholders to put forward a wholly good piece of legislation.

I also thank the committee for their work, having read through the report on their inquiry. It is notable that each committee member gave great credit to the chair, the member for Kurwongbah. I think that reflects on the member for Kurwongbah. One of the great goals we could all strive to achieve is that, when we leave this place, not only do people on our own side of politics say good things about us; people on the other side of the House also praise and give us credit. Those comments are a great credit to the member for Kurwongbah.

It was important that the committee got clarification from the department in regard to what 'ban the banners' actually means. It is not 'banners' as in objects that are waved around; it is those who are seeking to ban solar panels being put onto particular dwellings for aesthetic purposes. It is important that this piece of legislation corrects that situation and that, as the member for Kurwongbah said in his contribution, the changes pass the pub test for the public in terms of solar panels on dwellings. It is not just a renewable energy policy; it is a cost-of-living policy—ensuring power is more affordable for people who wish to put solar panels on their dwellings.

In the Bundaberg region, we love solar panels on our houses. At the beginning of last year, the 4670 postcode was not only No. 1 in Queensland; it was No. 1 in all of Australia. The Bundaberg region is the solar panel capital of not only Queensland but also Australia. At that time last year, there were 15,737 rooftop solar panel systems on our roofs, with a combined capacity of 71,000 kilowatts. That is absolutely outstanding. We know that this piece of legislation will allow that number to grow even more. It really highlights the important role of government in the renewable energy space. It is about building the infrastructure and enabling the policy that provides consumers with the investment that they want.

This is very much a consumer-driven piece of legislation. We have seen that reflected in the Bundaberg region, with our new network-connected battery along the coastline of the Bundaberg region. It is one of five trials across Queensland. There will be batteries in Bundaberg, Hervey Bay, Toowoomba, Townsville and Yeppoon. This is what good governments do: they invest in renewable energy that enables a lower cost of living. We know that collectively these batteries will store 40 megawatt hours. This is absolutely fantastic.

A couple of months ago I, along with the Treasurer, in his role as Acting Premier, inspected the battery and spoke with the Energy Queensland workers. Some 18 Energy Queensland staff have been a part of this battery rollout. The battery is set to be energised next month. We are looking forward to that—I know that many people across the region are also—because the battery will be able to supply an average of 478 homes for a 24-hour cycle. It will capture excess power during the day and then release it in the evening, at those peak times, for a wider range of houses.

Talking about solar panels in Bundaberg, last year Minister Scanlon came up and announced a \$750,000 investment into 446 new solar panels at the Mon Repos Turtle Centre, along with battery storage. The panels will produce 170 kilowatts of solar power and the battery storage has a capacity of up to 400 kilowatt hours. That will supply 97 per cent of the total electricity needs of Mon Repos. That is 97 per cent of a former electricity bill that they no longer need to pay because they have renewable energy. This means they can reinvest into the centre itself. Mon Repos is probably the No. 1 tourist attraction in the Bundaberg region—it brings so many visitors each and every year—so our policy on renewable energy will be contributing to the tourism industry in the Bundaberg region. It is needed and supported by people in the Bundaberg region. It is about responsible and practical policies for renewable energy.

On this side of the House, we have a proud record when it comes to those kinds of policies. What we do not have is a record of virtue signalling and excessive mind mapping, like the party that is green with envy on the other side of the House. The crossbench members, who are green with envy, have a record of not showing up for ministerial statements, where we actually talk about our investments in renewable energy and our investment in hydrogen. The members of the crossbench party who are green with envy do not show up.

**Mrs Frecklington** interjected.

**Mr SMITH:** Member for Nanango, I am talking about the party that is green with envy. I know that you are envious as well, but they are green with envy. We do not have their record of abstaining from voting because they are wedged between their splintered base. We do not have their record of not showing up and missing important divisions on conscience votes. That is the record of those who are green with envy on the crossbench.

I refer to our commitment to practical policies and good key infrastructure. I note the contribution to this debate from the member for Bundamba. He spoke about how 'Queensland now boasts 50 large-scale renewable energy projects since 2015'. He rightly pointed out that this represents over

\$10 billion of investment, almost 8,000 construction jobs alone and 5,774 megawatts of clean energy. The member for Bundamba is a champion for renewable energy, not only in his electorate but also in his role as the assistant minister. He went on to note—

Combined with almost 1,500 megawatts of rooftop PV solar, we now have 7,200 megawatts of renewable energy capacity. That means now over 20 per cent of the electricity use in Queensland produced from renewable energy.

I note the contribution made by the member for Stretton. He said that 33 large-scale solar farms are now operational, with another eight projects being committed. He noted that the 33 projects—


**Mr Skelton** interjected.

**Mr SMITH:** Thank you, member for Nicklin—have a combined generation of 2,000 megawatts.

This is a good time for the member for Nanango to interject, because I am going to talk about her party now. It is about the party with a different shade of green: the National Party. We see how divided they are. The Nationals used to stand up for the growers but now they stand up for the climate deniers. I know that the Leader of the Opposition will be very happy, because he managed to get one of the biggest climate deniers in Queensland's history out of his caucus and into the federal caucus. I am sure that Peter Dutton is waiting for that first caucus meeting, when all of the climate deniers will be there. Keith Pitt will be there; Matt Canavan will be there. They will be holding coal; they will be putting it in their coffee!

In my part of the world, the growers do not want coalmining on prime agricultural land. I stood up strongly for them. The member for Burnett and I stood shoulder to shoulder with them on that. We did not hear anything on that from the member for Hinkler. There were crickets. He did not want to wedge himself on whether or not there should be coalmining on prime agricultural land. We have the 'green with envy' party, who are going around saying all sorts of things in their la-la land, and then we have the party of the other shade of green, who are absolutely torn. Will they still be the LNP? Only time will tell.

*(Time expired)*

 **Mr MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (2.20 pm): Thank goodness the member's time has expired because that was an awe-inspiring contribution.

**Mr O'Connor** interjected.

**Mr MICKELBERG:** I do not know what it was, member for Bonney. It sounded a bit like a rant about the member for Hinkler, Keith Pitt, who was elected with a swing towards him I think.

**An honourable member** interjected.

**Mr MICKELBERG:** If you want to talk about numbers from the weekend, let us have a talk about the Labor Party who hold five seats at best in Queensland in the federal parliament. That is not an endorsement of this state government. That is most certainly not an endorsement of the member for Bundaberg.

**Government members** interjected.


**Mr MICKELBERG:** Look at those opposite who are concerned about the next state election: the member for Bulimba, the member for Greenslopes, the member for McConnel.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Martin): Order!

**Mr MICKELBERG:** All of whom are not coming back in 2024. Are they going to retire or are they going to lose, that is the question?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Buderim, I will ask you to take your seat. Members, under the provisions of the business program agreed to by the House and the time limit for this stage of the bill having expired, I call the minister to reply to the second reading debate.

 **Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement) (2.21 pm), in reply: I join members on this side of the House in acknowledging the valuable work of the officers and staff of the building industry regulator. They work hard every day to ensure Queenslanders live and work in quality, safe buildings. I thank members for their contributions on the bill in this very important debate.

As I said in my second reading speech, this bill demonstrates the Palaszczuk government's commitment to promoting a safer, fairer and more sustainable building and construction industry in Queensland—a commitment to helping Queenslanders build modern homes. It is just one part of an ongoing program of reform that has helped bolster confidence, create thousands of jobs and help build

our state. More than that, it reiterates our commitment to consultation and responsive government. We know that when we work together with industry, we achieve positive outcomes. In the shadow of COVID this is more important than ever.

I would now like to reflect on the issues raised during the debate. I am pleased that the shadow minister did not seek to oppose the bill. In fact, he described the bill as uncontroversial, which is probably as flattering as he is capable of being. I have had the opportunity to review *Hansard* of the second reading debate around 'ban the banners' a decade ago. It has been a substantial focus of this debate. It shows that the parliament at the time voted in favour of the 'ban the banners' reform. In fact, several members supported the 'ban the banners' policy, and I am referring specifically to those opposite, even if they took issue with other parts of the bill, with one describing it as a 'necessary step'. What is even more clear is that none of them raised any concern with the construction of the legislative amendments a decade ago. That includes the now Manager of Opposition Business, who was there. Why did those opposite, who said that the amendments were, in fact, deficient, not raise that matter then?

I note that members opposite raised some concerns about the case of a particular home owner. I think it is important to recognise in this debate the role that the courts play in our system of government. We all know the LNP has very little regard for the judiciary, especially the member for Kawana, but for the benefit of those opposite, in terms of the role of our legal system there will always be difficult cases where reasonable people can interpret the law differently. In the case that has been described, the independent umpire's decision had a significant impact on the original policy intent agreed by this parliament and as a result it was necessary to undertake significant consultation to ensure there were no unintended consequences of any amendment we would make.

The amendments in this bill are good legislative process. Laws are tested through the courts and in some cases they need to be refined by those of us in the House. This is about upholding the original policy intent of the provisions. In relation to the homeowner, I can confirm that an ex gratia payment was made that will go some way to assisting that individual. Allowing developer covenants to dictate where solar panels can be installed, as many have said, is likely to result in smaller, less efficient systems. That is true. Faced with this situation, many homeowners may decide not to install panels at all. In the face of the current climate crisis, it is vitally important that all Queenslanders are able—supported, in fact—to play their part to reduce emissions. In passing these amendments, this government will ensure that Queensland continues to lead the nation and the world in the adoption of rooftop solar.

Many members referred to the matter of cladding, raising concerns about the timeline for rectification works on affected buildings. It concerns me, and it should concern all members of this House, that the shadow minister and other former shadow ministers are remunerated more than those on the backbench yet have made such a feeble attempt to comprehend the issue of combustible cladding. It is a complex issue, but one would think at least shadow ministers would have done their homework. If they did, they would know that under the Building Act 1975 enforcement of building work has traditionally been undertaken by local government. Section 256 of the act is very specific on who is the complainant for prosecution of offences. Local governments have the power to commence court proceedings to enforce these provisions. The proposed amendments preserve these powers. However, they also give the building commission the same powers, as they are well placed to act in checklist matters.

I must also refute the suggestion of the member for Burleigh that flammable cladding was somehow approved by the government. I note the member invited me to educate him on this matter. For his benefit, and for the benefit of the member for Burnett, I will take the opportunity to do that. To be clear, since its introduction in 1997, the Building Code has contained specific fire resistance requirements that external wall products must meet—effectively banning combustible cladding on those buildings. Additionally, since 2017 the Queensland government has taken decisive action to address the issue further, including a ban on the use of certain combustible cladding materials for new buildings. It is a belt-and-braces approach. Through the Safer Buildings program, almost 20,000 private buildings have been assessed and 17,700 cleared of cladding fire risk.

The checklist process is just the first step in Queensland's three-phase approach to combustible cladding that includes identify, mitigate and rectify. The identification phase required in-scope private building owners to complete the checklist. Every single owner of a building with an identified cladding fire risk now possesses a report from a fire engineer registered with Queensland engineering regulator, the Board of Professional Engineers of Queensland, containing substantial advice about that risk. This empowers owners to mitigate and rectify risks. To ensure that buildings are safe to occupy until

rectification is complete, owners are obliged to provide access to the report to lot owners and tenants. The QBCC and relevant local government must also be given copies of the report. Further, the mighty Queensland Fire and Emergency Service—the best in the world—is made aware of buildings with a cladding fire risk so that they can undertake a review of their operational requirements in the event of a fire at the building.

Cladding rectification is the third and vital step. I remind the House that this requires development and approval of a unique solution for each building. Understandably, this takes time, but it is part of our thorough, risk based approach to rectifying this issue. I can advise members that 121 private buildings have completed rectification works. This compares with Victoria, where 153 buildings have been rectified in a program with a much narrower scope. I can also advise that 94 per cent of registered private building owners in Queensland have completed their checklist obligations. Impacted buildings have a combustible cladding notice displayed in the foyer. I have been clear from the outset that building owners are responsible for ensuring that their properties do not pose a cladding fire safety risk to the occupants. The consequences for failing to do so are why we are here debating this bill, and this has been well recognised by contributors to the debate.

The government has also taken action in relation to combustible cladding in its own buildings, with 93 per cent of government buildings identified as either undergoing rectification, having already completed rectification or in the process of planning for rectification. Importantly, those buildings have been deemed safe to occupy while any rectification works are taking place. A list of government buildings with confirmed combustible external cladding is included on the department's website and is updated monthly. We have taken the approach that we will be transparent and accountable on this issue. Once rectification works have been completed, the site is removed from the schedule. I was pleased to hear the member for Maroochydore, in her contribution, use that very information from the website. I encourage her and others to continue checking the website. It will continue to demonstrate the government's ongoing commitment to rectifying buildings in the publicly owned portfolio.

What is clear is that Queensland is once again leading the nation with our response to combustible cladding. Members do not need to take my word for that. The chair of the Safer Buildings Taskforce, the renowned Peter Koutsoukis, has said—

The checklist process, supervised by the Queensland Building and Construction Commission, was unequivocally, the most comprehensive assessment of cladding fire risk of any state.

All classes except houses and sheds, all attachments and all materials were to be assessed in Queensland, which is far more thorough than in any other jurisdiction. In their cladding response, New South Wales and Victoria have focussed mainly on higher risk buildings, particularly apartments, and focused only on aluminium composite panels and expanded polystyrene. Queensland's cladding response is the most comprehensive in Australia. Finally in relation to this matter, I put on record that the inquiry into the incredibly tragic Grenfell Tower fire also recognised the Palaszczuk government as a global leader for our approach to this issue.

Some members raised concerns around head contractor licensing. That is a little confusing given the LNP members of the committee supported that amendment when they recommended to the government that this change be made in 2020. We left a longer-than-usual commencement period to allow for detailed consultation on the amendment that they recommended to us. I can assure those members that our government has consulted extensively on this matter and has sought to find a balanced solution that substantially addresses the concerns of all stakeholders. In July and August 2021, key stakeholders, including the Ministerial Construction Council, were consulted on a policy paper on the operation of the head contractor licensing exemptions. We received 20 thorough submissions. That followed earlier consultation in 2021. All submitters were then consulted in developing the approach reflected in this bill.

Given the complexity of the building industry, enabling a regulation to prescribe circumstances where it is critical that head contractors be licensed will allow us to respond to emerging issues such as security of payment or safety issues and we will respond as they arise. These regulations will be subject to extensive consultation, as we have committed to previously and has been the case throughout this process because that is what a good government does. A good government listens and then a good government responds. These regulatory amendments will allow us to respond in an agile fashion.

Of course, for those members who need reminding, there is an added layer of scrutiny in the making of regulations. As we are all aware, the Statutory Instruments Act 1992 requires that subordinate legislation be tabled in the Legislative Assembly within fourteen sitting days after it is notified.



Subordinate legislation ceases to be effective if we do not table it. Further, this assembly may pass a resolution to disallow the subordinate legislation. To suggest—as has been suggested by many members opposite—that parliament has nothing to do with making regulations is simply not true.

I wish to address the contribution of the member for Maiwar. I take this opportunity to acknowledge that contribution to the debate, particularly in respect of apartment owners. While the government supports all homeowners being able to install solar panels, there are a number of very practical issues. I note that the member for Bundaberg made remarks about the perception of reality or otherwise that the Greens political party brings to this place. There are a number of serious practical issues that need to be addressed for apartment buildings. This is particularly the case when it is proposed to install panels in common areas that are jointly owned by the building owners. That is a real circumstance in many buildings.

To address those issues, the bill allows a body corporate to restrict solar panels being installed in common areas in three specific cases: first, where the weight of the panels could cause structural damage to the building—we are not going to entertain the Greens political party's suggestion that we should just do whatever we decide to do despite the risks that that might cause to the general community; second, where there is not enough space to install panels for all of the owners of the building—members on this side of the House believe in a fair nation and not one in which the objectives of a political party are met at any cost; and third, restricting the installation of solar hot-water systems where there is potential for noise from water pipes causing a nuisance to one or more of the unit owners. I believe that that is a commonsense approach. It is good policy and a commonsense approach that empowers individual unit owners. I also take the suggestion from the member for Maiwar that there is a world of opportunity to increase the uptake of renewable energy. I reiterate that Queenslanders emphatically chose Labor to help them do that.

The member for Gregory made the grave mistake of mentioning the former member for Callide. The member said that Colin Boyce was watching and listening to this debate. I think we all find that a little hard to believe. Colin Boyce seldom watched or listened to debates when he was sitting over there. He often watched though, I am assured, through his eyelids. While many Queenslanders were looking forward to seeing Labor's candidate for Flynn, Matt Burnett, take the win over the weekend, the silver lining is that Colin Boyce will not wander back into this place. However, good luck to everyone in Canberra. He is, I am told, a heavy sleeper.

As we have discussed at length, the amendments in the bill further the work of the Queensland Building Plan in making the industry safer, fairer and more sustainable. They also reaffirm the government's commitment to working in partnership with industry and the community as evidenced by our balanced and consultative approach to the many issues traversing this bill. Ultimately the bill will clarify, strengthen, modernise and support a modern set of Queensland building laws.

I will turn briefly to the amendment that I will move during consideration in detail. As I mentioned, there has been extensive industry engagement about these laws. I am pleased to see the committee also listened to industry and considered their submissions when making their recommendations. In my second reading speech I confirmed that the government supports both recommendations of the committee. To give effect to those recommendations, I will move an amendment during consideration in detail to amend the provisions relating to the Building Act that provide the QBCC with the power to prosecute offences for a failure to comply with the requirements for a combustible cladding checklist. That amendment was intended to give the QBCC the same enforcement power as local governments. It was part of our three-phase plan. However, it was brought to the attention of my department that it could instead be read by some stakeholders in a way that restricts the use of that power to the QBCC only. Clearly that was not the intention and I propose to amend that for clarity.

I note that many members have praised the work of the committee chair and member for Kurwongbah, Mr Shane King, and acknowledged his exceptional work. I also express my sincere thanks to the committee chair, other committee members and the staff of the committee for their important work in preparing for the consideration of this bill. I reiterate our support for and response to the committee's recommendations. I have also noted the thoughtful commentary provided by the committee and by stakeholders. As I advised the House yesterday, my department has commenced looking at a number of the matters that were raised but that are outside the scope of the bill.

In conclusion, I thank everybody who has contributed to this bill and who contributes to Queensland's building and construction industry each and every day. I particularly want to acknowledge and thank the staff the Department of Energy and Public Works and my office, the staff and officers of

the Queensland Building and Construction Commission and all of the stakeholders who have engaged in this process. I make a final observation: I could not look past the contribution made last night by the member for Surfers Paradise.

**Mr Smith:** Zenith.

**Mr de BRENNI:** I take the interjection: the zenith. The member for Surfers Paradise described 2009 as the 'zenith' of the LNP in opposition. Today, friends, it must certainly be at the nadir, especially after last Saturday's result. Once again, 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

Clauses 1 to 20, as read, agreed to.

Clause 21—



**Mr de BRENNI** (2.40 pm): I move the following amendment—

#### 1 Clause 21 (Amendment of s 256 (Prosecution of offences))

Page 12, line 26, after 'the QBCC commissioner'—

*insert—*

, a local government or a person authorised by a local government

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

*Tabled paper:* Building and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022, explanatory notes to Hon. Mick de Brenni's amendments [\[710\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Building and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022, statement of compatibility with human rights contained in Hon. Mick de Brenni's amendments [\[711\]](#).

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 21, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 22 to 68, as read, agreed to.

Schedule, as read, agreed to.

### Third Reading



**Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement) (2.41 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. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement) (2.42 pm): I move—

That the long title of the bill be agreed to.

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

Motion agreed to.

## MOTION

### Revocation and Dedication of Protected Areas



**Hon. MAJ SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Youth Affairs) (2.42 pm): I move—

1. That this House requests the Governor in Council to:
- (a) revoke by regulation under section 30 of the Nature Conservation Act 1992 the setting apart and declaration of part of two state forests;
  - (b) dedicate by regulation under section 29 of the Nature Conservation Act 1992 the revoked area of the aforementioned state forest as additions to an existing national park; and
  - (c) revoke by regulation under section 32 of the Nature Conservation Act 1992 the dedication of part of two national parks,
- as set out in the proposal tabled by me in the House today, vis

**Description of areas to be revoked**

Ringtail State Forest	An area of about 376.9398 hectares described as lots 9, 10 and 12 on AP22503 and part of lot 5 on AP22503 (to be described as lots 1-3 on AP23653), to be dedicated as additions to Tewantin National Park, as illustrated on the attached sketch.
Yurol State Forest	An area of about 287.13 hectares described as lot 2 on AP22502 and part of lot 1 on AP22502 (to be described as lot 1 on AP23654), to be dedicated as additions to Tewantin National Park, as illustrated on the attached sketch.
Castle Tower National Park	An area of 189 hectares described as part of lot 167 on plan NPW817 (to be described as lot 2 on SP278327), as illustrated on the attached sketch.
Mount Coolum National Park	An area of 7.603 hectares described as part of lot 154 on plan NPW867 (to be described as lot 2 on SP278327), as illustrated on the attached sketch.

**Description of area to be dedicated**

Tewantin National Park	An area of about 664.0698 hectares described as lots 9, 10 and 12 on AP22503 and part of lot 5 on AP22503 (to be described as lots 1-3 on AP23653), lot 2 on AP22502 and part of lot 1 on AP22502 (to be described as lot 1 on AP23654), as illustrated on the attached sketch.
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2. That Mr Speaker and the Clerk of the Parliament forward a copy of this resolution to the Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Youth Affairs for submission to the Governor in Council.

Our protected area estate that currently occupies over 14 million hectares throughout Queensland conserves areas with significant environmental values and provides jobs and recreational opportunities to Queenslanders. The Palaszczuk government is committed to protecting these environmental values and rich culture contained within our parks to preserve the recreational lifestyle Queenslanders and our visitors enjoy. This government continues to invest in the expansion of Queensland's protected area estate and during the past 18 months has acquired a number of properties including land at Mon Repos, Wild Duck Island and The Lakes which all focus on protecting unique and vulnerable ecosystems.

The Palaszczuk government has increased the protected area estate by over 1.12 million hectares since 2015. With responsibility over such an expansive estate, the Queensland government understands that sometimes there is a need to balance management of estate areas with essential land uses that provide significant benefit for the public. For each proposal to revoke part of the protected area estate, careful consideration is given to ensure that potential impacts to the estate are minimal and that compensation is satisfied by the proponent, in accordance with departmental policy. When compensation is recovered for revocation proposals, it is invested towards management and expansion to further grow the estate and protect its values for current and future generations. Two of the four revocation proposals being debated in the House today are, in practical terms, upgrades of state forest areas to national park status. The remaining two revocation proposals relate to areas of national park. These revocations have been carefully considered and are supported as they offer opportunities to provide essential services to the public. I will speak to these first.

The first proposal to revoke part of Castle Tower National Park is to allow for the area to be dedicated as freehold tenure and transferred to the Gladstone Area Water Board for public water storage purposes. The proposed revocation contains an area of about 189 hectares and will accommodate the raising of Lake Awoonga Dam wall to the maximum inundation level. It will also provide long-term water security storage to industrial and commercial customers, including residents of the Gladstone region. The proposed revocation includes the maximum modelled inundation extent and reduces the need for further national park revocations for the dam.

The Gladstone Area Water Board has agreed to provide the Department of Environment and Science with a sustainable land area as compensation for the loss of the national park area. The compensation land area, which is adjacent to Castle Tower National Park, is about 729 hectares. Due to its conservation values and connectivity, this land has been assessed by my department as being a suitable addition to the protected area estate, subject to the resolution of any dedication impediments. Consultation with relevant parties required to support the proposed revocation has been fulfilled by the Gladstone Area Water Board.

In addition to providing public water storage services to the community, the Gladstone Area Water Board also accommodates various recreational facilities at Lake Awoonga Dam for the public at no charge, including playgrounds, picnic shelters, amenities and campgrounds.

The second proposal is to revoke part of Mount Coolool National Park to allow for the Sunshine Coast Council to raise and upgrade the existing bund wall, infrastructure that significantly mitigates flood risks for the adjacent suburb of Marcoola. The proposed revocation contains an area of about 7.603 hectares for the bund wall upgrade and is required to offset flood risks increased by the Sunshine Coast Airport Expansion Project. The issue was identified through the approved environmental impact statement for the airport expansion project, and modelling suggests that raising the bund wall by up to 400 millimetres will be able to fully address the additional flood risks to neighbouring communities.

The bund wall upgrades are expected to have minimal impact upon the national park's values as the construction will be contained within the existing bund wall footprint which is already disturbed. Several alternative proposals for reducing the flood risk were considered and determined as not viable due to their potential impacts to the protected area estate.

The Department of Environment and Science has negotiated with the Sunshine Coast Council to determine an appropriate compensation package for the loss of the national park area in accordance with departmental policy. Consultation with relevant parties required to support the proposed revocation have also been fulfilled by Sunshine Coast Council.

The third and fourth proposals before the House today are for the revocation of about 376 hectares from Ringtail State Forest and about 287 hectares from Yurol State Forest to allow the areas to be dedicated as additions to the existing Tewantin National Park. This proposal is stage 2 of converting a total of about 2,400 hectares from Yurol and Ringtail state forests to protected area status to deliver biodiversity, conservation and recreational outcomes for the community. Members of the House may recall stage 1 of the Yurol and Ringtail Conservation Project from 2019, where an initial state forest area of about 357.39 hectares was revoked and upgraded to Tewantin National Park.

The project is being undertaken in a staged approach to accommodate current vegetation conditions and land use activities and will allow for the cessation of harvesting operations over a five-year period and restoration activities to begin immediately after each phase. The project is the first of its kind in Queensland and demonstrates the government's continued commitment to a balanced outcome for conservation and public benefit, delivering significant regional environmental, social and economic benefits.

A \$3.5 million investment to retire the land from plantation forestry for conservation purposes has been jointly funded by the Department of Environment and Science, Noosa Shire Council and Noosa Parks Association. In addition, a further investment of up to \$4.5 million has been negotiated with Greenfleet Australia to rehabilitate and revegetate the former plantation areas with native vegetation, in partnership with the Kabi Kabi Peoples Aboriginal Corporation, to provide habitat for koalas and job opportunities for local First Nations people.

The carbon sequestered by the new native forest areas will be sold by Greenfleet Australia in its voluntary carbon market to offset carbon emissions. Greenfleet Australia will also provide training to the Kabi Kabi First Nations peoples to implement the revegetation and monitor the carbon abatement area. Not only does this proposal contribute to the Palaszczuk government's commitment to increase the protected area estate in Queensland; it also delivers on a commitment to working in partnership and reducing the impact of carbon emissions on the environment.

It is estimated that during the 30 years of the carbon abatement, over 680,000 tonnes of carbon will be abated as carbon dioxide is sequestered from the atmosphere in plants as they grow. Prior to the establishment of plantation forestry over these areas, the areas hosted many regional ecosystems that are now of endangered and of concern status. The addition of about 664 hectares to Tewantin National Park will allow for the restoration of these endangered and of concern regional ecosystems as needed, supporting a significant vegetation corridor containing essential habitat for numerous threatened species, including the wallum froglet, tusked frog, the glossy black-cockatoo and the iconic koala.

The koala is listed under the Queensland Nature Conservation Act 1992 as endangered across its range in Queensland. This is one of many conservation efforts the Palaszczuk government is investing in to protect our koalas, and will complement other conservation initiatives currently being undertaken across particularly South-East Queensland, including habitat restoration, threat abatement and habitat protection.

This collaboration between Noosa Shire Council and the Noosa Parks Association Inc., the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries and HQPlantations demonstrates that the Palaszczuk government is committed to building partnerships and exploring innovative opportunities to achieve conservation outcomes for Queensland. The partnership model used for this project has the potential for broad uptake amongst local government, industry and rural enterprise sectors to implement habitat restoration and enhance protections on state lands.


The plantation licence over the areas of Yurol and Ringtail state forests has been surrendered and access to this area will be granted to Greenfleet Australia to undertake significant tree planting work. I understand that Noosa Shire Council is prepared to use its best endeavours to use ongoing funding from its environment levy to protect additional koala habitat in its council area. Noosa Parks Association Inc. will look at both funding and community-based project support with groups such as Noosa & District Landcare.

Ultimately, at the completion of the project, Tewantin National Park would become more than 5,500 hectares of national park area, connecting habitat across the Noosa landscape to Great Sandy National Park. These upgraded areas and existing Tewantin National Park are within a regional and state significant corridor that connects to the Mary River riparian bioregional corridor linking remnant tracts of vegetation and providing coast to inland connectivity. The protection of the remnant vegetation areas of these state forests and the restoration of pine plantation areas with native species will create an extensive koala corridor which will help safeguard the koala in the Sunshine Coast region.

The proposal will not extinguish or affect native title rights or interests in relation to the land. Indeed, it goes some way towards acknowledging the cultural and spiritual significance of the koala to First Nations peoples and builds upon the foundations we are laying to co-steward our protected area estate.

*(Time expired)*

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Martin): Before calling the next member, I acknowledge that we have in the gallery student council members of Ithaca Creek State School. Welcome to Queensland parliament.

 **Mr O'CONNOR** (Bonney—LNP) (2.52 pm): As the shadow environment minister, I will confirm that the Liberal National Party does not oppose this motion for the revocation and dedication of protected areas. This will see 664 hectares of Ringtail and Yurol state forests converted for conservation in Tewantin National Park. With the popular Mount Tinbeerwah, Tewantin National Park gives incredible views of the coast and mountains, plenty of mountain bike trails as well as rock climbing and abseiling at Grab Rock. The transfer of these state forests to national park will protect this important corridor and the koala habitat it contains.

This has been part of a broader project with the local council since 2015 so it is good to see more progress made with these state forests transitioning to become national parks and for the wider area to be protected. We welcome the collaboration with Noosa council, the traditional owners—the Kabi Kabi people—businesses and local environmental groups.

While the minister has tried to sell this over the last couple of weeks as a new announcement, we know this motion today is part of a longer term project that was started a number of years ago. In fact, the minister went so far as to do what was basically a cut and paste of a Facebook post by the former environment minister announcing exactly the same thing—koala cuddling and all. On 7 November 2018, the former environment minister announced the protection of 2,400 hectares of koala habitat. Then, on 17 May 2022, the current environment minister redid the same photo-op and again announced the government was turning 2,400 hectares of former pine plantation in Noosa into national park. I will table both of these posts for members to see the amazing announcement recycling we have seen from the environment minister.

*Tabled paper:* Social media posts by the Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Youth Affairs, Hon. Meaghan Scanlon, dated 17 May, and the Minister for Communities and Housing, Minister for Digital Economy and Minister for the Arts, Hon. Leeanne Enoch, dated 7 November 2018, in relation to the creation of protected areas in Noosa [\[712\]](#).

Is this the minister's way of trying to make it look like the government is doing more to grow our protected area estate? We know from the last state budget that our estate is only increasing by 0.01 per cent a year. I would like the minister to answer this in her summing-up speech: by what percentage will this 664 hectares increase Queensland's protected area estate? We know from the last state budget that just 8.26 per cent of Queensland is protected—the lowest percentage of any state or territory in Australia and less than half way towards the government's 17 per cent commitment that they made around seven years ago. Many environmental and conservation groups have said it will take many centuries for this government to reach their own target. Minister, where are we at? What percentage of Queensland's precious natural environment is classified as protected?


As I said in my contribution to the last motion for revocation and dedication of protected areas, the LNP will support any action to better protect and manage our parks, but we want to see improvements in the conservation and management of our parks in addition to any expansion of our estate. The state government needs to do more to manage the weeds running rampant in many of our national parks. Significant work must be undertaken to better eliminate pests and feral animals from our protected areas to make sure they are living up to what their name says they are. We see so little investment that fire trails are barely accessible and so little is being invested to manage our private protected areas that we have no idea what is happening to areas that have already been classified as protected.

Like I said earlier, around seven years ago the government set itself a target for growth, yet it seems to have no measurables as to what is already protected and no projected time line for that growth. The department cannot even tell us which properties or how many properties they are looking to acquire. It is because this government cares more about how things look instead of how they actually are. The data does not lie. The lack of priority this government puts on genuine environmental action is startling.

The Queensland state Labor government have set the lowest 2030 emission reduction targets of any state or territory in Australia and they are not even on track to reach those targets. On the latest available greenhouse gas inventories Queensland emissions have gone up since the Palaszczuk government were elected in 2015. For the benefit of the members opposite, I repeat that emissions have gone up under their government. They are not even halfway towards achieving their 30 per cent reduction. The Newman government presided over lower carbon emissions than that mob.

They love to make an announcement to get some good content for their socials, but the people on the ground, in particular in regional Queensland, are not seeing better outcomes for our environment. They are not seeing proper management. They worry about the impact this will have especially when it comes to the next fire season. Everywhere I travel across Queensland, people tell me that the worst neighbour people can have is the state government. They are sick of dealing with fire risks and weeds and pests from national parks next door to them. This under-resourcing of management is not good enough for these primary producers and landholders, and it is certainly not good enough for the precious ecologies and biodiversity of these protected areas. We need real progress and care to be taken. I will continue to call out the minister until I see it happen.

The other part dealt with by this motion—the revocations at Castle Tower National Park and Mount Coolool National Park—are understandable. At Castle Tower National Park it is a relatively small revocation to allow for the raising of the height of the Awoonga Dam wall. While the minister has provided very little detail about this before today, to see Labor do anything towards providing improved water security is a rare thing so we do not see any issues with the motion in that regard. The revocation at Mount Coolool National Park allows for flood mitigation. Given the weather we have seen this year, the need to safeguard infrastructure like the Sunshine Coast Airport is also a necessity. Again, we do not oppose this motion, but we urge this third-term government to put more emphasis on delivery instead of announcements or reannouncements.

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (2.59 pm): I rise to speak in support of the motion before the House today—in particular, the national park revocation components. Before I do, I want to address some points that the member for Bonney, the shadow minister, has raised. He made personal attacks, as usual, on the minister. I thought that comment that the member for Bonney made about feral animals was interesting. They cut so many staff under the Newman government.

I spoke to National Parks and Wildlife staff in Townsville. They could not keep up with feral animals that the member for Bonney referred to because they had lost most of their staff under the Newman government. The member for Bonney talked about targets. They do not have a target—they do not have an emissions target and they do not have a climate target. They have no target. They need to follow the Labor government's lead.

The proposals focus on balancing necessary societal interests with significant public benefit with respect to preservation of Queensland's protected area values. The proposals are a demonstration of good governance over Queensland's protected area estate and each action has been given careful consideration towards the conservation values and rich culture contained within the estate.

The first proposal to revoke part of Castle Tower National Park is to allow for the area to be dedicated as freehold tenure and transferred to the Gladstone Area Water Board for public water storage purposes. I recently spent a bit of time in Gladstone—a fantastic part of the world. The work they are doing there is outstanding.

The proposed revocation contains an area of about 189 hectares and will accommodate the raising of Lake Awoonga Dam wall to the maximum inundation level. It will also provide long-term water security storage to industrial and commercial customers, including the good residents of the Gladstone region. The proposed revenue includes the maximum modelled inundation extent and reduces the need for further national park revocations for the dam.

The Gladstone Area Water Board has agreed to provide the Department of Environment and Science with a suitable land area as compensation for the loss of national park area. In 2002, the Awoonga Dam wall was raised from 30 metres to 40 metres in height to provide the region with better water storage security and the economic benefits that stem from that. Since then, the Gladstone Area Water Board has proposed raising the dam wall to 45 metres to provide more water storage to help droughtproof the region.

As the minister stated, the Castle Tower National Park revocation proposal includes about 729 hectares of compensation land. The compensation block, immediately adjacent to the national park, contains more than nine different native woodland regional ecosystems with habitat suitable for endangered species—endangered species such as LNP members!—such as the powerful owl and koala.

**Mr Nicholls:** Not up in Townsville—12.2 per cent swing.

**Mr HARPER:** It is like going fishing. It is so easy. I have got one on the hook—it is a big one.

**Mr Nicholls:** If you were any good at fishing, that would be a problem.

**Mr HARPER:** Around 80 per cent of this block has statewide biodiversity significance. I thought this was going to be an interesting speech. I can make it very interesting, member for Clayfield.

The Awoonga Dam catchment contains a number of protected areas and state forests that boost the integrity of its ecosystems—the waterways, the soil, the vegetation and the air quality—key parts of what makes the region's outdoors such an attraction to the community. The important Castle Tower National Park and Bulburin National Park are fairly rugged and can be challenging to access, while places like the popular Lake Awoonga Recreation Area, managed by the Gladstone Area Water Board, with its caravan park, walking trails and barbecue areas provide ample opportunity to get away from it all. We are happy to support the Gladstone Area Water Board in maintaining and building on this key infrastructure into the future. I give a shout-out to the member for Gladstone, Glenn Butcher. I recently spent time in Gladstone. The whole community and Mayor Matt Burnett should be incredibly proud of the work that they are doing around that area.

The proposal to revoke Mount Coolool National Park is considered the most appropriate solution for reducing additional flood risks to the neighbouring suburb of Marcoola resulting from the Sunshine Coast Airport expansion project. The revocation is expected to have very limited impacts upon the protected area estate as upgrades to the bund wall would occur in the existing footprint, which is already disturbed.


The revocation is necessary to support the Sunshine Coast Airport expansion project that provides significant public benefit for the region. The airport expansion has introduced significant job opportunities to the region, enhances avenues for exports and also has the potential to attract two million passengers annually, in turn, creating enormous tourism opportunities for the Sunshine Coast and surrounds.

I want to go back to the member for Bonney—he has left now.

**Mrs McMahon:** He is just not in his seat.

**Mr HARPER:** Thank you for that. I want to talk about their lack of targets on everything—climate and emissions. It is the Labor government that is setting targets. The LNP has no target, has no plan and has no idea for the people of Queensland when it comes to climate and climate control. They had a proud history of not only sacking all of those people in the national parks area under their watch but

also having the highest land clearing. I do not know how they can be proud of that when we consider what is going on around the world. With that, I conclude my contribution. I commend the motion to the House.

 **Ms KING** (Pumicestone—ALP) (3.05 pm): It is again such a pleasure to speak following on from the member for Bonney—the self-appointed champion of the environment within the LNP. I have said it once before and I will say it again: who would want to be the LNP's environment spokesperson? It is a sad and sorry job as they are stretched across the barbed wire fence of actually delivering for the environment and pandering to their increasingly right wing base.

**Mr O'Connor** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Lui): Order, member for Bonney!

**Ms KING:** We saw that more than ever before—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Members to my left, order!

**Ms KING:** We saw that more than ever before coming out of the recent federal election results, where area after area turned teal and the LNP experienced their biggest federal election wipe-out since 1983.

**An opposition member:** Is there any relevance at all to this?

**Ms KING:** I take that interjection. My contribution is incredibly relevant to this point.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Members to my left, order!

**Mr O'Connor** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Bonney!

**Ms KING:** The member for Bonney—the faux environment spokesperson—is over there brushing up on his teal credentials. I think we have a new subfaction in the LNP—the teal subfaction—with a membership of one, or perhaps two. I note the member for Clayfield sitting here.

He is busily and pettily going through our minister's social media trying to justify his own reason for existing. Goodness knows his party room does not give him much reason for existing. The member for Bonney gets to talk about the occasional fluffy animal. He gets to make the occasional pointed remark about emissions. But is he allowed to really go into bat to deliver improved environmental outcomes for Queensland? He is absolutely on the leash when it comes to that point. He is allowed to play in the sand box, and that is about it. It was an incredibly petty contribution from the member for Bonney.

**Mr O'Connor** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member for Bonney, I have given you multiple warnings. I ask you to come to order.

**Ms KING:** Thank you for your protection, Madam Deputy Speaker. The member for Bonney's double standards gleam with the burnish of his LNP heritage. He talked about what our minister is selling. What is the LNP selling? They have absolutely nothing on the shelf when it comes to the environment. What is their record? There was the axing of Labor's strong tree-clearing laws, which I note the member for Bonney attempted to vote down. That appalling display of double standards in the member's contribution earlier on this motion in relation to—

**Mr NICHOLLS:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I am sure the advice from the table is exactly what I am about to say, and that is on the matter of relevance. We have heard now some almost four minutes and we have not yet heard one thing about the motion that is being debated—which is the revocation motion. I ask you to bring the speaker back to relevance.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member, can I ask you to get back to the motion.

**Ms KING:** Thank you for your guidance, Madam Deputy Speaker. We have these very important revocations and incorporations into our protected area estates, but I will reflect briefly on the contribution of the LNP when it comes to our protected areas over their period of time in government: the cutting of 60 frontline ranger positions, the positions that time after time allowed—

**Mr NICHOLLS:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. It is the same point of order; that is, relevance as to the actual motion under debate. That is not a relevant contribution to the debate currently underway.



**Mrs D'ATH:** In relation to the point of order, the member is directly responding to the member for Bonney's contribution on this motion, so she is being directly relevant to the debate that has already been allowed in this chamber.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I will seek advice. I will give the member some latitude, but can I ask the member to stay within the bounds of the motion.

**Ms KING:** I do rise in support of the motion. I seek to commend the proposal to upgrade parts of Yurol and Ringtail state forests to national park status and incorporate them into Tewantin National Park. That will add a total of 664 hectares from those state forest areas to Tewantin National Park and grow Tewantin to over 5,500 hectares.

I do note again the contribution of the LNP when it comes to safeguarding our protected areas: they cut 60 frontline ranger positions. Those essential frontline ranger positions going into the future would permit the appropriate and careful management of national parks like the newly increased Tewantin National Park. With this revocation motion we are delivering on a range of our Palaszczuk Labor government's commitments to grow our protected area estate. Since 2015 Labor has increased our protected area estate by over 1.12 million hectares to now cover over 14 million hectares of Queensland. I think that all members across this House would agree that that is an enormous land mass that is covered by our protected area estate. I do want to offer a note of contrast and advise the House that in 2021 at the LNP's state conference the central region branch moved a motion against increasing—

**Mr NICHOLLS:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. As interesting as the LNP convention is, and I am glad the member took such interest in it, it is certainly not relevant to the topic under debate. It is certainly not mentioned in the motion that is currently being considered. I would ask you to bring the speaker back to relevance.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member, can I ask you to advise how what you just said is relevant to the motion?

**Ms KING:** Absolutely. Through this motion the Palaszczuk Labor government is increasing the size of our protected area estates in the face of sustained criticism from the member for Bonney and the LNP. In contrast, the LNP's values include reducing the size of our protected area estates in Queensland or failing to sanction and improve the size of our protected area estates. I reflect on the values of our Labor Party within the Queensland parliament and contrast them to the values demonstrated within the LNP at their state conference in 2021 when a motion was moved by the central region branch not to sanction any increase—

**Mr NICHOLLS:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The relevance issue goes to the motion under debate. I would again rise to a point of order that the member's debate is not directly relevant to the revocation motion that is currently being considered by the House, the terms of which are quite clear and quite straightforward.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I have been listening intently to the member's contribution. She is within the bounds of the motion, so I will ask the member to proceed.

**Ms KING:** It certainly does seem that the LNP is somewhat sensitive on the issue of their own branch members seeking to limit any future increase in the size of Queensland's protected area estates.

**Mr O'Connor** interjected.

**Ms KING:** I note, member, that our Deputy Speaker has provided guidance as to the relevance of my contribution.


**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Through the chair, member.

**Ms KING:** Protecting Queensland's biodiversity and safeguarding our threatened species by increasing the size of our protected area estate is a key goal of the Palaszczuk Labor government. In the last 18 months we have added properties at Mon Repos near Bundaberg, Wild Duck Island north-east of St Lawrence, and The Lakes north of Hughenden to our magnificent protected areas. These new additions to Tewantin National Park are simply stage 2 of what has been a really impressive and innovative partnership model that accommodates existing land uses and partners across government, across industry and with traditional owners to grow, better manage and back in our protected area estates for the future.

I particularly want to acknowledge the minister and former minister's leadership in fostering these relationships to allow for this progressive rollout of increases to the size of Tewantin National Park. We have heard at some length about the really important advantages and benefits that will be provided to our threatened species, biodiversity and land connectivity that will permit the increased flourishing of not just koalas but other threatened species as well.

I note that Greenfleet Australia's role will be twofold: they will not only be selling the carbon that has been sequestered by the project in its voluntary carbon market to offset carbon emissions—and I note that over the next 30 years more than 680,000 tonnes of carbon will be abated by this project—but they will also be working with the Kabi Kabi to grow jobs and provide training to Kabi Kabi people around the revegetation and monitoring of the carbon abatement process.


As I reflect on the breadth of the debate we have seen here, our minister's social media and a whole range of matters, I will note once more that the LNP has set no targets whatsoever for emissions reduction, no targets for renewable energy and no targets for greenhouse gas reduction. That is in stark contrast to the Palaszczuk Labor government and our ongoing, continued and dedicated commitment to better environmental outcomes across all our protected areas and throughout our economy. I think that is to be commended. It is a remarkable model that we have seen rolled out here through the increase to the size of the Tewantin National Park. I look forward to that model becoming a blueprint for further increases in our protected area estates to continue the good work that our Palaszczuk Labor government is doing in this area. With that, I conclude my remarks.

 **Ms BOLTON** (Noosa—Ind) (3.19 pm): I rise to briefly speak to the section of the motion that relates to the Noosa electorate. As we have heard, the revocation is for over 376 hectares of Ringtail State Forest described as lots 9, 10 and 12 on AP22503 and part of lot 5 on AP22503, as well as 664 hectares of Tewantin National Park described as lots 9, 10 and 12 on AP22503 and part of lot 5 on AP22503. This is stage 2 of the Yurol and Ringtail conservation project which I spoke about previously in this chamber in 2019. This project is one that the Noosa electorate is extremely and rightfully proud of, as should all of Queensland.

The staged approach being undertaken has allowed the task of restoration activities to not be overwhelming to the organisations and volunteers involved in this first-of-a-kind project for Queensland. Jointly funded by the Department of Environment and Science, Noosa council and Noosa Parks Association, with a collaboration involving the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries and HQPlantations, this project demonstrates what can be achieved in efforts to conserve and protect. Proudly, Noosa boasts over 35 per cent of land under protection or conservation, and these efforts add to a long line of endeavours over many years.

It has been wonderful to see Greenfleet coming on board with training and funding to work with our Kabi Kabi Peoples Aboriginal Corporation in planting koala habitat and the creation of jobs for our young First Nations people, taking the partnerships in this project to new levels. As the minister outlined, the added bonus is that this project assists in reducing the impacts from carbon emissions as these trees grow.

Over the past months, many have been involved in plantings in stage 1, including Koala Crusaders via grants from Body Shop UK and Australia, right through to coffee being provided by Terri and Deadly Espresso. There have been so many wonderful examples of all coming together. In the coming weeks, months and years, many more will be involved, including organisations such as Noosa & District Landcare. It is both the journey as well as the destination that is being wonderfully shared and is one to truly celebrate. My gratitude goes to all involved over this long journey, including Ministers Scanlon, Enoch and Miles, and all who will be involved into the future. Ultimately, at the end of the project, Tewantin National Park will comprise 5,500 hectares and provide the connectivity needed for our flora and fauna as well as for our people. I commend the motion to the House.

 **Mr LISTER** (Southern Downs—LNP) (3.21 pm): I am glad to hear that the member for Noosa is satisfied with this arrangement. I acknowledge the partnership that is being spoken about here between local government and traditional owners in terms of maintaining these alterations to the national park. I also listened to a number of speakers talk at length about the amount of additional national park that the Labor government have accrued—I think I heard the figure of over a million hectares—since they came to office.

I would like to say that I wish the degree of care and concern that is going into maintaining this national park would be exercised for the national parks in my own electorate, like Main Range National Park, Sundown and Girraween. When I hear the government talk about the quantity of additional national park, I always ask myself: where is the quality? If national parks are supposed to be places where natural biodiversity is maintained to make them beautiful places for people to visit, I have no problem with that, but I do have concerns about national parks not being managed as well as they should be. I talk about things like fire trails, where access to a national park for firefighters becomes limited when they become overgrown and when the undergrowth thrives so that when a bushfire does pass through it causes environmental damage and threatens neighbouring properties.

**Ms Scanlon** interjected.

**Mr LISTER:** I cannot hear the interjection. I want to make a constructive contribution on this motion. I urge the government in all cases to ensure that the parks are maintained to a high standard—not just in respect of fuel loads but also in respect of noxious weeds and invasive pests. I am talking about harrisia cactus, boxthorn, lovegrass, fireweed, blackberry and lantana. I am talking about wild pigs which do a lot of damage to neighbouring primary producers by running through their crops and so forth. I am talking about deer and wild dogs which attack lambs and calves and make the economic situations of the people I represent difficult.

When a motion of this form comes before the House, I will always take the opportunity to ask the government to improve their act on these matters. The feedback I get from my own electors who actually go into the national parks is that they are not being managed well, particularly in respect of invasive pests, fencing and fuel loads. I urge the government to improve their game in these areas and to manage them as well as they can be under this proposal.


Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

## EVIDENCE AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Resumed from 16 November 2021 (see p. 3482).

### Second Reading

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (3.25 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

On 16 November 2021, I introduced the Evidence and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2021 into the House. The bill was referred to the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee for consideration. The committee tabled its report on 11 February 2022 making three recommendations. The government response to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee report was tabled on 9 May 2022. I will address the recommendations in more detail shortly, but I can foreshadow that I propose to move some amendments to the bill to address issues raised during the committee process. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee for its detailed consideration of the bill. A total of five submissions were received by the committee in the course of its inquiry. I extend my thanks to those organisations that made detailed submissions and gave evidence before the committee.

The committee's first recommendation was that the bill be passed. I thank the committee for its support. The bill delivers a number of important justice related reforms for Queensland and reflects this government's ongoing and unwavering commitment to ensure Queensland's laws and justice system remain contemporary, efficient and fair for everyone.

The first key area of reform in the bill is to establish a legislative framework for shield laws in Queensland to ensure journalists can more effectively fulfil their role as facilitators of free communication and report on matters of legitimate public concern. The bill introduces a qualified journalist privilege in certain contexts to provide better protection for the identity of journalists' confidential informants by creating a presumption against compellability and disclosure where this would reveal the identity of the informant or allow their identity to be ascertained.

The framework in the bill allows a balance to be struck between protecting confidential informants while allowing courts to require disclosure if it is in the public interest. Under the provisions in this bill, journalist privilege will apply in any proceeding before a court of record, whether or not the court is bound by the rules of evidence in the proceeding. This includes evidence given in a proceeding as well as disclosure requirements associated with the proceedings, such as summonses and subpoenas.

The bill expressly excludes proceedings under the Crime and Corruption Act 2001 from the shield laws framework and does not extend the framework to Crime and Corruption Commission proceedings. I want to acknowledge that the application of shield laws to the Crime and Corruption Commission was a key issue raised by submitters during the committee's consideration of the bill. As I stated in my explanatory speech, the application of privileges in the context of Crime and Corruption Commission investigations, hearings and proceedings is very complex.

The Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee has recognised the complexity of the existing privileges framework in the Crime and Corruption Act and recommended that the framework be reviewed. I can assure stakeholders that the government is committed to examining shield laws as part of this ongoing work regarding the operation of privileges under the Crime and Corruption Act. We need to ensure that the operation of any new privilege introduced into that framework is clear and effective. It is not simply a matter of amending this bill to remove the provision relating to the Crime and Corruption Act; we have to take the time to ensure we get the right approach and consult.

My understanding is that the legislative frameworks in the majority of Australian jurisdictions do not expressly provide whether or not journalist privilege applies to their integrity, crime or corruption bodies. This creates a degree of ambiguity in whether or not journalist privilege may be claimed, creating uncertainty for journalists and the relevant bodies.

The bill also applies journalist privilege to search warrants to ensure that confidential informants are not vulnerable at an early stage of an investigation. The bill provides that a journalist or relevant person will be able to object to the inspection, copying or seizing of a document by an authorised officer on the basis of journalist privilege, and sets out a procedure for managing the document or thing and determining the objection.

Recommendation 2 of the committee's report is that I provide an update in this speech in relation to the consideration of the issues raised by stakeholders about proposed section 14ZF. The issue raised by this recommendation relates to a suggestion that section 14ZF be amended to specify that the authorised officer who executed the search warrant bears the onus of proving that the public interest in disclosing the informant's identity outweighs the matters mentioned in section 14Y(1)(a) and (b) relating to adverse effects on the informant or another person and the public interest. I acknowledge the benefits in providing further clarity and will be moving an amendment during consideration in detail to specify that the person seeking to deal with the sealed or stored document or thing, in a way authorised under the warrant, has the onus of satisfying the court about public interest considerations on the balance of probabilities.

I acknowledge that some submitters raised other concerns with the committee about the procedures for search warrants in the bill. While amendments are not proposed to address these concerns, I can assure stakeholders that the Department of Justice and Attorney-General will monitor the practical operation of the provisions to ensure the protections offered by the shield laws framework are effective.

Another significant reform in the bill is to provide a legislative framework enabling videorecorded statements to be used as an adult victim's evidence-in-chief in domestic and family violence related criminal proceedings to support the operation of a pilot. The pilot will build on the significant work of the Palaszczuk government to respond to the impacts of domestic, family and sexual violence in Queensland. This includes the establishment of the independent Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce, which will be providing its final report on women's experience in the criminal justice system in June. While the bill introduces a broad legislative framework, it will only apply to a domestic violence proceeding as defined. This definition allows the parameters of the pilot to be established by regulation.

As I indicated in my explanatory speech, consideration is being given to the operation of a 12-month pilot which would run simultaneously in two Magistrates Court locations, at Ipswich and Southport. I acknowledge that some stakeholders raised concerns with the committee about the need for increased clarity in relation to the pilot. I can assure those stakeholders that further consultation will be undertaken with key stakeholders about the details of the pilot ahead of the making of the regulation.

Recommendation 3 of the committee report is that I give an update on the consideration of the issues raised by submitters in relation to the definition of 'domestic violence offence'. This recommendation was made following concerns raised by Women's Legal Service Queensland during the committee process about the potential for this definition to be interpreted in a way that will inadvertently narrow the types of matters where a recorded statement can be used. I recognise the benefit of clarifying this issue and therefore will be moving an amendment during consideration in detail to make clear that the definition of 'domestic violence offence' applies to breaches of domestic violence orders or other criminal offences, such as assault, committed in a domestic violence context.

The second key amendment I will be moving for the videorecorded evidence provisions is in relation to the definition of 'trained police officer'. While this amendment was not recommended by the committee, it responds to stakeholder views expressed during the committee process. As I outlined in my explanatory speech, allowing evidence-in-chief to be given by way of videorecorded statement offers potential benefits for victims of domestic and family violence.

A key safeguard for victims as part of the pilot is the requirement that statements are taken by trained police officers who must ensure that a complainant has given their informed consent to the making of a statement. A number of stakeholders have emphasised the importance of training and the need for it to encompass education about the impacts on domestic and family violence and trauma for victims. To this end, submitters have identified an opportunity to clarify the nature of the training in the definition of 'trained police officer' in the bill. I would like to thank submitters for this input and will be moving an amendment during consideration in detail to make clear that police must receive domestic and family violence training. The videorecorded evidence provisions will commence on a date to be set by proclamation to ensure there is sufficient time for this training to be delivered.


During the committee process, some stakeholders raised concerns that the pilot could impede the efficient administration of justice or prejudice an accused and their ability to receive a fair trial. While I acknowledge the use of videorecorded evidence-in-chief does represent a significant departure from the usual rules of evidence for criminal proceedings, the bill is not intended to override the court's general discretion to exclude evidence. Also, the pilot will be subject to an independent evaluation. Impacts on fair-trial rights of the accused, as well as the experiences of victims, will form key components of this evaluation.

I note that the opposition committee members in their statement of reservation have sought further details about the evaluation, including the independent assessor. The independent evaluator has not yet been appointed. Subject to passage of the bill, it is proposed that an appropriately qualified and experienced evaluator would be engaged through a procurement process. Any relevant findings made by the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce will also need to be considered. The task force's discussion paper on women's and girls' experiences across the criminal justice system refers to the pilot and includes discussion about whether or not videorecorded interviews between police and victims for sexual offences could be used as evidence-in-chief in trials. I look forward to considering the task force's findings later this year.

The final amendment to the videorecorded evidence provisions which I will be moving during consideration in detail is to address a technical error which has been identified in new section 93AC of the Evidence Act.

I will now turn briefly to the amendments in the bill which deliver on the government's response to the State Coroner's recommendation in the findings of the inquest into the death and disappearance of Daniel Morcombe. The provisions in the bill respond to the Coroner's recommendation by creating a clear disclosure process in relation to human remains which allows criminal courts to have regard to the need not to unnecessarily delay the return of a deceased person's body under the coronial system. I want to once again thank Denise and Bruce Morcombe for their engagement with these reforms and for their strong and tireless advocacy to increase the safety of children here in Queensland.

Finally, the bill also contains technical amendments to support the operation of a scheme to allow the electronic transfer of warrants and to ensure service as a magistrate in Toowoomba constitutes regional experience for the purpose of a transfer decision. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (3.36 pm): This is a complex bill dealing with some novel and complex changes to well-established areas of law. While all the changes contemplated by the bill are important, some stand out. Firstly, the bill deals with the issue of the so-called shield laws. These laws are designed to protect journalists when they report in the public interest against actions designed to force them to reveal their confidential sources in court. There is currently no common law privilege that allows journalists to refuse to reveal their confidential source which, it is argued, stifles the free flow of information and an active and free press. While the LNP welcome this change, we believe it can go further, and we will be seeking to move an amendment to the bill to extend the operation of the shield laws to matters before the Crime and Corruption Commission. In fact, amendments should be being circulated about that right now.

In passing, it is interesting to note how this government's attitude has changed. We only need to turn back to August 2020 when then attorney-general D'Ath wanted to actually introduce gag laws, stopping the reporting of matters reported to the CCC, outraging journalists and leading to our state's journal of record to publish a completely blank front page highlighting the Orwellian overreach of an arrogant Labor government. My, aren't we seeing that every day in this place at the moment!

**Mr Hinchliffe** interjected.

**Mr NICHOLLS:** I listened to my friend, the member for Sandgate's response there. Such was the reaction that the proposal did not even last 24 hours—not 24 hours! It lasted 20 hours—in fact, an embarrassing backflip or a spectacular backflip, depending on who was commenting about it and where you read the story, but that was the term used. That legislation did not even last a day. In fact, it was

so bad that former attorney-general D'Ath gagged herself within 20 hours after introducing the bill. She issued one of the shortest media statements of all time announcing that the bill was withdrawn. I table a copy of that statement for the amusement of the House and anyone who might be inclined to read it.

*Tabled paper:* Media statement, dated 14 August 2020, by the former Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Hon. Yvette D'Ath, in relation to the recommendations of the CCC and the withdrawal of a bill [\[713\]](#).

It should even be able to be read by the honourable member opposite for it is only a line long and it contains words of less than two syllables. Even the member should be able to read that. The second major change—

**Mr Saunders:** Sit down, you fool.

**Mr NICHOLLS:** Not only do you look like a clown, but you sound like one.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Lui): Through the chair.

**Mr NICHOLLS:** The second major change the bill introduces involves overturning the rule against hearsay—

**Mr SAUNDERS:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take offence to that remark. I ask him to withdraw.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member, your comments were unparliamentary and I ask you to withdraw.

**Mr NICHOLLS:** I am happy to withdraw.

**Mr LANGBROEK:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. My point of order is that the member for Maryborough also used unparliamentary language and I ask you to ask him to withdraw that.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Maryborough, I ask you to withdraw your comments.

**Mr SAUNDERS:** I withdraw.

**Mr NICHOLLS:** The second major change the bill introduces involves overturning the rule against hearsay evidence and allowing the giving of evidence-in-chief by audio or video recording by domestic and family violence victims in criminal proceedings. Another significant change flows from the tragic abduction and murder of Daniel Morcombe. The State Coroner in that case made recommendations to impose a time limit on the testing of human remains. In fact, that recommendation was made some considerable time ago and the opposition has continued to pursue that both in estimates and in question time. Hopefully, this change will be of a comfort to families in the future. It is a testament, again, to the perseverance of the Morcombes' campaign for law reform. This is not the only one, but this is yet another one of the reforms they have campaigned for.

Other matters relate to computer warrants and the recognition of Toowoomba as regional service for the Magistrates Court service transfer policy. Let me deal with the videorecorded evidence material first.

If honourable members ask any law student or even an experienced practitioner, they will tell them that the law of evidence is one of the most important, arcane and confusing areas of the law to explain. I suspect it is so because it is so vital to determining the questions often placed before the courts. In civil litigation it is, of course, of importance. But in a criminal trial dealing with, as it does, determinations of guilt or innocence and punishment and deterrence as well as protection of society, it is absolutely vital. Perhaps that is why so much time and energy is expended on ensuring evidence is reliable and trustworthy and why so much time in court is spent on examining and cross-examining the evidence presented to ensure it is reliable and free from taint and/or interference. It is evidence that points the way to the truth that a court seeks when conducting a trial and adjudicating claims between parties.

Inevitably as part of that evidence evidence-in-chief has to be presented. The best person to present that evidence-in-chief in a criminal trial, especially for an assault, is the person assaulted. In doing so, the witness recounts the events of the assault in open court under the questioning usually of the prosecutor, a trained prosecutor, who elicits the evidence necessary to sustain the fundamentals of the offence.

Understandably and notwithstanding the care with which prosecutors take a victim through their evidence in court, this can sometimes be traumatic and upsetting. Certainly reports from victims of domestic and family violence indicate that this is especially the case in criminal proceedings. It may

also be that victims are intimidated by an accused, especially if that accused is self-represented and sitting at the bar table directly in front of them in court. It is an attempt to address this very real concern that the suggestion has often been made to use video or audio recordings as evidence-in-chief in criminal trials. It is important to note that this type of evidence can be used in matters involving children.

The issue with this proposal is that it is not what lawyers sometimes call 'the best evidence'. It is, in fact, hearsay evidence. This bill negates the hearsay rule in domestic and family violence related criminal proceedings. The hearsay rule that evidence of a previous representation made by a person is not admissible to prove the existence of a fact that it can reasonably be supposed that the person intended to assert by the representation—that is the hearsay rule—is one of the most popularly known of the so-called rules of evidence.

As an aside, if honourable members ask any 19-year-old watching the Johnny Depp and Amber Heard trial on Snapchat, they can tell them all about the hearsay rule—that is how popular it is. It is, in fact, an exception to the admissibility rule of evidence. It applies to the criminal matters defined in clause 37 of the bill in new part 6A. Broadly, they are offences against the Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act or other criminal offences involving such a contravention. I do want to note that the amendments circulated by the Attorney address the committee concern around the definitions in clause 37 and specifically new section 103B and I want to signal that the LNP will support this change and this amendment.

This change in the rules of evidence is significant. As the Attorney noted in her introductory speech, we do need to be careful about the consequences of this change. Understandably, there are some very real concerns raised by the Bar Association of Queensland and the Queensland Law Society. The concerns are well canvassed in the committee report and in each of those associations' submissions to the committee. While a trial of the changes is sensible and appropriate, there is still little detail available of how the trial would be evaluated and by whom. I note the Attorney's comments in her speech a little while ago that the appointment of someone to evaluate the trial is still yet to be made.

There is little information on what might constitute a measure of success of the trial and whether the trial is effective in both reducing trauma for victims and improving access to justice as well as ensuring there are no miscarriages of justice all the while balancing the need to ensure a fair trial. It is important to note that there is a paucity of evidence available, especially from the most recent trial in Victoria, of a similar scheme to gauge the effectiveness of those changes. Again, this came out in the committee report.

Of course, one of the matters to be taken into account will also be future actions stemming from the just announced inquiry into the Queensland Police Service as part of the response to the first report on women's justice and safety. One matter of concern in this trial is the training of police who will be taking this evidence. This matter was canvassed widely in the committee. Clause 37 inserts new part 6A and new section 103E sets out the requirements for making recorded statements. It says, amongst other things, that a recorded statement must be taken by a trained police officer. The proposed definition of a 'trained police officer' does not specify what the training must be. Again, I note the committee's comments on the issue.

I also note the comments of the Women's Legal Service of Queensland about the areas that ought to be considered in the training and the extremely specialised area this part of the law involves. I also note the Women's Legal Service's comment that there must be adequate support for police to be trained including trauma informed work practices. Again, I note the Attorney's proposed amendments—and she mentioned them today in her speech and, again, we signal our support for that amendment—will insert in new section 103E(4) a clear direction that the training must be domestic and family violence training, but it does not include trauma informed work practices, as requested by the Women's Legal Service in their submission. I simply ask the Attorney to explain why this is so. There may be some other aspect of the training that the Attorney can inform the House on to satisfy this request.

It is fair to say that the Bar Association does not wholeheartedly support this change. The Bar Association in its submission points out some serious issues that will have to be carefully monitored during the trial if we are to have confidence that setting aside the hearsay rule that has served justice so well over the years is to be permanent and does ensure proper justice for all. One significant area of concern raised by the Bar Association is that police officers will take the recorded evidence-in-chief intended to be used as such in court when that is not primarily a police officer's role. Police are there to investigate offences, gather information and charge an accused.

Their primary role is not to record evidence and take evidence-in-chief. It is a very different role. Taking and delivering evidence-in-chief is, in fact, an area that requires some considerable skill. This is a matter that properly needs to be considered as part of the trial. I ask: can the Attorney in her reply advise whether some form of training in the eliciting of evidence-in-chief will be included in the training referred to in new section 103E(4)?

The Queensland Law Society makes a thoughtful and reasoned submission. It supports videorecorded statements in domestic and family violence proceedings in principle, subject to the interests of justice and a fair trial. Again, the society urges caution in a number of areas and addresses both the benefit and the pitfalls that may emerge from the trial. It is important that we do pay attention to these warnings from both the Bar Association and the Law Society, given their many years of experience, their day-to-day ongoing interactions with the system and their knowledge of the law.

Let me make this plain: that ought not to stop this parliament from seeking to make the experience of victims of domestic and family violence in the justice system less traumatic and less frightening than it otherwise might be. Indeed, the task force report makes this abundantly clear and I have spoken about the need for this to occur in recent debates, most recently on the issue of consent in the Criminal Code speech that I delivered in regard to that amendment last year.

The LNP will be supporting this part of the bill, and we will be looking to be kept informed of the results in a sensible and open manner. If the government expects support in making these changes, we would like to see the results of the trial provided to this House so that it can be informed. If we are to achieve the goal of a better response and a better system, we need proper and full debate. This can only be achieved with the provision of all of the information from the trial. Again I ask the Attorney to assure the House that the results will be tabled in a prompt and timely manner, allowing a full and considered evaluation of the success or otherwise of the trial.

I turn to the so-called shield laws. This is a complicated matter, as anyone looking at pages 25 to 41 of the bill will quickly conclude. I do not intend to repeat the information provided in the explanatory notes. The method of operation of the section, though, is thorough and the definitions seem to contemplate the modern take on journalistic activity, including the use of social media. Critically, the definitions in proposed section 14R appear to reflect the current understanding of who a journalist or a publisher is. This was extensively discussed in the High Court case of *Fairfax Media Publications Pty Ltd v Voller*.

Submitters to the committee were mostly positive about the way the laws should work and their practical effect. Where there was a concern about section 14ZF, the Attorney has signalled that amendments are to be made and they have been circulated. One thing, however, remains clear: there is no compelling reason advanced as to why the shield laws should not apply to hearings before the Crime and Corruption Commission. The consultation report showed that 94 per cent of survey respondents and 56 per cent of submitters supported the application of shield laws for journalists appearing before the CCC. When the bill was introduced last year, the Attorney said in her speech—

I can assure stakeholders that further consultation will be undertaken in relation to this work and that we will be in a position to determine the most appropriate course of action in the first half of next year.

It is almost the end of 'the first half of next year'. In fact, we only have a couple more weeks before it will be the end of the first half of this year. Indeed, we only have the budget sitting to go before this parliament will not be sitting again for the first half of this year and will not be sitting again properly until August. We are still waiting for a statement from the Attorney about whether the shield laws will apply to matters before the CCC.

Earlier this afternoon the Attorney-General again said that the application of the shield laws is being reviewed, but she made no statement as to how the consultation will make it any more clear that people believe that the shield laws should apply to the CCC. The consultation has been done and the submissions have been made. The committee report makes it clear.

As I said, the LNP believes there is no compelling reason why shield laws cannot apply to the CCC, so I will be moving amendments in consideration in detail to give effect to this. This is a position clearly supported by the Queensland Law Society when it says in its submission—

Our members are of the view that if shield laws are to be introduced, their coverage should extend to CCC proceedings where witnesses can be compelled to give evidence ...

QLS believes that a qualified privilege will allow the CCC to advocate why the shield should be overridden in a particular matter ...

The Bar Association supports the extension, saying in its submission—

... it considers the same shield laws should apply in matters before the Crime and Corruption Commission.



The Bar Association also noted—

It would require only relatively minor amendment to the provisions as they currently stand.

I say to the Attorney: for the benefit of ALP members—in fact, all members—I have circulated a simple and relatively minor amendment.

Australia's Right to Know coalition also urged that the shield laws apply to the CCC. In response to the Attorney's introductory speech last year, the ARTK says—

We argue that the time is now to ensure the shield law applies in all circumstances without exception.

The LNP supports these and other calls to extend the shield laws to the CCC and will be moving amendments, as I have foreshadowed.

The remaining provisions of the bill are not controversial, although I do want to specifically acknowledge the implementation of the changes following the coronial inquest into the death of Daniel Morcombe. This change is as a result of the lengthy delay the Morcombes experienced in having Daniel's remains returned to them. The State Coroner's report details the circumstances of that delay, including the need to retain evidence for the trial in circumstances where the prosecution and defence could not agree on certain steps to be taken. The amendment balances the need to ensure a fair trial for the accused with the desire of families to finally lay loved ones to rest. The LNP will be supporting the bill and we do look forward to debate on the amendment.

I urge all members to think carefully on the amendment that I am proposing to include the CCC in coverage of the shield laws. I say this in light of all we have learned in the last few months about the CCC. Let's not forget the reports we have had from the parliamentary committee. When considering the amendment I have proposed, I remind members that the journalist privilege, the so-called shield law, is not absolute. It is not the privilege of an MP in this House; it is a qualified privilege. It is subject to the review of a Supreme Court judge.

Ultimately, we place our faith in those superior courts and their judges to uphold our laws and strike the right balance. In fact, those courts often adjudicate matters involving the exercise by the CCC of their powers. We already provide them with those powers. This might be boring to some, or it may be above their ability to understand, but it is vitally important to consider serious matters in a serious way. Some people have a blind adherence to the party line without a consideration of the rationale and the reason before it and some people think that listening to a reasoned debate has no place in democracy. I am not one of those people. I listen to other people in this place, pay attention to what they say and try to make a reasoned comment. I think I have done that with the Attorney-General's contribution. I acknowledge the amendments that she has made. I listened to her speech this afternoon and I have responded to the comments she made in her speech this afternoon in a reasoned way.

**Mrs Frecklington:** That is what debate is about.


**Mr NICHOLLS:** I take the interjection from the member for Nanango: that is what debate is about. You do not all have to agree—I certainly would not expect it or want it—but you do need to listen to a debate that puts forward an alternative point of view and makes a point in relation to something so important as journalistic shield laws. If they are not important, that is fine, but they obviously are because the government has introduced the legislation to deal with the issue. They must be important to someone on the government benches.

I say to members: think carefully on the amendment to include the CCC in the coverage of the shield laws, because of what we have learned about how the CCC operates and what has occurred in the past. We place our faith in the superior courts to uphold our laws and strike the right balance. There is absolutely no evidence that they cannot do exactly the same thing with a claim for privilege by a journalist appearing before the CCC.

In our role as parliamentarians we are well aware of the existence of sources, anonymous sources and leaks. In this place, subject to our rules, we enjoy an absolute privilege. Imagine if a member was compelled to reveal their sources of information. How would that member feel? That is the position that journalists appearing before the CCC are placed in without an amendment that provides them with a qualified privilege subject to review by a superior court judge and subject to challenge by the CCC.

In conclusion, the LNP will be supporting the bill. We will be supporting the amendments made. We support the changes made in relation to the video recording of evidence and think the trial is a worthy trial and should be undertaken. However, we think the bill can be made better. The protections

for journalists can be made better in respect to their appearances before the CCC. I urge all members, especially government members, to give some thought to the proposal and to support the amendments when they are debated.

 **Mr RUSSO** (Toohey—ALP) (4.00 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Evidence and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. The Evidence and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2021 was introduced into the Legislative Assembly and referred to the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee on 16 November. The objectives of the bill are to establish a statutory framework that allows protection against the disclosure of the identity of journalists' confidential informants, known as shield laws; introduce a legislative framework to support a pilot enabling videorecorded statements taken by trained police officers to be used as an adult victim's evidence-in-chief in domestic and family violence related criminal proceedings; provide a specific process for the viewing and examination of the body of a deceased person in a criminal proceeding to implement the Queensland government's response to recommendation 2 in the findings of the inquest into the disappearance and death of Daniel James Morcombe; clarify the operation of computer warrants about bail; enable service as a magistrate in Toowoomba to constitute regional experience for a transfer decision under the Magistrates Act 1991.

The committee, in its report No. 23, which was tabled in this Assembly on 11 February 2022, has recommended to the Assembly that this bill be passed with three recommendations. Recommendation 1 is that the Evidence and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2021 be passed. Recommendation 2 is that the Attorney-General, in the second reading speech, provide an update about consideration of the issues raised by stakeholders about proposed section 14ZF. Recommendation 3 is that the Attorney-General, in the second reading speech, provide an update on the consideration of the issues raised by submitters about the definition of a 'domestic violence offence'.

The committee's task was to consider the policy to be achieved by the legislation and the application of fundamental legislative principles—that is, to consider whether the bill has sufficient regard for the rights and liberties of individuals and the institution of parliament. The committee also examined the bill for compatibility with human rights by the Human Rights Act 2019.

On 23 November 2021, the committee invited stakeholders and subscribers to make written submissions on the bill. Five submissions were received: from the Bar Association of Queensland, Women's Legal Service Queensland, Queensland Council for Civil Liberties, Australia's Right to Know coalition of media organisations and last, but not least, the Queensland Law Society. The committee received a written briefing and a public briefing on the bill from the Department of Justice and Attorney-General and the Queensland Police Service on 29 November 2021. The committee received written advice from the department in response to matters raised in submissions. The committee held a public hearing on 1 February 2022 and the same five organisations that gave written submissions also appeared at the public hearing. We also received three written responses to questions taken on notice at the public hearing.

In relation to shield laws, the bill amends the Evidence Act 1977 to establish a framework to enable better protection of the identity of journalists' confidential informants. The department advised that the shield law amendments create a qualified journalist privilege that applies when an informant has given information to a journalist with the expectation that it may be published in a medium for the dissemination of news and observations on news to the public and the journalist promises the informant not to disclose their identity as a source of the information. The amendments create a presumption that a journalist or relevant person is not compellable to answer a question or produce a document that would disclose the identity of the informant or enable their identity to be ascertained. However, the privilege itself is rebuttable and a court may order that the identity of the informant be disclosed after weighing competing public interests.

The privilege only protects the identity of the informant and does not apply to all journalistic material that a journalist or relevant person may wish to keep confidential. The bill also does not mandate the protection of the identity of the informant or regulate journalist conduct. A journalist or relevant person is not obliged to claim journalistic privilege, and how each person chooses to utilise the protection offered by the framework may vary depending on the particular circumstances.

In response to the committee's questions regarding the reason and timing of the proposed shield laws, the department advised that Queensland was out of step with the rest of Australia in protecting the journalist-source relationship. The Queensland Law Society advised that while they broadly supported the journalists' privilege, they were concerned about how it would operate in defamation proceedings, whistleblower protections and where there is potential for misuse. The department

advised that the bill will operate alongside the Defamation Act 2005 and the Public Interest Disclosure Act 2010 and there were mechanisms for the court to flexibly and appropriately apply the shield law framework.

Australia's Right to Know explained that the shield laws were needed because when a journalist accepts a confidence they have a professional obligation under the professional code and that a journalist does not get to choose which circumstances they might respect. Once the confidence is accepted it is an absolute obligation to respect that confidence. The department confirmed that the bill provides that the privilege applies before a court of record, the privilege does not apply under the Crime and Corruption Act 2001.

Submitters supported the introduction of the proposed shield laws. However, submitters also supported the view that the laws should apply to the CCC. Submitters acknowledged the Attorney-General's comments when the bill was introduced that further consultation will be undertaken about the CCC and that the government will be in a position to determine the most appropriate course of action in due course. The committee supports the review proposed by the Attorney-General.

It should be noted that at this time the Queensland Police Service spends approximately 40 per cent of its time on domestic violence issues. The bill amends the Evidence Act, the Criminal Code and the Justices Act and other related legislation to establish a legislative framework for the giving of videorecorded evidence-in-chief by adult victims in criminal proceedings that result from breaches of the domestic violence act. The underlying policy intent is to remove the hearsay rule of evidence so that out-of-court statements can be used as evidence of the existence of a fact contained in them. This is not a novel concept to the criminal courts, where for a long time evidence in relation to offences against children has been taken by video and presented in the courts.

The reasons cited in the explanatory notes for enacting the proposed amendments include reducing the trauma of victims associated with the retelling of their experiences in court, illustrating a victim's demeanour and experience close to the time of the event and reducing the capacity of the perpetrator to intimidate a victim.


I believe that reducing the trauma to a domestic violence victim is vitally important as those people have already been traumatised. The Queensland Police Service advised that the modelling shows that there should be significant time savings for frontline police and significant benefits for domestic violence victims, including that in some instances police officers will no longer need to take victims from their homes at all hours of the night to take them to a police station to obtain an old-fashioned typed statement.

The Queensland Law Society, while supporting the measures aimed at minimising trauma for victims, noted that videorecorded statements and evidence from body worn cameras are already admissible in certain circumstances. The Law Society supported the proposed use of videorecorded statements in domestic and family violence proceedings in principle, noting that there are complexities with the proposal that may require further consideration.

The Bar Association noted that in some circumstances the benefits that are hoped for may not come to fruition and there may be unfairness caused to an accused. The Bar Association further noted that in a contested hearing—

Whilst the provisions would mean that in that setting the victim would not have to relay orally the account, the victim will nonetheless be reliving the experience they have already relayed on the video.

I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (4.10 pm): I too rise to address the Evidence and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2021 and I do so for a number of reasons. First and foremost, it happened to be one of the last committee considerations that I undertook as a member of the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee.

**Mr Nicholls:** A very valued contribution, too.

**Mr POWELL:** I take that interjection from the shadow Attorney-General; there would be many who would dispute it. I want to address a number of the matters contained in the committee's report and the legislation, some of which cover areas that the shadow Attorney-General and others have also taken an interest in. I will start with an issue that is very near and dear to my heart and that of my family.

On numerous occasions in this chamber I have mentioned that my family moved to the Sunshine Coast hinterland town of Palmwoods in April 2003 and it was later in that year when another young man from Palmwoods was sadly taken. Ever since, my family has considered Day for Daniel a very special day. It is a day that we participate in as a family. When I worked for the department of child safety I was able to commence a friendship with Bruce and Denise Morcombe and their family. Then,

as the local member representing that area, that relationship went to another level. It has been great to continue to work alongside Bruce and Denise and to advocate for the fantastic work that they do with young people throughout Australia in raising awareness.

There is a part of this bill that means a whole lot to the Morcombe family and I think it will mean a lot to other families that have lost a loved one, under whatever tragic circumstances, into the future. I am referring to the elements of the bill that address the viewing and examination of the body of a deceased person. As the shadow Attorney-General and others have mentioned, the coronial inquest into the death of Daniel determined that the Queensland government should amend the Criminal Code to ensure a time limit is imposed on the testing of human remains in circumstances where the prosecution and defence fail to reach agreement on the identity of the deceased. This came out of the fact that finally, eight years after losing Daniel, in December 2011 they were able to locate his body; however, they were not able to properly commemorate his life until the body was released from the coroner in November of the following year, some 11 months later. I remember at the time that that was particularly challenging for Bruce and Denise. In some ways there was a level of closure, yet it could not be finalised. In such an instance everyone understands the importance of fairness in trials and making sure evidence is collected properly. However, after waiting eight years having to wait for another 11 months was incredibly traumatic.

I note that the government raised, as I just did, that it is a bit of a balancing act in this regard. The Department of Justice and Attorney-General advised—

The bill contains amendments to the Criminal Code to implement the government's response and address the underlying intent of the coroner's recommendation to ensure a deceased person's remains should be returned to their family and loved ones as soon as possible for burial by inserting a new specific provision dealing with the viewing and examination of the body of a deceased person. This new provision is intended to clarify the process for testing human remains and ensure the prosecution and court can have regard to a coroner's duties under the Coroners Act as well as the need to ensure the integrity of the body is protected, as is currently required.

Perhaps these amendments do not go quite as far as I think the coroner or perhaps the Morcombe family and others wanted, but they are a huge improvement on where we were previously. At this point I again acknowledge Bruce and Denise. I thank them for the way that they have turned a tragedy into such an exemplary force of influence in so many ways in our schools, here in government, across the departments and in the broader society. I thank them for everything that they do.

I will briefly touch on the statement of reservation that the member for Currumbin and I made to the committee report. Our statement is around protecting victims of domestic and family violence and the trial of the use of recorded evidence as evidence-in-chief. The shadow Attorney-General unpacked this in some detail and I will not go back over that.

A number of submitters raised concerns regarding the definition of a 'trained police officer'. The majority of those submitters recommended that the definition be changed to include that the officer must be trained in domestic and family violence and not simply the recording of evidence. We on this side of the chamber certainly support those concerns and that recommendation. We believe that for this legislation to be effective and for the trial to be extended, appropriate resourcing of the Police Service is essential. That must include trauma informed training in domestic and family violence so that victims do not suffer further traumatisation as they progress through the justice system. We would like to see clarity around the evaluation of the pilot, including the independent assessor, the measures they will be assessing and whether the evaluation will be made public. I think I heard the Attorney-General refer to some of that in her presentation earlier this afternoon.

The final area of the legislation I want to speak to is something that I guess most of us will focus on, that is, the shield laws. As the shadow Attorney-General has said, not one of us will dispute the need for or fail to support these changes in the legislation. However, irrefutably most concern from submitters came from the fact that, given this opportunity, we are not extending the shield laws to the Crime and Corruption Commission. The shadow Attorney-General read out a number of the submissions made so I will touch briefly on only a couple. The Bar Association of Queensland said—

Whilst the Association appreciates there are significant public interest considerations in respect of this, it considers the same shield laws should apply in matters before the Crime and Corruption Commission.

The QCCL explained—


... it is a classic illustration that people with extraordinary powers should not be exempt from supervision; they should have more supervision. The CCC, like any other body which has compulsive powers, should be required to demonstrate that the public interest outweighs the free speech interests of the journalist. I do not see the fact it is the CCC makes one jot of difference. The difference will come no doubt in the assessment. In the weighing of those interests the court will say, presumably, that whatever the CCC might be investigating might be more important than some ordinary court process. That is where that will be worked out and it should be worked out outside the CCC because, as I say, the CCC is basically a standing royal commission. It has enormous powers. Those powers should be subject to more supervision, not the other way around.

The ARTK stated—

... the key issue with the bill is that the shield does not protect a journalist from a demand by the Queensland Crime and Corruption Commission that the identity of a confidential source be disclosed.

And it goes on and on.

The members of the committee clearly picked up on that. On page 18 of the report we mention that submitters supported the introduction of proposed shield laws but also supported the view that the laws should apply to the CCC. We on this side do not think the government's response to that has been adequate enough. I support and acknowledge the amendments that will be moved by the shadow Attorney-General to extend these powers to the CCC. I think that the point made by the QCCL is particularly poignant: to those given much power much supervision is also required. For that reason, we call on all members of the chamber—including the members of the Labor government and the crossbenches—to support our amendments to ensure that, if we are going to have shield laws, which we all accept are required, they should apply to all including the CCC. With those comments, I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr HUNT** (Caloundra—ALP) (4.19 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Evidence and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2021. The ubiquitous vote of thanks must go to the secretariat, as ever, for their tireless work in the collation of information and the unending administration that goes into these reports. The committee, as ever, worked well, and thanks goes to the committee chair, Peter Russo, member for Toohey, and the other committee members, who all made valuable contributions to this bill: Laura Gerber, the member for Currumbin; Mr Andrew Powell, the member for Glass House, who was still on the committee at that time—and I thank him for his contributions made on the committee while I was there and he was still a member; Sandy Bolton, the member for Noosa; and the indefatigable Jonty Bush, member for Cooper.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr HUNT:** I did not know she would be in the chair, okay? The committee has made three recommendations around this bill and they are: that the bill be passed; that in the second reading the Attorney-General provide an update on consideration of the issues raised by stakeholders around the proposed section 14ZF; and that in the second reading the Attorney-General provide an update on the consideration of the issues raised by submitters in relation to the definition of 'domestic violence offence'.

On 23 November 2021 the committee invited stakeholders and subscribers to make written submissions on the bill. Five submissions were received, from the Bar Association of Queensland, Women's Legal Service Queensland, Queensland Council for Civil Liberties, Australia's Right to Know coalition of media organisations and the Queensland Law Society.

The policy objectives of this bill are to provide: a framework to protect journalists' confidential sources from identification; a framework to provide a pilot enabling videorecorded statements to be used as an adult victim's evidence-in-chief in domestic and family violence criminal proceedings; and a specific process for the examination of the body of a deceased person in response to recommendation 2 in the findings of the inquest into the disappearance and death of Daniel Morcombe. The bill also seeks to clarify arrangements around computer warrants as they pertain to bail and to also enable service as a magistrate in Toowoomba to be counted as regional experience for the purpose of transfer decisions.

The explanatory notes open with a thought that extols the virtues of a free, independent and effective media. This is an important goal to strive for. Having watched some sections of the press in recent weeks, I cannot help but wonder if that is more aspirational in Australia; nonetheless, it is vital that we provide journalists in Queensland with the protection to refuse to reveal the identity of a confidential informant.

The shield law amendments create a qualified journalist privilege that applies when an informant has given information to a journalist with the expectation that it may be published in a medium for the dissemination of news and observations on news to the public and the journalist promises the informant not to disclose their identity as a source of the information. The amendments create a presumption that a journalist or relevant person is not compellable to answer a question or produce a document that would disclose the identity of the informant or enable their identity to be ascertained. However, the privilege itself is rebuttable and a court may order that the identity of the informant be disclosed after weighing competing public interests.

While broadly supporting the intent of the bill, the Queensland Law Society noted that it sought further considerations as to how the bill would apply to defamation and whistleblower provisions. In response, DJAG was able to advise that the provisions in the bill will operate alongside the Defamation Act 2005 and the Public Interest Disclosure Act 2010 and, through the operation of a qualified privilege, provides mechanisms for the court to flexibly and appropriately apply the shield law framework across the range of criminal and civil matters that may come before a court, including defamation proceedings and instances where a person may seek to misuse the laws.

Further concerns were raised by a range of submitters around the amendments as to whether they should extend into the CCC. The CCC's response is worth capturing here. The CCC noted—

... CCC inquiries are inquisitorial proceedings established for particular purposes with limited statutorily defined jurisdiction and extraordinary powers that reflect the particular public purpose it performs. The body has power to compel persons to answer questions or produce a document or things that may override the privilege against self-incrimination.

Noted that most other jurisdictions do not provide an avenue for protection of journalists and their sources before their integrity/investigative agencies ...

I enthusiastically support this bill and its amendments to the Evidence Act, the Criminal Code and the Justices Act as they relate to the provision of a framework to the giving of videorecorded evidence-in-chief by adult domestic and family violence victims. It is further evidence that this government, and this Attorney-General in particular, are 100 per cent committed to doing everything possible to not just assist the victims of domestic and family violence but also reduce the trauma of their experience.

This bill includes a range of safeguards designed to limit this trauma and protect the privacy of domestic and family violence victims. In addition to requiring the complainant's informed consent and for statements to be taken by trained police officers, other safeguards include: when determining whether or not to present the complainant's evidence-in-chief in the form of a recorded statement, the prosecution must take into account certain factors including the wishes of the complainant.

Not only will this be a significant step forward for victims, but the Queensland police advised that modelling shows that there should be significant time savings for frontline police and significant benefits for domestic and family violence victims, including that police officers will no longer, in most instances, need to take domestic violence victims from their homes at all hours of the night and take them back to a police station to obtain a typed statement.

QPS also highlighted the fact that the amendments would not preclude the collection of written statements under certain circumstances if, for example, the complainant withdraws consent for a videorecorded statement. In a similar vein, the Queensland Law Society also observed—

The reality with videorecorded evidence is that we do not think you can have a one-size-fits-all approach. Evidence is complex. People are complex. With the circumstances in which they will come to give a complaint and how they will give it, there is so much variation that there is something to be said for the fact that it is not so much the mode of evidence; it is the quality of the actual evidence that matters.


Time and again we hear of not just the physical but also the emotional toll of incidents of domestic and family violence. This can be compounded by the requirement to uproot in the middle of the night, children in tow, to go to a police station and try to recall traumatic events of an hour previous with any degree of accuracy. This amendment should help alleviate some of that tension.

Lastly, everyone in this chamber will be familiar with the tragic events surrounding Daniel Morcombe. The inquest into his death recommended that the Queensland government ensure a time limit is imposed on the testing of human remains in circumstances where the prosecution and the defence fail to agree on the identity of the remains. To its credit, this government is acting on that recommendation, although it must be noted that the need must be balanced against the obligation to safeguard the accused person's right to a fair trial.

The bill contains amendments to the Criminal Code to implement the government's response and address the underlying intent of the coroner's recommendation to ensure a deceased person's remains should be returned to their family and loved ones as soon as possible for burial by inserting a new specific provision dealing with the viewing and examination of the body of a deceased person. This new provision is intended to clarify the process for testing human remains and ensure the prosecution and court can have regard to a coroner's duties under the Coroners Act as well as the need to ensure the integrity of the body is protected as is currently required.

While there was a concern with the amendment expressed by the Queensland Law Society around the definition of a human body part, DJAG was able to provide that the definition is broad and would encompass samples, including microscopic samples. If a body has already been released by the coroner and samples are retained under section 24 of the Coroners Act 2003, these would still fall under the proposed new provisions of the Criminal Code being inserted into the bill.

This is a genuinely progressive bill that provides an extra layer of protection to ensure a robust media environment, such as it is. It provides an enhanced protection to ease the journey of the victims of domestic violence and it provides an element of humanity when the judiciary is dealing with the remains of our loved ones. On that basis, I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms BOLTON** (Noosa—Ind) (4.29 pm): As we have heard, the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee were presented with a bill that, if passed, will help ensure that Queensland's journalists and news reporting agencies are able to dig deep into issues, with the help of informants and whistleblowers, and know that they can offer protection to their sources. This confidentiality provision is essential, otherwise information sources dry up and governments and corporations will not be opened up to the scrutiny they rightly need and which is essential.


Whilst these new laws offer a qualified privilege, it must be remembered that courts will still be able to make determinations on the application of the law and information provision. Also, this protection does not have to be taken up by a journalist; it is not a mandate. As there are still some concerns from both media organisations and legal and civil liberties organisations, a review of the efficacy of the laws after implementation is needed to ensure they work effectively in the Queensland situation, including looking at vexed issue of the Crime and Corruption Commission not having the shield laws applied in their jurisdiction.

I turn to the important issue of how victims of domestic and family violence are often retraumatised by having to provide their evidence in person at criminal proceedings. There are proposed amendments to the Evidence Act, the Criminal Code and the Justices Act to allow for a pilot to facilitate videorecorded statements taken by trained police officers to be used as an adult victim's evidence in DFV criminal proceedings. This is welcomed.

Quality and timely training of police officers is vital. I agree with respondents such as the Women's Legal Service that want this aspect advanced. Having DFV trained officers engaged in dealing with the victims and the recording of evidence would be best practice and it should be ensured that this requirement does not lead to victims not being able to record their evidence due to them being unable to locate suitably qualified officers in all locations. Specific DFV training for all police officers, especially in a state as decentralised as Queensland, is essential. I support the amendment to be moved by the minister in this regard. Concerns have been raised by the Queensland Law Society regarding access to transcripts of these recorded statements by an unrepresented defendant. They believe that they need to be readily available to ensure access to justice is not delayed or denied. A critical evaluation of the trial at its completion must be undertaken to ensure that all learnings can then be applied if this is to continue in perpetuity, especially as this form of evidence departs significantly from the usual evidentiary rules. It is important that it is fair for both sides of cases into the future.

Other elements of this bill include provisions to ensure a reasonable time limit is imposed on the testing of human remains that may be subject to criminal proceedings so that the family of the deceased can have the closure they are seeking whilst not impacting on the legality of criminal proceedings. Overall, the proposed amendments across the entire bill appear to seek clarity and reduce trauma for all, including families and advocates of victims.

I would like to thank the submitters to the committee for their consideration of the bill and their timely follow-up of questions raised. I thank the minister and all departmental staff who participated and provided advice. My gratitude goes to our chair, fellow committee members and our committee secretariat who have again done excellent work on this bill.

 **Ms BUSH** (Cooper—ALP) (4.33 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Evidence and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2021. This bill is substantively about the introduction of shield laws for journalists in Queensland and, rightly so, has been the main focus of the contribution of others. We know that the media and journalists play an important role in the fabric of Australian and Queensland democracy. I have been very fortunate throughout my career prior to coming in here to have a wonderfully positive and reciprocal relationship with the media. It is my intention that that positive and reciprocal relationship will continue while I am in this role. We know that the role they play, particularly in terms of investigating and long-form pieces, is important in unearthing some of the big issues that go on in a democracy. Ensuring that there is qualified privilege to protect the identity of those sources is something that I know we all recognise as being important.

I would like to start by speaking to another element of this bill, in particular clauses 9 and 10, which go to the issue of the viewing and examination of a deceased body in a criminal proceeding. As others have said before me, these clauses come following the coronial inquiry into the death of Daniel Morcombe. The Coroner's report was delivered on 5 April 2019 and recommended that the Queensland government amend the Criminal Code to ensure a time limit is imposed on the testing of human remains in circumstances where the prosecution and defence fail to reach agreement on the identity of the deceased.

I have worked and supported many hundreds of victims of homicide who have been in the situation where parts of their loved one's body has been retained by the Coroner for testing in anticipation of a homicide trial which may occur some years into the future. It would be impossible to put into words the experience of a person whose loved one has been murdered and what they endure throughout the criminal investigation and prosecution. I know others have spoken to the elements of the bill that deal with that issue, but I think it is important that we go a little further into why those particular clauses in this bill are important. It might be a small cohort of Queenslanders who are impacted but they are a very important cohort of Queenslanders who are impacted.

I am certainly not going to go into graphic detail, but I want to recognise that people who watch or listen to these speeches and members in this House may have a trauma background and sometimes by detailing some of the things we do in here it might be difficult for people. I start with that trigger warning for people in the chamber and outside who may need that.

In relation to homicide, the process looks a little bit like this. Firstly, the family are notified that their loved one is never coming home. Next they learn that the death of their loved one has been violent and purposeful in nature. Often the offender will be known to the family and so mentally you start replaying every conversation and interaction you have had with them and every interaction that you have witnessed between the offender and your loved one. Families try to find that moment when they feel they ought to have noticed something. The guilt for families is unbearable.

Next comes the identification of the body. The family will be asked to view the weapon used to see if they can identify its source. The family will be asked to view and identify blood soaked clothes that have been taken as evidence. For me that happened within the hour of being notified that my sister and father had died.

Funerals are always hard, but most people probably do not realise that families of homicide victims are often not able to even have an open casket because of the violent nature of the offending. Not only are you now planning a funeral prematurely, but the violent and deliberate actions of the offender have dictated the type of funeral you can give your loved one. It is the ultimate form of control.

Next is the autopsy. Your loved one is reduced to descriptors, size and weight on a coroner's report. They are no longer Joe or Barry, they are now simply referred to as the body. That is the name that they will continue to be known by throughout the prosecution and trial. The kicker comes when you are notified that in fact some parts of your loved one's body will be retained by the Coroner for testing in anticipation of the criminal trial. This is hard on anyone, but I particularly want to acknowledge the absolute trauma that some families experience at this moment, specifically our culturally and religiously diverse communities which often need burials to occur in a certain way or in a particular time frame.

This bill will fulfil the Queensland government's obligation under recommendation 2 of the coronial report into the death of Daniel. I join with the member Glass House in acknowledging the tremendous work that Bruce and Denise have done in this space, putting aside or maybe using their personal grief and horror and anguish to shine a light on a lot of issues for victims of crime. I also acknowledge that behind Bruce and Denise there are in fact many hundreds of other families who have done a lot of work in this space. This bill amends the Criminal Code to clarify the process for viewing and examining a victim's body in a criminal proceeding and ensures that consideration can be given to both the need to protect the integrity of a person's remains as well as the need to release the body by the coroner and that that not be unnecessarily delayed.

I turn now to some of the provisions in the bill that will continue reforming the domestic and family violence space, specifically in regard to the video evidence-in-chief. The bill amends the Evidence Act, the Criminal Code and the Justices Act and other related legislation to establish the legislative framework for the giving of videorecorded evidence-in-chief by adult domestic and family violence victims in criminal proceedings.

There are a number of reasons why this work is really important, and others have outlined that, including the reduction of trauma for domestic and family victims associated with the retelling of their experiences, illustrating a victim's demeanour in court and their experience and the behaviours of the




offender at a time as close to the proximity of the act of violence as possible and reducing the opportunity for offenders to intimidate victims which we know obviously plays a part in the successful prosecution of these cases.

Yes, there are some significant time savings to the trial but, to be quite frank, I do not think that really matters. To me, this is the kind of work police should be doing. This is what our Police Service should be freed up to do—to be working on these types of acts of violence. Notwithstanding that, I think the reforms we are proposing in terms of what they will do for victims are particularly important.

The Women's Legal Service highlighted their concerns particularly with proposed sections 103B(a) and 103B(b), meaning that the recorded statement can only be used when there is a domestic and family violence charge and an offence against another act. They did think that this was a limitation in the existing draft and that it should be amended to reflect a wider application of the recorded statement being admissible in evidence for offences against the Domestic and Family Violence and Protection Act or an offence against another act. I believe that the Attorney may have spoken to this already. Certainly that was a question that the committee put to the department. They advised that it was the intention that both limbs separately fall under the definition and that they were looking at how they might reform that.

In the time I have left, I would like to acknowledge my colleagues who worked on this inquiry with me, particularly the member for Toohey, our chair, the secretariat and all the submitters. I think we had five submitters—so not a particularly voluminous response but a very important response. We were very glad to receive their applications and that they were able to provide timely responses to the questions that we put to them on notice. With that, I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr PURDIE** (Ninderry—LNP) (4.43 pm): I too want to acknowledge the contribution from the member for Cooper and thank her for her bravery in sharing those personal stories not just with us here in the House but for anyone who might be watching or for anyone who might read *Hansard*. It takes a lot of emotional energy to tell a story like that. From someone who has not lived that experience but has witnessed it closely, I appreciate her doing so.

I rise to make a contribution to the Evidence and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2021, which was introduced to parliament and referred to the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee on 16 November 2021. The main three objectives of the bill are: to establish a statutory framework that allows protection against the disclosure of the identity of journalists' confidential informants, known as 'shield laws'; to introduce a legislative framework to support a pilot enabling videorecorded statements taken by trained police officers to be used as an adult victim's evidence-in-chief in domestic and family violence related criminal proceedings; and to provide a specific process for the viewing and examination of the body of a deceased person in a criminal proceeding to implement the Queensland government's response to recommendation 2 in the findings of the inquest into the disappearance and death of Daniel Morcombe.

The committee invited stakeholders and subscribers to make written submissions on the bill. Five submissions were received. The committee also held a public hearing on 1 February 2022. The explanatory notes advise that consultation on the shield law aspects of the bill were guided by feedback on the discussion paper entitled *Shielding confidential sources: balancing the public's right to know and the court's need to know*. Feedback was received via online surveys and written submissions from a range of stakeholders including media organisations, legal stakeholders, academics and individual community members.

The consultation report indicates that the majority of stakeholders supported the introduction of shield laws in Queensland. The proposed laws establish that a journalist can make the claim for protection in court and it is up to the court to grant that interest or decide if the public interest outweighs the claim, in which case the journalist can be compelled to reveal their source by the court.

The controversial element of the proposed shield laws is that they do not extend to the Crime and Corruption Commission which flies in the face of the 94 per cent of survey respondents and 56 per cent of submitters who supported the extension to the CCC. The Bar Association of Queensland submitted that 'an investigation into alleged corruption may stem from a whistle-blower' and that, as such, 'the same shield laws should apply in matters before the Crime and Corruption Commission'.

QCCL stated that the CCC 'has enormous powers' and that 'those powers should be subject to more supervision, not the other way around'. They also said that 'a journalist should not be frightened of dealing with issues' that the CCC 'might be involved in and therefore threatened with the prospect of it being able to override an immunity which other bodies'—other courts of law—'may not be able to'.

Australia's Right to Know coalition of media organisations considered the exemption of the CCC from the application of this bill as 'nonsensical'. There is little to no reason not to extend it. A court can still overrule the privilege and it will mean they need to prove on the balance of probabilities that the public interest outweighs any likely adverse effect. The CCC must be a body that the public trust and that it has the full ability and independence to thoroughly investigate matters that are brought before it. The extension to the shield laws to the CCC will ensure informants are protected where appropriate and encourage more to come forward.

The next part of the bill introduces a legislative framework to support a pilot enabling videorecorded statements taken by appropriately trained police officers to be used as an adult victim's evidence-in-chief in domestic and family violence related criminal proceedings. These amendments to allow videorecorded evidence are intended to reduce the trauma for domestic and family violence victims—and never has there been a more pertinent time for this trial to occur. Allowing videorecorded evidence is a significant change that will assist many in reporting crime, particularly victim survivors of domestic and family violence. The trauma for a victim to retell their story can be extensive, and we need to do everything we can to make the process of reporting abuse easier.

The proposed trial is a result of the 2015 *Not now, not ever* report, which recommended that the Attorney-General implements 'alternative evidence procedures for victims of domestic and family violence providing evidence in related criminal matters to reduce the trauma of this experience'. Footage will only be recorded by trained police officers—most likely on their body worn cameras—with a complainant's 'informed consent'. While the police minister is here I might go off script a little bit and talk about that training.

**Mr Healy:** Woo hoo!

**Mr PURDIE:** Mate, it is all good. I listened intently to the Attorney-General's contribution in her second reading speech. I think she indicated there might be some amendments around police training to give clarity around it and how important it is. Currently 93A statements are taken by qualified police officers predominantly in the child abuse sphere where they do the one-week ICARE training, which is the interviewing children and recording evidence model, which I commend and applaud.

There are some prickles with obtaining statements like that. We heard our shadow Attorney-General talk about the training an experienced and educated prosecutor has in leading a witness through their evidence-in-chief which they can do in court. Often with the luxury of pre-trial briefings and meeting with the witness, they can do that. A police officer taking an ICARE interview cannot lead a witness through their evidence. They have to ask open-ended questions. They cannot lead the witness in any way. In a recent court decision which is now case law, for a strangulation offence the prosecution no longer has to prove that the victim was choked.

**Mr Ryan:** They lost their breath.

**Mr PURDIE:** That is exactly right—that their breath was impacted.

**Mr Ryan:** Good court decision. It was appealed.

**Mr PURDIE:** I appreciate that. In a 93A statement, as the minister rightly knows, the police cannot lead that evidence. If the police take this evidence on a body worn camera they cannot lead that evidence. The victim might at that time talk about the physical act of being choked. The police officer can encourage the person and ask, 'What happened then? How did that make you feel?' If the victim does not actively volunteer that her breathing was impacted, that essentially does not meet the element of the offence of strangulation. I have not seen any recent stats on that, but I know that when you look at a DV homicide—which unfortunately I did a few times—that was often a precursor. When you looked back through the offender's history, it was often a precursor that they had a strangulation offence.


We have to make sure that in relation to 93A statements officers are appropriately trained. I am concerned about eliciting that information. A trained prosecutor, as the member for Clayfield pointed out, could lead that evidence through a witness in evidence-in-chief, but police might not be able to get in a 93A statement.

I also want to raise another matter. Maybe the Attorney-General can address this later. I may have missed the point. I know from my experience and colleagues who are still working in this space that the Justices Act in relation to 110A and 110B is often the biggest hurdle about getting recorded versions before the court. It states that the Magistrates Court will not accept a statement that is not signed in accordance with the Justices Act. In a recent ruling from Southport, apparently a magistrate excluded videorecorded evidence because it could not be tendered because it was not signed in

accordance with section 110 of the Justices Act. I know this does make some amendments to the Justices Act. I do not think that has been amended. I could go on about that, but the minister has acknowledged that he is aware of these issues.

I want to make sure the training is adequate. There is a lot of police training now because police need to be upskilled. There has been a lot of mission creep over the years, and now police need to be everything to everybody. A lot of the training is CAPs books they do online. Often police do that on their own time—they stay back to do it—and you are under the pump. I spoke to someone the other day and he has 13 outstanding CAPs books he needs to do. We need to make sure this ICARE model or these 93A amendments, which we support, is not fast-tracked because we do not want victims having to go to court, eventually being led through their evidence-in-chief where they might then give evidence that their breathing has been impacted, but because that was not elicited in the ICARE interview, or whatever it would be called, that could be a benefit to the defendant. There are some things we need to clarify.

There are other amendments in the bill. We heard the member for Cooper talk about amendments in relation to the coronial report for Daniel Morcombe, and I certainly cannot add anything better or more clearly than the member for Cooper did.

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (4.52 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Evidence and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2021, and of course I lend my support to the bill. As we have heard from previous speakers, as stated in the explanatory notes the objectives of the bill are to—

- establish a statutory framework that allows protection against the disclosure of the identity of journalists' confidential informants;
- introduce a legislative framework to support a pilot enabling video recorded statements taken by trained police officers to be used as an adult victim's evidence-in-chief in domestic and family violence related criminal proceedings;
- provide a specific process for the viewing and examination of the body of a deceased person in a criminal proceeding to implement the Queensland Government's response to Recommendation 2 in the findings of the Inquest into the disappearance and death of Daniel James Morcombe;
- clarify the operation of computer warrants in relation to bail; and
- enable service as a magistrate in Toowoomba to constitute regional experience for the purpose of a transfer decision under the Magistrates Act 1991.

This is a very important bill with many important aspects, but I wanted to focus my contribution on two of the amendments. The first one is about clarifying the operation of computer warrants in relation to bail; the second is around recorded video evidence for victims' evidence-in-chief in domestic and family violence related criminal proceedings. The first matter relates to computer warrants. We are clarifying a very important aspect here. Throughout COVID we saw the computerisation of a lot of processes. People were working from home, and some of the things they would normally do in person in their own hand were digitised. Some of the court processes and some of the legal processes we had to adopt during the COVID pandemic required a lot of computerisation and electronic versions of things to happen. One of the things that happened—and it was a great innovation—was that some warrants were allowed to be managed electronically. This is a very important aspect. This amendment clarifies the process around electronic warrants being managed electronically and the storage and creation of those warrants.

This is important for two reasons. Firstly, it is relatively faster to manage warrants in this way. That has a resourcing impact. It reduces the resourcing impact on the courts but it also reduces resourcing impacts on the Police Service. The second aspect, which I think is the most important aspect, is that it allows the transfer of the warrant faster from the court to the police. When things are handled manually, when things are handled physically, it can take some time for the written document to go from the courthouse to the police station to be acted upon. By managing that process electronically, which this amendment clarifies, we can have the instantaneous transfer of that very important document. Why is that important? It means that police can act faster and apprehend the subject of that warrant. It is very important, so I want to commend the Attorney-General for taking action to clarify that matter.

I now turn to the second aspect I want to focus my comments on, which is recorded statements in certain domestic and family violence proceedings. Giving evidence in a criminal proceeding can be a traumatic experience, particularly where the offence is committed in the context of domestic and family violence. This is because, unlike in civil domestic and family violence proceedings, in a criminal proceeding the victim must appear in court and provide their evidence-in-chief via oral testimony.

Although there are existing provisions in the Evidence Act that provide victims with a level of protection in court proceedings, we acknowledge that the experience remains a very difficult one. This government is committed to doing more to protect victims of domestic violence. That is why through the laws introduced in this bill the government will trial using videorecorded evidence-in-chief. The trial will see trained police officers—that is, police officers who have completed specific training approved by the Police Commissioner—to take a victim's statement using a video recorder. Because this trial is geographically limited, we are to focus training efforts to the specifically trained police officers in those areas.

Notwithstanding the respect that the Police Service has for the legislative process, the Police Service has already started rolling out this training notwithstanding we are still debating the legislation. That means the Police Service will be ready to engage in this trial as soon as these laws are proclaimed following the legislative process. Importantly, I am advised that this training will incorporate the application of victim-centric, trauma informed practices by police officers with victims. I am also advised that the training will include a face-to-face component with a focus on practical learning. The Queensland Police Service has strong relationships with other police services across the country and has been able to leverage off interstate counterparts to gather insights on the limitations and impacts of obtaining technology facilitated statements from victims and incorporating these learnings into the design of the pilot.

For example, I am advised that in practice police keep their body worn cameras situated on a tripod to take recorded statements. This is designed to ensure the footage taken by police is clear and stable and the audio quality remains high. The video will then be played in court as the victim's evidence-in-chief. There are several potential benefits to this. For example, it reduces the trauma associated with the victim having to retell their story multiple times; the video statement will illustrate the victim's demeanour and experience closer to the time of the criminal offence; and there is reduced opportunity for the perpetrator of the offence to intimidate the victim.

While a number of other jurisdictions in Australia have introduced similar laws to permit the use of police recorded interviews in criminal proceedings, we acknowledge that the evidence base is still relatively fresh. In respect of that evidence base, I note the Monash University report of the Victorian trial in relation to—

Debate, on motion of Mr Ryan, adjourned.

## MOTION

### Central Queensland, Health Services



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

That this House notes the widespread community health concerns across Central Queensland, and calls on the health minister, member for Gladstone, member for Rockhampton and member for Keppel to:

1. acknowledge their failure in implementing the Destination 2030 plan developed by the Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service to date.
2. commit to implementing all services and associated infrastructure identified in the report.
3. install a CT scanner at the Biloela Hospital to ensure that the people of Biloela and surrounding areas have access to this basic service.
4. acknowledge the decline in essential health services, like maternity and intensive care beds, across the region.

I have put this motion before the House because we cannot get a straight answer from those opposite. The Queensland Health crisis is not just affecting Queenslanders in the south-east; this crisis reaches all corners of our great state. Many of the problems are the same, repeated in hospital after hospital up and down Queensland. We know how bad ramping is; in Queensland it is the worst in the nation. We know how bad our elective surgery waiting list is; it has nearly doubled since those opposite came to government. We know how hard it is to see a specialist, because in Queensland there are nearly a quarter of a million people waiting to see one in our public hospitals—a quarter of a million people. It makes your eyes water.

No matter how you slice it, those opposite are losing control of Queensland Health, and that is blatantly obvious in Central Queensland. We know who is accountable for this mess. It is the health minister, but the minister fails to accept responsibility. Let me tell the House who is complicit in the

Queensland health crisis. It is the member for Gladstone, it is the member for Rockhampton and it is the member for Keppel. Those members are as idle as one of the dozens of ambulances stuck on Central Queensland hospital ramps when it comes to advocating to fix this crisis.

Last year across Central Queensland, paramedics spent nearly 6,000 hours waiting with patients on hospital ramps, in corridors and in hallways. For the benefit of the House, let us listen to some more of the numbers behind the crisis: there are more than 2,000 people waiting for elective surgery across Central Queensland; one in 10 of them are not being seen in the clinically recommended time; and nearly one in four people arriving at emergency departments across Central Queensland are not seen on time either. They are frightening numbers. Make no mistake: this is not the fault of the amazing doctors, nurses, paramedics and other health professionals across Central Queensland. They are trying their hearts out.

I was up at Gladstone Hospital a few weeks ago with the Leader of the Opposition. We know firsthand the incredible work those clinicians do, and so do the people of Central Queensland. But this state government will not empower those doctors, nurses and paramedics. In fact, those opposite have taken it away. Those opposite are not enabling the basic healthcare services that the people of Central Queensland deserve; nor are they resourcing the services that clinicians of Central Queensland want to deliver.

Take the Biloela Hospital, for example. It does not have a CT scanner. That is something that so many of us take for granted, but it is not available to the people of Biloela and surrounds. Minister, I ask: what will it take to get one of these machines and the appropriate staff into the Biloela Hospital. This is just one example of the basic services that the people of Central Queensland are going without. Some are forced to wait days with injuries—


**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Order! Pause the clock. Member for Nanango, member for Logan and member for Nicklin, you will stop your quarrelling across the chamber.

**Ms BATES:** Some are forced to wait days with injuries and forced to drive hours just to have their scan. We also know that historically those opposite have stripped maternity services out of many rural and regional communities over many years. It happened in Central Queensland. The Central Queensland HHS has a plan to tackle some of these issues. It is called Destination 2030. When we spoke with clinicians in Gladstone and Calliope recently, they despaired. They despaired that the document is sitting in the minister's bottom drawer gathering dust. Those on the coalface in the Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service are waiting for action. They are waiting for the equipment they know could save lives and that could make treatment efficient and effective. They are waiting for the front-line colleagues who could help to treat sick Queenslanders in acceptable time frames and acceptable facilities. With those opposite, I fear their wait may not have an end in sight.

I say this to the members for Gladstone, Rockhampton and Keppel: stand up, lift your game and listen. Listen to the desperate pleas of people in your communities. Listen to the voices behind the health crisis in Central Queensland. They are not numbers on a spreadsheet. They are not statistics on a website. They are Queenslanders.

Our team have been there. We have listened. We are not trying to fudge the figures or hide the problem. We know the Queensland health crisis is real. The reason we know it is because the people of Central Queensland have told us—the clinicians, the patients. We have heard them and we are fighting tooth and nail for a health system which will be there for them in their hour of need.

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (5.05 pm): I move the following amendment—

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

1. the external pressures on the Queensland and national health systems, including in regional Queensland;
2. the investment by the Palaszczuk government in Queensland's health system, including Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service;
3. the Palaszczuk government had to rebuild the Queensland health system after the Newman LNP government sacked nurses and health workers, including in Central Queensland; and
4. that the Palaszczuk government handed down a record health budget of \$22.2 billion in 2021-22.

**An opposition member** interjected.

**Mrs D'ATH:** Those opposite talk about Destination 2030 and say that it is sitting there gathering dust. It should be noted that, of the milestones identified for completion in 2021, 43 of the 47 have already been completed and four remain underway. But we do not hear that. No, it is just, 'You haven't completed 2030 by 2022.' We certainly know that the member for Mudgeeraba will not become a future treasurer unless she figures out that 2030 is not here yet.

On the issue of the CT in Biloela, I look forward to going back and reading every *Hansard* from when they were in government to see how many members, including the then health minister, talked about Biloela Hospital and the resources they were putting in and when they were going to promise a CT for them. I suspect I will not find anything if I do a scan and look for mention of a CT in Biloela to see if those opposite, who allegedly are standing up for the regions, have any evidence of ever doing anything. In fact, there were reports when they were in government that the LNP wanted to privatise medical imaging along with pathology and a raft of other services. That is what was being reported when the LNP were in government—that they would actually privatise these services.

As I was getting to my feet I heard an interjection about Prime Minister Anthony Albanese. We know that a Labor federal government is actually going to support the health system and understand the importance of investing in our health system.


**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Pause the clock. There is far too much interjection occurring. I will start to warn members.

**Mrs D'ATH:** Those opposite, including the member for Mudgeeraba, talk about acceptable facilities and investing in our regions, but they never reflect on their own record of cutting \$120 million out of funding to the Queensland Health community—Deaf Services Queensland, Cerebral Palsy League, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Service, Queensland AIDS Council and child and family therapy services, and of course they closed the Barrett Centre as we know. That is in addition to all of the cuts to the health workers.

We would not have seen them doing town hall meetings talking about health when they were in government. I still remember the LNP candidate who was running against me standing up at a health forum and saying that the nurses who lost their jobs were happy to be made redundant. Then when a doctor stood up and said, 'What about the individual contracts for doctors? What are you going to say about that?' She actually said, 'I'm not aware of that issue.' She was a registered nurse and this was at a health forum during the Redcliffe by-election when they were in government. For the member for Mudgeeraba to come in here and talk about health and investment in capital infrastructure in our regions and in our staff is an absolute joke.

Also, those opposite run around this state and talk down the health system but at no stage talk about COVID, what is being seen around the country right now and the pressures on the health system. There is no acknowledgement whatsoever, compared to when they were in government. They had ramping. As members heard me say earlier today, they had ramping and they had surges with flu season. They had problems, but they did not have a global health pandemic. There are numerous media reports showing that all of the things they are now complaining about were happening under them. Conveniently, they have amnesia and they do not remember anything that happened when they were in government. I ask that members support our amendment, reflecting the investment by the Palaszczuk government.

 **Ms LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (5.10 pm): I rise to support the motion moved by the member for Mudgeeraba. The town of Biloela is crying out for a CT scanner. It is estimated that up to 46 patients per month have to make a 300-kilometre round trip to either Gladstone or Rockhampton just for their routine CT scans. These CT scans take the ambulance and two staff away from the Biloela community every day. Rural doctors and patients are crying out for CT scanners in their communities, yet this Labor government sells off the retired CT scanners to external buyers rather than placing them for use in regional hospitals. This Labor government sells these assets rather than placing these useable CT scanners in rural and regional hospitals where they are needed.

**Mrs Frecklington:** Which is what the clinicians want.

**Ms LEAHY:** I will take that interjection: that is what the clinicians want. Not only is it CT scanners that rural and regional hospitals need; funding from this government to operate their X-ray machines on weekends would also help. Patients from the Roma Hospital come to me regularly about being denied X-rays on weekends.

Over the Easter weekend we had thousands of people at events like bull rides, motocross and rodeos—plenty of potential for broken bones. However, when a mum and her daughter presented to the Roma Hospital on Easter Saturday with a suspected broken elbow they were told by the doctor, 'Come back on Tuesday. We can't order an X-ray.' The Labor government is failing the doctors and nurses at the front line, denying them funding to use the X-ray machines on weekends at Roma Hospital and others.

This Labor government have had seven years to bring back birthing in Chinchilla and all they can do is another review. When the LNP were in government they opened the birthing suites in Chinchilla, Cooktown and Beaudesert. There were up to 100 births per year at Chinchilla under the LNP. Contrast this to the Labor government, which has closed 34 rural birthing units since 2001. Last month I was contacted by Bryana Thompson of Chinchilla, who was 36 weeks pregnant with her third child. If Bryana went into labour, she would have to drive herself an hour to Dalby as her partner works away. She was scared she would give birth in her car on the Warrego Highway with her two young children on board. Fortunately, she went into labour when her partner was home on Anzac Day. However, she spent half of her labour in a car driving to the Dalby Hospital and needed immediate medical care following the birth. After seven years, this lazy Labor government does not even have a midwife who lives in Chinchilla. I am advised that the four midwives who service Chinchilla live up to two hours drive away—at Ipswich, Jandowae, Toowoomba and Dalby.

Earlier in the year Beatrix Bracefield was born on the side of the Warrego Highway. At the time, her mum kept having nightmares that she was not going to catch Beatrix in time and she was just going to go 'splat' on the asphalt. Her mum was unable to use the only birthing suite at Chinchilla Hospital because it had been turned into a COVID-19 ward, which at the time had no COVID patients in it. Beatrix Bracefield's birth certificate says, 'Place of birth: Warrego Highway'. She will have that for the rest of her life, thanks to the Palaszczuk Labor government. That is how the Palaszczuk Labor government treats women and children. It is shameful! Instead of employing midwives and recruiting doctors in Chinchilla, this Labor government has made the Chinchilla birthing suites into offices and COVID wards. It is an absolute disgrace!

This Labor government need to answer how long it will take for the Darling Downs Hospital and Health Service to review the maternity service—again. Is this review going to gather dust on the bookshelf, like the previous Rural Maternity Taskforce review by the previous health minister and now Deputy Premier? Mums like Bryana Thompson, Yvette Bracefield, Amanda Vonhoff, Ursula Keating, Amanda Allen and others do not want the reviews gathering dust. They want midwives, doctors and birthing in Chinchilla. This Labor government has a health crisis, and it has been a complete failure for mothers and babies in Chinchilla.



**Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (5.15 pm): It would be good if they could use their allotted five minutes. I wish I had more—

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

**Mr HARPER:** I rise to speak to the amendment moved by the minister. Record investment in health has restored the thousands of nurses that the LNP sacked in their time in government. Do those opposite want to talk about investment in Central Queensland? Since 2015 there have been 119 doctors, 498 nurses and 153 allied health staff—all increased under the Labor government.

I was part of the Ambulance Service prior to getting elected. I saw staff get sacked. At least 50 per cent of the former Newman government cabinet—the Leader of the Opposition knows this well—would meet with ambulance officers in secret in Townsville and try to get dirt on the Bligh government. I know those sly operators. That is what they did then and that is what they are doing now. We have a very proud record.

I know that it is the member for Mudgeeraba's birthday. I am trying to be kind. I have +2.00 power glasses. I am not sure what her glasses are, but the *Destination 2030* report is in the future. In 2025 there are some milestones. We are in 2022. It is all underway.

In contrast, all you can do is look back at your dismal record of sacking nurses. Disgraceful! Sacking nurses—4,000 nurses! Allied health staff! How embarrassing to sit there and think that you have some kind of proud record on health investment.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr HARPER:** Absolutely shameful, the lot of you. Members opposite picked on three of the best members. Of course they get personal and nasty. I tell you now: the good member for Gladstone, the member for Keppel and the member for Rockhampton all turned up to the health committee public hearings in their areas. None of you lot turned up there. None of you lot turned up!

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order, member! Through the chair.

**Mr HARPER:** They heard how difficult it was for their people to get access to a GP. Let's not forget the report. It outlines exactly what the pressures are on our public health system. I say to those members: grow some spine, front up to the public hearings and hear what the challenges are in the health space—the real pressures. The LNP in this state failed to pick up the phone when Scott Morrison was prime minister and ask for increased funding. That was non-negotiable!

**Mr Crisafulli** interjected.

**Mr HARPER:** You should hide, too. You should put your head down a little bit in shame, Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order, members! Your comments will come through the chair.

**Mr HARPER:** Yes, shake your head, Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member, you are repeatedly ignoring my advice to put your comments through the chair. If you continue to do that, I will warn you.

**Mr HARPER:** The LNP has a very poor record of cutting and sacking in relation to health services in this state. We have invested. We have restored the funding. We have put record funding into health. We should be proud of what we have done. There is more to do. By contrast, we have that lot there!

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr Mickelberg** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Pause the clock.

**Mr HARPER:** I do not know how they can sleep straight.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Buderim, you are warned.


**Mr HARPER:** There has been a record investment in Central Queensland health and it is because of the strong advocacy of the local members who asked for more, and they are getting more. They are getting a record investment in health. I cannot wait for the budget to be announced by the Treasurer in just a few weeks time. I hope all members of the LNP pay attention because we are going to invest more in the health space because we are aware of the ageing and growing population and the pressures in the public health space. We are the ones who are restoring nurses. Those opposite have a poor track record. They should hang their heads in shame. Who could sack 4,000 nurses and think that is a good thing? I would shake my head too, Leader of the Opposition. That was an absolute disgrace.

There is record investment under the Labor government but record cuts under the former Newman government. They should all hang their head in shame.

*(Time expired)*

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The House will come to order.

 **Mr MOLHOEK** (Southport—LNP) (5.20 pm): It is a pleasure to follow the member for Thuringowa. I am glad he actually referred to the recent health inquiry. One of the comments I made earlier in the week at our first committee meeting after the election was that we should forward a copy of this to the new Prime Minister and health minister and asking them to have a look at the 40 recommendations that were made as a result of this inquiry. What I have really enjoyed hearing over the last seven or eight years from this government is that every time they talk about the number of people who were sacked the number seems to grow. As I recall, I think there were some significant changes during the Newman era, but I do not think it was 4,000 nurses. I think it was an awful lot less than that.

**Mr Harper:** Remind the people of Queensland.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Order, member for Thuringowa.

**Mr MOLHOEK:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I am not taking those interjections. We will not be supporting this amendment. The amendment is like a broken record. This government has had seven years now—in fact, more than seven years—to address some of the challenges in Queensland Health but for some reason they want to keep going back to the past. What we hear is that every year is a record year in health spending. When we were in government every year in health spending was a record year as



well. In fact, I recall in our first year back in 2012 the health budget went up something like seven per cent across the state. On the Gold Coast I do not think it has ever gone up much less than 10 per cent year on year for the last decade, as it should.

I want to talk a little bit about what this means to the people of regional and remote Queensland. I had the pleasure of spending some time with the member for Gregory. We travelled through Emerald, out to Longreach and then to Boulia. Some of the stories I heard from some of the families in those far-flung, remote regions of Queensland would break honourable members' hearts. It is very easy for us all to get up here and rail about who is and is not doing what. However, the reality is there are some people out there whose families have been busted up because they have to travel hundreds if not a thousand kilometres or more to get the health care they need. On many occasions there is no provision for the separation of those families.

We have heard stories firsthand in Rockhampton of people who have travelled to Rockhampton for hospitalisation who have then been released at one or two o'clock in the morning onto the streets of Rockhampton with no plan to get them home, no transport and nowhere for them to stay. They are there 400, 500 or sometimes 1,000 kilometres away from their family and have to wait for a bus, a flight or some other form of transport the following day. This government needs to do better. That is the truth of it. All we have seen across the state is a reduction in health services and specialist services in so many parts of rural and remote Queensland. It simply is not good enough.


In this report so many recommendations have been made. It is my sincere hope that this report will be forwarded to the new Prime Minister because there are significant issues in here that need to be addressed. That is why this committee report was adopted and that is why members on this side of the House were part of that committee process and actually moved forward with it.

**Mr Harper** interjected.

**Mr MOLHOEK:** I take the interjection from the member for Thuringowa; it was a 'sham' report because it only looked at half the problem. That is because the government only wanted to look at those issues they could blame the former federal government for and were not prepared to do a full and open inquiry into all of the issues impacting health services within our state.

I will be looking forward to seeing what advocacy those on the other side of the House conduct in respect of these recommendations.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The House will come to order. Before I call the next speaker, I say that the previous two speakers have been using the report in a manner in which it could almost be considered to be a prop. If you are going to use the report, table it or read from it, but do not wave it around.

 **Mr O'ROURKE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (5.26 pm): I rise to support the amendments moved by the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services. When it comes to health investment in Central Queensland I am proud to stand by the record of the Palaszczuk Labor government. The people of Rockhampton know that only Labor can deliver more doctors, more nurses, more allied health staff, more ambos and more hospitals for our region. This government has made record investments in health and I am pleased to say that most recently we delivered a record \$691 million budget for Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service. That is a 48 per cent increase on the final budget of the previous LNP government.

Since we came to office in 2015 the Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service work force has grown by 119 doctors, 498 nurses and 153 allied health staff. In addition to these new workers, we have also delivered an 84-bed expansion to the Rockhampton Hospital, a new 10-bed ICU in Rockhampton, an extension to the Rockhampton Hospital coronary care unit and a 42-bed drug and rehabilitation treatment facility in Rockhampton. No-one denies that the health service is currently under enormous pressure. That is the case in every health service across the country. For example, there have been 92,000 presentations in emergency departments in the Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service in the last calendar year, a 22 per cent increase—

**Mrs D'ATH:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. There is a lot of noise in this chamber that is not interjections. There are members rudely speaking loudly so that the member cannot be heard in the House.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Order! I will not have noise while I am trying to take a point of order.

**Mrs D'ATH:** I ask that members show respect and allow the member to be heard.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I agree with your point of order. I would ask members to show that respect. I am taking advice on a matter.

**Mr O'ROURKE:** As I said, this is a 22 per cent increase compared to 2015. That is 10 times the increase in population over that time period.


Last financial year the number of transfers from residential aged-care facilities to our hospitals increased by nearly 60 per cent on the previous year. In that same time period, overall ambulance transfers increased 15 per cent to 38,872. Right now the Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service is caring for 46 long-stay patients who no longer require hospital care because there are not enough aged-care or disability care placements for them. This is the responsibility of the federal LNP government.

The Morrison government has totally failed our elderly and our most disadvantaged. There are real challenges. The people of Central Queensland can be assured that a Palaszczuk government is working tirelessly to provide the funding and the staff to deliver the world-class health care that all Queenslanders expect and deserve. Unfortunately, the LNP government does not value the health of my constituents as much as I do. That is why when they were in government they cut just under 200 staff from the Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service, they cut \$1.6 billion from Queensland Health and they cut funding to dozens of important community health organisations, many of which service my electorate.

The LNP like to talk about improving our health system, but at the first opportunity when they came into government they tore down as much as possible. In opposition they have refused to acknowledge the pressures coming from the aged-care, disability care and primary care sectors. They would rather complain than advocate for constituents. They were more interested in keeping the previous Morrison government in power than they were in finding real solutions to the pressures in our health system. We have a real shortage of GPs. We have a real shortage of disability care beds and aged-care beds.

I want to put on record my thanks to the health staff we have. They do an absolutely amazing job under lots of pressure, and I thank them for the great work they do each and every day. Thankfully, with the election of the Albanese Labor federal government, Central Queensland residents can be confident that the state and federal governments will be working together, taking responsibility and doing the hard work to improve our healthcare system.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** A number of speakers this evening have referred to the first order of general business on the *Notice Paper* today, the health committee report No. 18. That report is currently being debated by the House, so members will cease referring to that report. Members can raise issues that are touched on by that report but they cannot refer to the outcomes of that report or that report itself.

 **Mr MILLAR** (Gregory—LNP) (5.31 pm): Our health system is in crisis. It has been in crisis for the last seven years. I remember Anna Bligh saying when she was premier that the health system was a basket case. Her basket case is better than your basket case! We have ramping and absolute chaos in our health system. The health system in Queensland is an absolute disgrace, and in regional Queensland it is getting worse.

Labor like to say how things look but they do not realise how things are. I will tell them how things are in our health system. People have had enough of our failing health system—not delivering on elective surgeries, not being able to see people in emergency departments.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Order, members! Pause the clock. Sorry to interrupt, member for Gregory. I am having trouble hearing you over the interjections of your own members. I ask all members to come to order.

**Mr MILLAR:** I asked the Minister for Health a question yesterday. Some \$10 million was given to the Queensland Labor government for an upgrade of the emergency department in Emerald in the 2020-21 financial year. The minister said, 'I'll get back to you'; she has not got back to me. She says, 'I'll look into this. I'll look into that.' I think I might start calling the health minister 'Mirror': she will look into it but will not get back to you. There was \$10 million to upgrade the emergency department at the Emerald Hospital, but we have not had any answer. The government got the money over 12 months ago, yet we have not got an answer.

In the last budget the health minister made an announcement about upgrading regional hospitals. We thought we might finally get a hospital in Blackwater. That was 12 months ago. Planning has not even started. They are calling for tenders in the next couple of weeks. We need a hospital in Blackwater now.


One of the things I have been campaigning for in the Central Highlands is renal dialysis. There is renal dialysis in Charters Towers—I congratulate Charters Towers. There is renal dialysis in Bowen—I congratulate Bowen. Why can we not have renal dialysis in Emerald? Emerald has a population of 15,000 people, yet you cannot deliver it. During the last state election, then health minister Steven Miles made an announcement that we will have renal dialysis in Longreach. That was nearly two years ago, yet we still do not have renal dialysis in Longreach. Families are still travelling thousands of kilometres, to Townsville or Rockhampton, and having to move away from their families to receive this important care. It is renal dialysis; it is not rocket science. There were chairs put in Boulia, but there is no renal dialysis there. There are nice comfortable chairs. You will be able to watch the State of Origin in those chairs if you put up a TV, but you cannot get renal dialysis in Boulia. The Labor government is failing on health.

There are other areas where they are failing. On weekends in Emerald, if little Johnny plays Rugby League or Sally plays netball and they break a bone, they cannot get an X-ray. They just have to strap it up, take some Panadol and hope for the best. It is absolutely ridiculous.

The member for Southport and I went to Boulia and heard a tragic story. An Indigenous lady in an acute situation with a terminal illness was not getting care in Mount Isa so she jumped on a Greyhound bus and went all the way to Toowoomba to try to get care. In fact, the bus driver had to stop the bus and call an ambulance in Toowoomba to take her hospital. These were the final days of her life. She finally got Angel Flight home. I acknowledge the member for Warrego and her commitment to Angel Flight. This lady got Angel Flight back to Mount Isa so that she could live out her last days in Boulia. That is the care we are giving to regional rural people.

These people are being treated like second-class citizens. How about we step up, acknowledge we have a problem and start fixing the problem? Start putting the money back into services in regional and rural services. I ask members opposite to come out and listen to the people in Emerald, Longreach and Biloela talk about the health system, because it is failing. The health system is failing. Our doctors and our nurses are doing a great job, but we are failing them.

*(Time expired)*

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (5.36 pm): Today's motion from the LNP provides yet another reminder of how disconnected they are from reality. As the health minister has repeatedly advised the House, the COVID pandemic is placing extraordinary pressure on health systems around the country and around the world. Queensland is not immune to the pandemic. Currently there are 1,681 Queenslanders suffering from COVID and receiving treatment in hospitals or care at home. Fifty-seven of these are under the care of the Central Queensland HHS. The LNP plough on regardless, as though COVID does not exist. They are recklessly attacking our health system and those who work in it.

I have had lots of interactions with health workers. They tell me that they are sick and tired of the member for Mudgeeraba turning up with the member for Broadwater and having a nice little chat with them, pretending that they are there to be supportive. Then they go out the front of the health centre or the hospital and stab them in the back. They are sick and tired of being ripped to bits by those opposite.

The member for Whitsunday has also been very vocal on this issue. I remind her that most of the people contacting my office live in the Northern Beaches of Mackay, in the Whitsunday electorate. They are sick and tired of the behaviour of those opposite, continually attacking healthcare workers. It is just disgraceful.

**Mr Harper:** Why don't you care about healthcare workers?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Order, member for Thuringowa.

**Mrs GILBERT:** I will tell you why they do not care about health care workers. We just go by their past actions and their behaviour. When those opposite are in government they sack people.

**Mrs Frecklington:** We fixed the health system!

**Mrs GILBERT:** They slash and sack.

**An honourable member** interjected.


**Mrs GILBERT:** The waiting list, that was a good fix! Those opposite sacked 197 frontline health workers from the Central Queensland region. It was eye-watering. They come in here and pretend that they care about health workers when all they want to do is sack them. Whatever challenges are being

faced in the system in the regions it is hard to see how it would be better met with fewer doctors and fewer nurses delivering health care. That is how they think you fix a health system: you sack them. We are proud that we are out there delivering quality healthcare services to Queenslanders no matter where they live. All those people in the Whitsundays work at Mackay Hospital and they have you in their sights.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Put your comments through the chair.

**Mrs GILBERT:** Last year our budget allocation at Central Queensland HHS was a record \$691.4 million. That is an increase of 48.4 per cent on what those opposite allocated in the final budget that that lot brought down. Since coming into government in 2015 we have increased the number of nurses delivering public health care in Central Queensland by over 50 per cent. That is better than the 197 healthcare workers that those opposite flicked off. We have increased doctors by over 41 per cent and the number of allied health staff by over 56 per cent. More staff means better health services delivered to regional Queensland. This government understands what Queenslanders expect. They deserve decent health care. We have been able to deliver into the Central Queensland HHS an additional 48 new beds through the expansion of the Rockhampton Hospital; 36 treatment spaces in Gladstone ED—the list goes on and on.

*(Time expired)*

 **Mr BENNETT** (Burnett—LNP) (5.42 pm): When I was asked to talk on the motion I thought that this House could take some time to talk about the people in Biloela wanting a CT scan, essential services and intensive care beds. This comes from consultation with opposition teams in these communities wanting to advocate on behalf of those communities. It has been turned into a political debate. I will take the time to talk about the needs in the Central Queensland area, in particular the great areas of Bundaberg, Childers, Agnes Water and others. We need to paint the scene of an ageing population in the area. We are facing challenges in the health sector, but unless we recognise these challenges and put the 2030 plan into action for these people in regional Queensland we are in big trouble. Currently 26 per cent of the population are over 65. It will get significantly higher.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr BENNETT:** Do I have to take all these interjections to get you people kicked out? Keep going.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Comments will come through the chair.

**Mr BENNETT:** It is already significantly higher than the state average of 15 per cent. Twenty-six per cent of our population earn less than \$33,000 per year compared to 17 per cent for the rest of Queensland. It is no secret we are also suffering a severe shortage of GPs. I acknowledge the strain this is putting on the Wide Bay Hospital and Health Service.

**Ms Richards** interjected.

**Mr BENNETT:** I will take the interjection from the member for Redlands who is obviously going to go on all day. You look after your own hospital, I will look after mine and we can get on with the job.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Comments will come through the chair and, member for Redlands, you will cease your interjections.

**Ms Boyd** interjected.

**Mr BENNETT:** I have been here 10 years and I am very proud to be here.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Pine Rivers, cease your interjections.

**Mr BENNETT:** I will continue to advocate for Queensland Health and for the people of Bundaberg who are clearly not getting their fair share under the current arrangements. My first question is how are current health professionals expected to keep up with the ever-increasing pressures when we have not dealt with the shortage of health professionals? There are issues at the federal level. I have no doubt that there is a district workforce shortage, issues with Medicare provider numbers—all these things—but we could have debated it tonight and got a sensible outcome and agreed that health services could be better.

There are serious issues around the future of doctors at Childers Hospital. I put on record that we have been talking to the Wide Bay Hospital and Health Service about the principal health officer leaving. This has caused a lot of angst in my community. They are operating with two locums, and we all know how expensive that is. We need a principal health officer, two junior doctors, a medical superintendent and allied health support staff. I put on record that the Childers community deserves better. We need an urgent review of the model currently in place where the medical superintendent is expected to run the private practice. Agnes Water and 1770 do not currently have a hospital or any

other health service infrastructure. The closest is 125 kilometres away. Currently there are 2.5 full-time equivalent GPs to support a population of 6,000. This expands by another 5,000 during peak holiday periods. For about 20 years there has been very little change in the level of service delivery. Local Discovery Coast residents access both the Wide Bay health service and the Central Queensland health service. We are calling for action.

**Ms Richards** interjected.

**Mr BENNETT:** I will take the interjection from the member for Redlands again. Again I am advocating for my community and I suggest she gets on the speaking list and talks about the tragedy at Redlands.

**Ms Richards** interjected.

**Mr BENNETT:** I will take the interjection from the member for Redlands again. All I am advocating for is my region. I guess the member for Redlands could be on the speaking list if it is her desire to be heard and obnoxious all night. The issue of access further complicates the process. Often there are referrals that say 'client is out of catchment'.

**Ms Richards** interjected.

**Mr BENNETT:** I will take the interjection from the member for Redlands interjecting over my comments about—


**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. The manner in which you are conducting yourself, and have been through much of this speech, is dangerously close to reflecting on the chair. I will maintain order in this chamber and I am doing that. If you have any concerns about my performance there are ways that you can deal with that. For now I would suggest you continue your speech.

**Mr BENNETT:** Can I ask for clarification? I am not allowed to take interjections from members who are yelling at me across the chamber? I am asking a question.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member, I do not take questions from members. I have given you advice. You have the call. If you do not want to continue your speech you can sit down.

**Mr BENNETT:** The Rosedale community currently operates without an ambulance station, leaving the residents with a one and a half hour wait for an ambulance. This is not good enough. We have heard several stories about people waiting in severe pain or worse in the Rosedale community. The community is subject to significant road trauma on a road that is clearly in much need of upgrades.

I will conclude with the promised level 5 Bundaberg Hospital. It is not easy to turn up to that community and continue to talk about the promise made in 2020. At a recent community forum Wide Bay Hospital and Health Service said they are going to add services gradually until we get to level 5 services. It is a complete cop-out. The community were lied to. That is the way that the Wide Bay Hospital and Health Service continues to operate. I will go on record, as I have before, and say that I do not believe that the Wide Bay Hospital and Health Service chair is the right person for the job. It is time for her to consider her role in providing health services to the people of Wide Bay.

 **Ms LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (5.47 pm): I rise this evening to speak in support of the government's amended motion and against the opposition's motion that they have moved this evening which very clearly states that this is a debate about the Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service. The member for Burnett talks about Bundaberg and Childers—and Redlands—when the Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service is very clearly a completely different hospital and health service. Thank goodness for federal Labor and our federal Labor candidate Matt Burnett in Flynn for delivering \$150,000 to refurbish Impact Community Services in the member for Burnett's electorate to attract GPs and allied health services to the Discovery Coast. Federal Labor is delivering more GPs for the member for Burnett's community. What has he done in the last 10 years to deliver more health services?

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member for Gladstone, you are on a warning. Member for Kawana, you are also on a warning.

**Ms LAUGA:** In the past 10 years the member for Burnett has done nothing to deliver more GPs and health services to his community. I am proud that federal Labor will deliver on its \$150,000 commitment for more GPs at Agnes Water in the electorate of the member for Burnett. Why does the LNP want to constantly talk down our Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service, particularly during a global pandemic—a time when our health workers are working so incredibly hard to keep our community as healthy as possible?

**An honourable member** interjected.

**Ms LAUGA:** I will get onto Michelle Landry shortly. Those men and women—doctors, nurses, allied health professionals, public health officers, pathology laboratory staff, wardies, cleaners, cooks—have been working so hard to keep our communities safe and those opposite have done nothing but talk down our Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service. Actually, they did do something: they cut and they sacked. When they were in government they cut millions of dollars of funding from our Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service and they sacked 197 health workers. One hundred and ninety-seven doctors, nurses and healthcare workers were sacked from Central Queensland hospitals. Those healthcare workers will never forget what Campbell Newman, the LNP government and those opposite did to them. The member for Nanango came in here and said that the LNP fixed the health system when in government. I do not know who she thought they were. It is laughable! They did not fix anything. They cut and they sacked. It was like Godzilla coming through the city and tearing it apart. That is exactly what they did to our health system. That is not ‘fixing’.

Only Labor builds up our health and hospital services. I am proud that the Palaszczuk government is delivering a record \$691 million budget for the Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service, which is an increase of 48 per cent compared to when the LNP was in power. When we came back to government we had to undo ‘Can-do’. Not only have we restored those healthcare worker numbers; we have raised them with 119 doctors, 498 nurses and 153 allied health staff.

It was the federal Labor government, together with the state Labor government, that built the cancer care ward at the Rockhampton Hospital. Every year over 500 people can now access cancer treatment in Rockhampton, close to their family and home, thanks to a \$140 million commitment made by the federal Labor government in 2011. It was the state Labor government that contributed a further \$17 million towards the helipad and the state-of-the-art new Intensive Care Unit. It was the state Labor government that contributed \$21 million towards the new Rockhampton Hospital car park. Michelle Landry likes to take credit for that but the federal LNP contributed less than 25 per cent of the total project cost. It was the state Labor government that built the \$14.2 million 42-bed detoxification and rehabilitation centre, which the LNP and One Nation campaigned against and tried to stop.

At the 2019 federal election it was federal Labor that committed to funding to refurbish the mental health unit, but the LNP and Michelle Landry did not match that commitment so now state Labor has stepped up with the funding. I am proud that we are delivering on that commitment. It is the state Labor government that is building the \$18.2 million cardiac hybrid theatre. We have funded the Rockhampton Hospital coronary care unit expansion. We have provided for more beds in Central Queensland. There are over 180 additional beds across Central Queensland since we came to government. In Central Queensland 46 hospitals beds are taken up by long-stay patients who need and want to get into aged care or disability care, but because of the Morrison government’s failures they have nowhere else to go. Those opposite do not say anything about that, though.

It is this side of the chamber that delivers more nurses and more doctors. I am proud that it this side that is delivering improvements to our health services in Central Queensland.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Order! The House will come to order. I appeal to members: we had enough slogans prior to last Saturday. If we could leave them out of the chamber that would be appreciated.



**Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (5.53 pm): If the government will not admit that there is a problem, how are they planning to fix it? There is a health crisis right now in Queensland. There is a health crisis in Central Queensland. There is a health crisis in Wide Bay. There is a health crisis in Redlands. There is a health crisis in Brisbane. There is a health crisis in North Queensland. Because we do not have time to talk about all the crises, tonight we are discussing Central Queensland.

Why are we talking about Central Queensland? It is because we know that this House will be better once Bryson Head, the LNP candidate for Callide, gets in here because then we will have a strong voice and an advocate for that region. The people of Chinchilla, the people of Theodore, the people of Biloela and the people of Moura want a representative who speaks out for them, just like they had with the former LNP member.

What do we see from those opposite who represent the seats of Rockhampton, Keppel and, of course, Gladstone? The member for Gladstone has completely forgotten that he is meant to be governing for the whole region and not just the little area that he represents. Whether they live in Biloela, Moura, Theodore, Banana or any of those great places, the people of Central Queensland deserve a health system. If a woman needs to go to hospital to give birth, there should be a maternity centre

where she lives. I am talking about the Chinchilla maternity centre, which those opposite closed. Then what did they do? There was not one COVID patient but they turned it into a COVID ward! Beatrix will forever be known as the poor little child who was born next to the Warrego Highway. Every time a form states where she was born, it will not say Chinchilla, Dalby or Tara because under these jokers all of those maternity centres were closed down.


**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Pause the clock. That was unparliamentary language and I ask you to withdraw it.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON**: I withdraw. When we started this debate, I had heard the member for Gladstone say that the Leader of the Opposition and the hardworking opposition health minister were just talking to their LNP mates. The member for Gladstone should tell that to the 2,000 patients in his area who are waiting for elective surgery. He should tell that to those people. He should tell it to the paramedics. In Central Queensland, paramedics have spent 6,000 hours waiting with their sick and dying patients for hospitals to let them in. Regional people deserve better. Regional people deserve a health system that is fixed. They deserve a government that admits they have a problem.

The health minister might have sent out speaking notes to the assistant health minister and all of the government backbenchers who have spoken today. They have all quoted the figures, but how has that helped? How has that helped the people who are sick, those who are dying and those who are waiting for specialist care? How has that helped those 2,000 people who are waiting for specialist care? How has it helped the kids who play sport on the weekends but cannot get a scan if they break a bone? They are told to turn up on a Tuesday for treatment. How does that help?

I absolutely plead with the health minister to admit that they have a problem. Anna Bligh stood up and said that the health system was a basket case. That is why I entered this place and it is why the member for Gregory entered this parliament. Guess what? The health system is worse than it was under Anna Bligh and that is saying something! I urge the people of Callide to vote for Bryson Head and get another regional voice in this House.

*(Time expired)*

 **Hon. GJ BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water) (5.58 pm): I rise to support the amendments moved by the health minister tonight. One of the reasons I do so is because those opposite are asking why the 2030 plan has not been delivered yet, even though it is only 2022. Who was the smart mathematician in the LNP who said, 'Hey, there's a 2030 plan that we need to address but it hasn't been delivered'? It is 2022. Der! There are eight years to go. There is plenty of time to deliver it.

Tonight I rise to talk about the fantastic Labor members who are based in Central Queensland: Barry O'Rourke in Rockhampton, Brittany Lauga in Keppel and Julieanne Gilbert in Mackay. They are doing a sterling job in this House to support their communities, particularly when it comes to health. There are no greater voices than those three members in this place—as well as me—talking about health to the Health Minister and about what we need in Central Queensland.

Tonight, I also want to talk about why we see so many people presenting themselves to our local hospital system in Central Queensland. It is because the former prime minister of Australia let down the people of Central Queensland by not letting them attend their own bulk-bill doctors in their areas. There is not one bulk-bill doctor in Gladstone who can look at a person's health issues prior to them having to present to the Gladstone Hospital. That is a problem. On top of that, the previous member for Callide, who was part of the backbench opposite, did not for one day stand up to the federal LNP when it stopped international doctors coming into Gladstone who could potentially have worked at our GPs and at our Gladstone hospitals. That was a massive failure of the federal LNP. The voiceless former member for Callide never ever stood up in terms of getting doctors into our hospitals and local clinics.

I am proud of the track record that we have delivered on health in Gladstone: a brand new \$42 million accident and emergency service delivered in Gladstone in the first term that I was the new member in Gladstone. That hospital and its fantastic staff are delivering for the people of Gladstone. We are an industrial city. We have some of the best people in Gladstone who are being treated at our Gladstone emergency hospital right now, as we speak.

In Gladstone, we have also supported the Gladstone community when the private Mater Hospital left Gladstone. We now have no specialist services for private hospitals in the Gladstone region. Who filled the void when the maternity service from the Mater walked out of Gladstone? It was this government. We put \$1 million into the Gladstone Hospital so that women who used to go to the Mater

Hospital could give birth at the Gladstone Hospital. Not only that, but we now are revamping that hospital to make sure we can continue to give services not only to the people of Gladstone but also to the people of Central Queensland who want speciality services in the Gladstone region.

I can talk about Gladstone all night, but, as opposed to tonight's motion, we are telling those opposite that we are delivering. We have nearly doubled our investment in the Central Queensland Health and Hospital Service since coming to government. That investment is seeing more doctors, nurses and midwives on the ground continuing to look after the people of Central Queensland. We are not going to sit here and listen to those opposite tell us that we are not delivering on health in Central Queensland, because we continue to deliver for those regions. I am particularly proud of the fact that we are looking after vulnerable people in our community—not only those being left behind by the previous federal government in the aged-care facilities, on which they have not spent one cent in the Gladstone region. We continue to make sure that we are supporting mothers coming into our Central Queensland hospitals, those most in need of support services and those needing renal services to make sure they are taken care of. We also will continue to deliver into the future.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Order! The member used some unparliamentary language during that contribution. I ask you to withdraw.

**Mr BUTCHER:** I withdraw.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I just remind the member and all members that when speaking they are speaking to the chair. Terms such as 'der' would be considered unparliamentary.

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

**AYES, 47:**

**ALP, 47—**Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Hunt, A. King, S. King, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Madden, Martin, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pease, Power, Pugh, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.

**NOES, 32:**

**LNP, 29—**Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Camm, Crandon, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Hart, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Leahy, Lister, Mander, Mickelberg, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, O'Connor, Perrett, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Stevens, Watts.

**KAP, 2—**Dametto, Knuth.

**PHON, 1—**Andrew.

Pairs: Fentiman, Last; Howard, Gerber; Richards, Weir.

Resolved in the affirmative.

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

**AYES, 47:**

**ALP, 47—**Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Hunt, A. King, S. King, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Madden, Martin, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pease, Power, Pugh, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.

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**KAP, 2—**Dametto, Knuth.

**PHON, 1—**Andrew.

Pairs: Fentiman, Last; Howard, Gerber; Richards, Weir.

Resolved in the affirmative.



Motion, as agreed—

That this House notes—


1. the external pressures on the Queensland and national health systems, including in regional Queensland;
2. the investment by the Palaszczuk government in Queensland's health system, including Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service;
3. the Palaszczuk government had to rebuild the Queensland health system after the Newman LNP government sacked nurses and health workers, including in Central Queensland; and
4. that the Palaszczuk government handed down a record health budget of \$22.2 billion in 2021-22.

## EVIDENCE AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

### Second Reading

Resumed from p. 1372, on motion of Ms Fentiman—

That the bill be read a second time.

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (6.12 pm), continuing: As I was saying before the interruption, I am speaking in favour of the Evidence and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. It is important when we are talking about the evidence base around digitally recorded evidence-in-chief that we look to what other jurisdictions are doing. Whilst the evidence base is still somewhat developing, there have been some instances of the intention behind digitally recorded evidence-in-chief delivering on the outcome which is essentially protecting victims from being retraumatised and wherever possible supporting their evidence to get the criminal justice outcome.

The Monash University report on their investigation into the Victorian experience of digitally recorded evidence-in-chief, which they call DREC, found in respect of some police feedback at page 98 of the report—

At the end of the first 12 months, 166 DRECs had been taken from victims of family violence and there were two requests for transcription ... In almost all cases an interim or final family violence intervention order was granted where one was not already in place.


This reinforces that matters are being finalised by the court without the DREC being played or the victim being required to undergo cross-examination.

That is important. The matters are being finalised in court without retraumatising the victim—without requiring the victim to be cross-examined in court. It continues—

As a result of implementing the use of DRECs we are achieving the intended outcome of the reform and minimising the traumatisation of victims during the court process.

I hope the trial we are running in Queensland has a similar outcome—that is, the limiting of the retraumatisation of victims by having this very persuasive form of evidence-in-chief. I hope it also achieves the outcome of protecting victims by ensuring that the criminal justice process delivers on their expectations and the expectations of the community—that is, that victims are protected from domestic and family violence. Of course there will be an evaluation around this trial. I hope that the evidence base supports the ongoing operation of these laws and the widening of the application of these laws in due course beyond the two trial areas.

The bill appropriately balances the rights of the defendant. For the video statement to be admissible, the victim must still be available to be cross-examined, although we have seen in other states that that has not been the case. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr ANDREW** (Mirani—PHON) (6.15 pm): I rise to speak on the Evidence and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2021. Queensland is currently the only jurisdiction in Australia without any legislative shield law protections, meaning journalists can be forced to disclose the identity of their sources or risk facing a substantial fine or even jail time. For any democracy to thrive, the free availability of information is crucial. Without this, journalists will not keep people informed on matters of crucial public interest.

Sources who leak classified documents and information to journalists do so to expose wrongdoings when it comes to power, whether governmental, bureaucratic or corporate. Such people have little to gain and everything to lose in doing so. Journalists put themselves at risk too when protecting the identity of sources and their information. As things currently stand, there is little in Queensland's common or statute law to protect either of them.

Queensland has become a very secretive place, with many restrictions in place preventing the public accessing vital information that is in their interests to know. The current pandemic has greatly accelerated this trend towards secrecy. Pandemic modelling is deliberately withheld from the public on the basis that ordinary people are like children—incapable of understanding or likely to misrepresent it. This is unacceptable. It has meant that bureaucratic health committees and other government agencies have been left free to operate without any public transparency or oversight by parliament. The extent of Queensland's secrecy problem was made clear earlier this year when a news report from the ABC began—

There is a politician we can't name—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Pause the clock. Member, I am struggling to find relevance in your contribution to the long title of the bill.

**Mr ANDREW:** This is about the shield laws.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I will give you some latitude. You may continue.

**Mr ANDREW:** A news report from the ABC began—

There is a politician we can't name, using a non-publication order we can't get, in a case to suppress a report by a corruption watchdog which won't talk about it, in a court hearing that was held with no names.

Welcome to Queensland.

The people of Queensland deserve much less secrecy and better protections for their journalists. If sunlight is the best disinfectant, then things are getting darker and darker in Queensland. Various attacks on journalists in the last few years are an affront to our democracy. Throughout this time, there has been a steady erosion of our rights and freedoms, something the mainstream—to its discredit—has been largely silent on. One journalist even tried to assert last year that Julian Assange was not entitled to the same rights as other journalists because he is not a real journalist. Whatever people may think of Julian Assange, he is definitely a real journalist and he is entitled to all the same rights as other journalists lay claim to.

For all the government's lofty sentiments about the bill providing Queensland journalists with shield laws, there are a number of major loopholes which render all its purported protections tokenistic at best. Chief amongst these loopholes is the bill's significant caveat which allows the shield law protections to be waived if a judicial officer decides it is in the public's interest to do so. What the left hand gives the right hand will take away. There is no criteria or set of rules that a judge must adhere to when determining whether something is of public interest or not.

In the UK and EU, courts work under the presumption that journalists are not required to reveal confidential information—full stop. New Zealand operates under that presumption. Without strong and effective shield laws, we simply will not have sources willing to come forward or journalists prepared to publish them—no matter how vitally important to the public interest that information is. Without real protections, journalists risk becoming little more than stenographers for power in Queensland. Few will risk passing on information to the public which they may need to know and which is essential for shining the light on injustice and holding governments and powerful vested interests to account.

Apart from the bill's public interest caveat, there are a number of other clauses that further limit the bill's shield laws. Clause 14Q(1)(a) of the bill restricts the shield protections to cover only that information which is disclosed 'in the expectation that the information may be published in the news media'. This is far too narrow. A better definition can be found in the Northern Territory's legislation which simply requires an informant to expect that their information may be used by a journalist.

A much bigger 'get out' clause in the bill is proposed new section 14S(2), which specifically excludes the Crime and Corruption Commission. The main reason these shield laws were needed in the first place was the way the CCC's extraordinary and secretive powers have been used to intimidate and coerce Queensland journalists into divulging their information and sources. The recent proceedings against 'F' is just one of many cases which revealed just how badly shield laws were needed in Queensland to protect journalists from the CCC and its 'star chamber' proceedings.


Shield laws that exclude the CCC will mean Queensland journalists remain at significant risk of being forced to reveal their sources and of being imprisoned if they refuse. I therefore urge the Attorney-General to reconsider this exclusion and extend the shield law protections to include the CCC and all its proceedings. Shield laws must apply in all circumstances without exception. To put that into

effect, proposed new section 14S(2) of the bill needs to be deleted. I also oppose the bill's amendments creating or continuing offences that increase the risk of journalists being imprisoned for doing their job. I therefore strongly oppose proposed new sections 93AA, 93AC, 103Q and 103S of the bill.

Proposed new section 93AA is another extraordinary and unjustified intrusion on the open administration of justice. No exception is made under the clause for when publication happens in the ordinary course of news reporting. Nor is there an exception for a journalist reporting parts of a criminal statement or transcript which have already been disclosed in an open court. I do not accept the assertions in the explanatory notes that this penalty is 'proportionate and relevant'. It is neither proportionate nor relevant to put journalists at risk of imprisonment for simply doing their jobs, especially when that offence is for something that is likely to constitute no more than 'fair reporting' or open court proceedings. I therefore ask that proposed new section 93AC also be deleted.

I also note that there are no provisions covering bloggers or citizen journalists contained in the bill. This is another serious omission in my view. These and other limiting clauses in the bill make it hard to see how these new shield laws offer journalists anything in the way of real protections or rights. In my view, the government would be better off looking at the old shield provisions contained in the Commonwealth Privacy Act. Under the act, a journalist can be fined or imprisoned for failing to provide information, answer a question or produce documents, except where 'he or she testifies that doing so would reveal the name of a source who had supplied the information confidentiality'. There are no ifs, no buts—just straight up protection. That is what we need. They are the sorts of shield laws Queensland journalists do need, not the Swiss cheese variety this bill offers. A strong and protected fourth estate is essential in a healthy and open democracy.

The bill does not adequately reflect Queensland's commitment to this principle. The relevant provisions which I have just highlighted must be redrafted to better protect Queensland journalists and the public's right to know.

 **Mr McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (6.22 pm): I rise in support of the Evidence and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, a bill that contains a number of important reforms to the Evidence Act, as well as to the Criminal Code and to a number of other acts that go to very important issues such as journalist shield laws and giving effect to recommendations that arose out the Morcombe coronial inquest around the examination and viewing of the body of a deceased person as well as reforms that go to the use of videorecorded evidence from body worn cameras on police officers in domestic violence situations. They will be the main elements of the bill that my contribution will focus on and they are incredibly important reforms for the state of Queensland.

I turn firstly to the viewing and examination of the body of a deceased person. The bill includes amendments to the Criminal Code in response to a recommendation that was handed down in the Daniel Morcombe coronial inquest. I would like to place on record my sincere thanks to, and acknowledgement of, Bruce and Denise Morcombe for their strong and tireless advocacy to increase the safety of children in our state. The amendments in the bill create a clear disclosure process in relation to human remains which allows criminal courts to have regard to the need not to unnecessarily delay the return of a deceased person's body under the coronial system. They seek to strike the right balance between the timely return of a victim's body to their family and loved ones and ensuring an accused person's right to a fair trial.

Recommendation 2 of the Morcombe inquest findings is for changes to the Criminal Code to establish a time on the testing of human remains in cases where the prosecution and defence cannot agree on the identity of the deceased. This inquest finding stemmed from the lengthy delay that arose between when Daniel's remains were found and when they were returned to his family for burial because his identity was disputed by the defence which led to the need for retesting. This bill seeks to address that awful situation and respond to the coronial inquest recommendations through clause 10, which will insert a new section into the Criminal Code—section 590ASA, which relates to viewing bodies of deceased persons.

The new section provides that the court may direct that the prosecution be allowed to view or examine the body of a deceased person for the purposes of the relevant proceeding subject to the conditions that the court considers appropriate and is satisfied will protect the integrity of the body and ensure the release of the body for burial under the Coroners Act is not unnecessarily delayed. I will finish my contribution on this element of the bill by also acknowledging the contribution of the member for Cooper, who bravely shared an extremely personal, very relevant and emotional contribution on this topic.

I now turn to the issue of videorecorded evidence and the use of body worn cameras by police officers in domestic and family violence situations. Domestic and family violence criminal proceedings are bound by the rules of evidence and, as such, victims are required to appear in court and provide direct oral evidence. That is often subject to the use of special measures. This is in contrast to civil proceedings under the Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act where the court is not bound by the rules of criminal evidence.

The giving of evidence in court by a victim of domestic and family violence can be truly traumatic, especially given that the perpetrator, the defendant, is physically there. Victims can be intimidated by the accused. We need to make sure our justice system supports victims so they come forward and hold perpetrators to account.


This bill contains amendments to support a pilot allowing video statements taken by trained police officers with a body worn camera to be admissible as a complainant's evidence-in-chief in criminal proceedings for a domestic violence offence including breaches of domestic violence orders. This can reduce trauma for survivors by avoiding the task of telling their story multiple times and can reduce the opportunity for offenders to intimidate victims.

Whilst similar measures have been used for several years for some other vulnerable witnesses, including children, it is important that evidence can be obtained about the impacts and experiences that are unique to domestic and family violence cases. A range of other states and territories have introduced legislation facilitating the use of police recorded interviews with complainants in domestic violence cases, particularly in the context of the increased use of body worn cameras by frontline officers. For example, in Victoria a digitally recorded evidence-in-chief trial was established in October 2018 which was subject to an independent evaluation by Monash University. It has been referred to by the member for Morayfield.

It is acknowledged that the evidence base in relation to the use of videorecorded statements in domestic and family violence proceedings is still growing and evolving, so I think it is very appropriate that this bill is effectively a proposal for a 12-month pilot program that will better support domestic and family violence victims during court hearings. The pilot program will be independently evaluated to enable learnings, data and feedback on victims' experiences and any potential for unintended consequences together with other impacts for courts, police and prosecutors to be properly assessed.

This forms part of the Palaszczuk government's unwavering commitment to the ongoing prevention of domestic and family violence. Earlier this month the Premier and Attorney-General announced an historic overhaul of other laws and practices to better protect Queensland women from domestic and family violence and hold perpetrators to account. It includes: new laws and programs to recognise, prevent and punish coercive control, including making coercive control a criminal offence; a commission of inquiry into police practices; expansion of the domestic and family violence courts; better support for women; a special strategy for First Nations communities; and funding for perpetrator programs to change men's behaviour and stop the cycle of violence. All of these are a result of the first report from Justice Margaret McMurdo's Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce titled 'Hear her voice' that was handed down in December. Ending domestic and family violence is everyone's responsibility.

Unfortunately, I have run out of time to go too deeply into journalist shield laws; however, a free, independent and effective media which may need to rely on confidential sources at times is crucial for a strong democracy. We are committed to better protect journalists and their sources with this legislation, which contains journalist shield laws. We made a commitment to deliver those shield laws, and this bill is delivering on that commitment. These laws will protect confidential informants by providing that a journalist cannot be compelled to answer a question or produce a document that would disclose their identity. I commend the bill to the House.


 **Mr KRAUSE** (Scenic Rim—LNP) (6.32 pm): As the member for Clayfield has indicated, the opposition is supporting the bill. I thank all members so far for their examination of it, in particular the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee. I participated in one of the public hearings in relation to this bill. We are supporting the introduction of shield laws for journalists in relation to matters before the courts. That will be a rebuttable presumption, so it is not a hard-and-fast rule. It could be subject to public interest determinations. It is not an absolute rule. If judges decide when all of the evidence is before them that it is in the public interest for journalists to disclose their sources, then that may be the case. We are saying as a society, through this bill, that journalists are important. Sometimes the role they play in disclosing corruption or scandal on the basis of confidential whistleblowers needs to be supported, and the identity of those whistleblowers needs to be protected in the court process.

The member for Clayfield has circulated amendments to be moved in consideration in detail, and I urge all members to support that amendment as well. That relates to the Crime and Corruption Commission and the application of the shield law to that process as well. It has been nearly 12 months now since the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee recommended a review of certain provisions of the Crime and Corruption Act which deal with issues of people refusing to answer questions within compulsory hearings—the Star Chamber, it is sometimes called—of the CCC. There are provisions in that act that allow people not to answer questions if they have a reasonable excuse, I think it is called. That does not provide the same protection for journalists as this law does in other spheres. Surely, in the 12 months since that report was handed down the Attorney-General could have turned her mind to it and come to a decision on those parts that were recommended for review, but we have not seen that. It is good that the member for Clayfield has brought the amendment forward. Hopefully, all members are able to support it.

I should also say that it is good that the shield laws are being introduced into the court process through the Evidence Act, but this concept should also be applied in other spaces as well. I draw the attention of the House again to the Office of the Independent Assessor. The principles of the shield laws should be applied in that space as well. In the last 12 months there was a case that was the subject of an application in the Supreme Court by a small regional newspaper based in Boonah in the Scenic Rim electorate. They went to the Supreme Court to have set aside a notice given to them by the Office of the Independent Assessor. The Office of the Independent Assessor was demanding the production of all journalist's notes in relation to a particular telephone call with a councillor who was the subject of a complaint before the Independent Assessor. It is a very broad power that the Independent Assessor has, but it goes to the same principles about protecting the identity of journalists' confidential informants.

Whilst it is a separate regime, similar principles should be put in place for the Office of the Independent Assessor. It was a massive overreach on their part to issue that notice demanding all notes, particularly when you take into account the rather low-grade misconduct that was being investigated by the Independent Assessor at that time. It was a Supreme Court application taken by a small family-owned business which eventually saw that notice set aside. While we can all support shield laws here today, the Office of the Independent Assessor is another matter but there are similar principles to the ones that are being dealt with in this bill. That office needs a review. Its powers need to be reviewed, and the conduct provisions that they look into when it comes to councillor conduct also need to be reviewed.

Today we are talking about shield laws. We support the bill. I urge all members to also support the amendment very well put forward by the member for Clayfield so that the shield laws also apply in the CCC context.

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (6.38 pm): I rise to speak to the Evidence and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2021. I begin by acknowledging the work of the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee in its consideration of this bill. I would also like to acknowledge the work of the committee secretariat. The report made three recommendations, one of which was that the bill be passed. There are two other recommendations that I will discuss further in my contribution.

Madam Deputy Speaker, may I acknowledge you, my parliamentary colleague, member for Cooper. I really want to thank you for your contribution in the House today and your great and valuable work in supporting victims of crime which you have done over the years. I know you have done an outstanding job. I would also like to acknowledge the great bravery you showed today by standing up and speaking so openly and honestly about your own experiences. I really acknowledge that. I know that it would have been difficult, so thank you for sharing your lived experiences with us.

The bill amends the Evidence Act 1977 to establish a statutory framework for shield laws. Queensland is currently the only jurisdiction in Australia without a statutory framework to protect against the disclosure of the identity of journalists' confidential informants. These are known as shield laws. This bill introduces shield laws to afford better protection for the confidential informants. The framework in the bill has been informed by public consultation, the review of laws in other jurisdictions and an examination of case law. The bill creates a qualified journalist privilege, meaning that a journalist or relevant person, such as a journalist's employer, producer or editor, is not compellable to answer a question or produce a document that would disclose the identity of a confidential informant or enable their identity to be ascertained unless ordered by a court.

The bill provides that the privilege applies in any proceeding before a court of record—known as a relevant proceeding—except proceedings under the Crime and Corruption Act 2001. A journalist or relevant person may claim the privilege when giving evidence in a trial or hearing. If a claim is

established, the court may make an order that the evidence must be given despite the privilege if satisfied the public interest in disclosing the informant's identity is outweighed. The bill provides that a journalist or relevant person may also object to complying with a disclosure requirement, such as a summons or a subpoena, in relation to a relevant proceeding.

Further, the bill provides that a journalist or relevant person may object to a document being dealt with as authorised under a search warrant on the grounds it would disclose the identity of the informant. If an objection is made, the document must be sealed or stored in a safe and secure way until the objection is determined. The bill contains safeguards to protect the privacy of the informant and other confidential information that may be disclosed by providing that the court may make an order restricting access to information or documents or make any other orders it considers appropriate.

The bill will also amend the Evidence Act and other related legislation to implement a framework for the use of videorecorded statements taken by trained police officers as an adult victim's evidence-in-chief in domestic and family violence related criminal proceedings. Enabling the giving of evidence-in-chief via a videorecorded statement by victims of domestic and family violence offers potential benefits to victims, such as reducing the trauma for victims associated with having to retell their stories on multiple occasions and reducing the capacity of the defendant to intimidate the victim.

In Queensland, the use of out-of-court statements taken by police is currently limited to children and persons with an impairment of the mind under section 93A of the Evidence Act. Whilst other Australian jurisdictions allow the use of police recorded interviews as the evidence-in-chief of victims in domestic and family violence criminal proceedings, evaluations and research to date are not conclusive about the impact on victims, case outcomes, plea rates and unintended consequences.

The bill contains amendments establishing a framework for a pilot allowing the use of videorecorded evidence-in-chief taken by police for adult DFV victims. The bill creates a broad legislative framework for a pilot, based on similar provisions in Victoria, enabling videorecorded statements taken by trained police officers to be used as an adult victim's evidence-in-chief in criminal proceedings for a DFV offence. A DFV offence includes breaches of domestic violence orders and criminal offences, such as assault, committed in a DFV context.

The bill requires recorded statements to be made as soon as practicable after the alleged incident. In practice, this will usually occur via a police body worn camera placed on a tripod at the scene. To be admissible, the recorded statement must also be made with the informed consent of the complainant and include acknowledgements as to the statement's truth and complainant's liability for providing false information and disclosure requirements to be complied with, and the complainant must be available for cross-examination and re-examination. Safeguards are also included to limit the trauma and protect the privacy of DFV victims, such as requiring the complainant's wishes to be considered by prosecution when determining whether to use a recorded statement and preventing statements from being provided to accused persons.


A regulation is required to give effect to the amendments. However, it is proposed the pilot will operate in the Ipswich and Southport Magistrates Courts for a period of 12 months. Any ongoing or expanded use of the provisions will be subject to consideration of the results of a proposed independent evaluation, funding considerations and any other relevant recommendations of the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce. Targeted consultation during drafting of the bill highlighted the importance of adequate police training. We heard the police minister, the member for Morayfield, discuss that during this debate. These amendments in the bill will commence on proclamation to allow sufficient time for implementation activities to occur, including police training and further consultation.

The bill will also amend the Criminal Code to insert a new provision dealing with the process for viewing and examining the body of a deceased person. On 5 April 2019 the State Coroner delivered his findings of the inquest into the disappearance and death of Daniel Morcombe. Recommendation 2 of the report is that the Queensland government amend the Criminal Code to ensure a time limit is imposed on testing human remains where the prosecution and defence fail to reach agreement on the identity of the deceased. The government has agreed to this recommendation in principle and committed to undertaking further analysis, research and consultation with key stakeholders about how to best implement the underlying intent of the Coroner's recommendation. The amendments in the bill will deliver on this commitment.

A new specific provision dealing with the viewing and examination of the body of a deceased person is contained in the bill to clarify the process for testing human remains and ensure that the prosecution and court may have regard to a coroner's duties under the Coroners Act 2003, as well as

the need to ensure the integrity of the body is protected as currently required. The new provision seeks to balance an accused's right to have a fair trial with the rights of the family to have the remains of their loved one returned for burial as soon as possible.

May I also acknowledge the tireless work of the Morcombe family. I acknowledge that no family should have to go through the trauma they have had to go through. However, they have worked tirelessly to deliver change and education throughout Queensland and I thank them for that. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (6.47 pm): I rise to address the Evidence and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2021. Madam Deputy Speaker Bush, can I also acknowledge your contribution today, particularly your lived experience. As a fellow parliamentarian, I found that to be a very important part of the debate. I certainly appreciated listening to that and obviously what it means with respect to this legislation.

On 16 November 2021, the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence introduced the Evidence and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2021 into the Queensland parliament. It will amend a number of pieces of legislation and acts. The objectives of the bill are to: establish a statutory framework that allows protection against the disclosure of the identity of journalists' confidential informants, which are known as shield laws; introduce a legislative framework to support a pilot enabling videorecorded statements taken by trained police officers to be used as an adult victim's evidence-in-chief in domestic and family violence related criminal proceedings; provide a specific process for the viewing and examination of the body of a deceased person in a criminal proceeding to implement the Queensland government's response to recommendation 2 in the findings of the inquest into the disappearance and death of Daniel James Morcombe; clarify the operation of computer warrants in relation to bail; and enable service as a magistrate in Toowoomba to constitute regional experience for the purpose of a transfer decision under the Magistrates Act 1991.

In my contribution today, I wish to address those matters which specifically pertain to the introduction of a statutory protection for the journalist-source relationship, which is more commonly referred to as the introduction of shield laws. As outlined by the Department of Justice and Attorney-General in evidence to the Queensland parliament's Legal Affairs and Safety Committee—and indeed as all members of the Queensland media are well aware—the state of Queensland is currently the only jurisdiction in Australia that does not have an equivalent shield law and statutory protection for journalists and their sources.

This legislation which is before the Queensland parliament will create a qualified journalist privilege, one which will apply when an informant has provided information to a journalist with the expectation that it may be published in a defined news medium and where the journalist has promised that the identity of the informant as the source will not be revealed. It must be noted, and as advised by the Department of Justice and Attorney-General, this privilege only protects the identity of the informant and will not apply to all journalistic material that a journalist or relevant person may wish to keep confidential.

It is also very important to note that the Queensland government has sought to enact a broad function based definition of 'journalist' which places a greater focus on whether the activities of the individual are 'journalistic in nature, rather than on their employment state and organisational links'. As outlined by the Attorney-General, such a distinction has been made so as to accommodate the emergence of new and innovative methods of communication whilst also ensuring that journalists are not excluded from those protections on the basis that they are not acting within the traditional construct of journalism and news media. Whilst the introduction of this legislation and statutory protection is widely welcomed, as is too often the case with the Palaszczuk state Labor government, this is yet another area of reform where there has been a significant and missed opportunity.

Overwhelmingly, relevant stakeholders and submitters to the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee supported the extension of the statutory protection for journalists and their informants to apply to matters before the Crime and Corruption Commission. There is virtually no reason why such provisions cannot be extended to the Crime and Corruption Commission, given that a court would still be able to overrule the privilege. In fact, as the Queensland Law Society highlighted—

A court would act as a check and balance on this privilege and be able to hear reasons from the CCC as to why, in a particular case, the shield should be overridden.

It should be noted that other respected stakeholders, including the Bar Association of Queensland and the Queensland Council for Civil Liberties, have also expressed very similar concerns and advocacy for the extension of these laws to include the Crime and Corruption Commission. To that

end, I support the Liberal National Party's amendment which seeks to rectify the Labor government's missed opportunity and extend these laws to include matters that are before the Crime and Corruption Commission.

As recent events have clearly demonstrated, Queenslanders must be able to have full trust and confidence in the Crime and Corruption Commission and its independence in fully examining the matters that have been referred to this important integrity and investigative body. As my colleague, the Liberal National Party's shadow Attorney-General has already articulated, the extension of this legislation and shield laws to capture the Crime and Corruption Commission will ensure that, where it is deemed appropriate, informants will remain protected whilst also encouraging more to come forward.

I believe it is important to state unequivocally that in any democracy, especially our own here in Queensland, journalists and the media have an incredibly important role. A strong, dedicated, independent and fair media is crucial to not only reporting on the matters which are most important to the lives of Queenslanders but also in holding our institutions and governments to account and also what is debated here in the Legislative Assembly of Queensland. Journalists and the media have a vital role in shining a light on some of the darkest areas and issues concerning our state of Queensland. The role of a journalist and the media is accurately and fairly reporting on matters, especially those pertaining to issues of corruption, maladministration, neglect or incompetence, and they should not be hindered and their sources, where it is shown to be applicable and appropriate, must be protected.


In our democracy here in Queensland with a unicameral parliament, which places us in a unique position, and where we have a government dominated parliamentary committee system, journalists too often must rely on the confidential sharing of pertinent information from relevant sources. If nothing else, the last 12 months alone has shown the growing number of whistleblowers who have felt compelled to go to the media to shine a light on matters of potential or alleged corruption or maladministration that, up until that point, often those whistleblowers have felt that they have had very little recourse or other opportunities to raise serious matters in relation to public administration.

All this being said, whilst the so-called Fourth Estate has an incredibly important role in our society, and one which will be afforded further special protections in order to ensure that this role can be fulfilled, there has been a noticeable decline in the standards, professionalism and care that some in the media have taken when reporting factually on stories and also in handling complaints. With journalists and the media being afforded such important protections, it must be matched by an understanding and willingness to accept the great responsibility that they have in ensuring they are reporting on matters accurately, fairly and that they are in the genuine public interest.

Unfortunately, too often once a story is reported on, published or in the public domain, following inaccurate, biased or unfair reporting, the damage to individuals and groups is already done. It is a small number that unfortunately tarnish the industry and the media as a whole, however until journalism and reporting standards improve, along with genuine and efficient complaints handling processes, many in our society and broader community will continue to review the reporting of some journalists and some within the media with scepticism.

In closing, I also briefly acknowledge and support other measures contained within the legislation before the House, including those which will enable the use of videorecorded statements and evidence as evidence-in-chief. It is envisaged that such a positive step forward will assist many in reporting crime, especially victim survivors of domestic and family violence and abuse, and eliminate the trauma for a victim who would otherwise be asked to retell their story repeatedly.

Finally, can I take the opportunity to thank all members of the Queensland parliament's Legal Affairs and Safety Committee, including the deputy chair, the member for Currumbin, as well as the now former committee member, the member for Glass House, who has become our Manager of Opposition Business, the committee secretariat for its support and all stakeholders who contributed to the committee's consideration of this legislation. It is very important legislation. They certainly provided important submissions into the committee and allowed a diligent report to be prepared. Certainly this legislation will provide some protections. It will certainly enhance those who come forward and talk to journalists and our media, and it will also ensure that those journalists and the media have relevant protections.

 **Mrs McMAHON** (Macalister—ALP) (6.56 pm): I rise to make a contribution in support of the Evidence and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2021. I thank the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee for their consideration of the bill and their contribution thus far to the debate. I would especially like to



make mention of your contribution, Madam Deputy Speaker. For the many bills we debate in this House, few have a personal connection to members as this one likely does for you, and I thank you for your contribution.

There are several significant reforms contained within this piece of legislation. However, with the time I have, I will limit my contribution to the two aspects that I am most familiar with. Firstly, with respect to introducing a legislative framework to support a pilot, enabling videorecorded statements taken by trained police officers to be used as evidence in chief in domestic and family violence related criminal proceedings. This is a development that has been considered by Queensland Police for some time and has been sought by victim advocacy groups in the sector for even longer. As members may be aware, my last position within the Queensland Police Service prior to being elected was the senior project officer for domestic and family violence within the Vulnerable Persons Unit here in Brisbane. I attended many sector-wide forums in Queensland and interstate where the prospect of a victim statement being recorded by body worn cameras was regularly discussed. I note that a number of other jurisdictions had already implemented trials to varying degrees that have helped inform the development of this practice.

The *Not now, not ever* report recommendation 133 explicitly referred to the implementation of alternative evidence procedures for victims of domestic and family violence providing evidence in criminal matters to reduce the trauma of the experience. Videorecorded statements by special witnesses are generally referred to as '93A statements' and have traditionally been used for videorecorded statements for children as the member for Ninderry outlined the ICARE requirements for the recording of their statements in his contribution.

In 2015, the definition of 'special witness' was amended to include a person who is a victim of domestic violence who is to give evidence against the person who committed domestic violence. Additional amendments were also made in 2015 to permit body worn cameras by police to capture footage of police performing their duties, but what this did not allow for was the use of this body worn camera footage, specifically the statements made by victims and witnesses to investigating police attending job scenes, to be used as evidence. This bill seeks to change this.

For the benefit of members in the House I will spend just a few minutes outlining the current process for obtaining evidence for domestic violence offences. As we know and as the House has been informed on numerous occasions, the investigation of domestic and family violence incidents is the leading use of police resources in this state. Police frequently will spend over 40 per cent of their shift responding to and investigating domestic and family violence. A lot of this time is spent recording evidence.

Currently, a police officer attending a potential domestic and family violence incident first needs to establish the context of the incident, the relationship of the parties involved, the incident that occurred and then identify the person most in need of protection.

Debate, on motion of Mrs McMahon, adjourned.

## ADJOURNMENT

### Gympie Show; QCWA Centenary



**Mr PERRETT** (Gympie—LNP) (7.01 pm): Two weeks ago Gympie was hit by its third flood this year. It reached 16 metres. The Normanby and Kidd bridges were closed, cutting access to the south side of Gympie. A number of businesses were impacted again. They were still recovering from the events from earlier this year.

Another casualty of the flood was our much loved Gympie Show. It has been through many challenges over the past few years. In 2020 it was cancelled because of COVID. This year it fought for the opportunity to even go ahead. Government mandates on shows meant that the show committee could not hold events to help raise funds to hold the show. The mandates discriminated against shows. Rules were applied solely to the Gympie Show and a fundraiser but not to other events and activities at the same venue.

Following a strong campaign, within 12 days 6,134 signatures were gathered on a petition protesting the mandates. I was pleased to sponsor that petition. Everyone was looking forward to the show to help bring our community together following the floods. When the green light was finally given, the Gympie Show committee scrambled to organise a three-day event. It had five weeks to pull together Queensland's third largest agricultural show.

The show had a muddy start but, unfortunately, the rain kept falling and events were quickly rescheduled and some cancelled. It was disappointing that on the third day, the Saturday, the show had to be cancelled because Gympie was again flooding and roads and bridges were cut.

The financial cost to the show society is significant. The financial burden would not be as immense if the government had acted quickly to clear up the discriminatory mandate issues. The committee could have held fundraising events earlier in the year. This also impacts the many schools and P&Cs, kindergartens, sporting groups, community organisations and service clubs which raise thousands from manning gates, parking and traffic control, cleaning facilities, and running bars and food stalls.

I was pleased to attend the show and recognise the contribution of patron, past president and long-time supporter Bill Bishop, who died in January. Shows cannot exist without the tremendous efforts of volunteers who put in long, unpaid hours. The success of the Gympie Show is testament to the work and commitment of more than 330 volunteers and show committee members including the president, Debra Brown, and vice-president, Warren Smith.

Today it was a great pleasure to host the QCWA centenary barbecue lunch, a magnificent milestone. Office-bearers from across Queensland attended the event organised by the centenary team Christine King and Marina Taylor. Congratulations to those who were involved. I wish the QCWA every success in going for a double century.

### **Sandgate Electorate, Volunteers; Fischer, Mr H**



**Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Tourism, Innovation and Sport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics and Paralympics Sport and Engagement) (7.04 pm): After the recent celebration of National Volunteer Week, I extend my sincere thank you to the many people in the electorate of Sandgate who volunteer their services. This year I could not recognise volunteers without acknowledging the floods that ravaged much of South-East Queensland in February and parts of my local community in particular. This was a devastating weather event which cost 13 Queenslanders their lives, a number which would have been far higher if it were not for our noble team of State Emergency Service heroes.


There were also some who were not SES trained but found themselves coming to the aid of their neighbours, family and friends. I speak of people like Deagon's Quinn Storrie and Matthew Roberts, who on Sunday, 27 February heroically ventured out in a tinny and rescued people from the rising water and their inundated homes. They must be thanked. There were many families who, like Mary and Ken Maddocks of Deagon, were left with completely sodden and sewage ridden houses after this event.

The struggle with their clean-up effort would have been far worse if it were not for the likes of a few compassionate volunteers who rolled up their sleeves and lent their fellow neighbours a hand. I speak of people like: Joanna Lee, Ronan Leahy, Thomas Stephen, Will Henderson, Anna Campbell from Queensland Walks, Lachlan Boyes, Jodie Woodrow, Fiona and John Stacheel, Sally Faux and Troy Schultz, who led an army of St Patrick's College, Shorncliffe student and teacher volunteers. This recovery effort was continued by the Sandgate and Bracken Ridge Action Group, better known as Sandbag, at the community centre in Sandgate and at Bracken Ridge. Sandbag's volunteers' tireless support extended to countless families in applying for government support, providing food and clothing, and even just being there to talk to those who were in need.

In addition to this, volunteers remain the lifeblood of many great community groups and sporting clubs in the Sandgate electorate. A great example is the many Sandgate Hawks AFL club players and families and even rival club members from Aspley Hornets, Wilston Grange Gorillas and the Kedron Lions who all came to help that community get back on its feet after the devastating impact of the floods on their facilities. Despite this wet start to the year, the efforts from club volunteers at the Hawks and all the other clubs across the Sandgate electorate have resulted in very successful starts to their respective 2022 seasons, particularly for those water sports.

As honourable members can see, one of the best parts of representing my electorate is the undeniable sense of community spirit, a spirit which the late Hendrick Fischer undoubtedly encompassed. Henk, as he was known by all, was an integral part of the Sandgate community through his role of founding member of both Jabiru and the aforementioned Sandbag organisation. Henk went over and above for the community and he will be dearly missed by the many people he helped in his time. Vale Henk Fischer.

**Scheuber, Mr B**

 **Mr JANETZKI** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (7.07 pm): The late Boyd Scheuber, private and humble, might be a little disappointed that I am speaking in this House about him this evening. However, there are some people who leave an impression on your life, perhaps not with the weight of their words but simply their presence or humble support. Boyd was one such person in my life. Part of me wonders whether a number of his personal characteristics remind me of my own beloved father: quiet, hardworking, kind, loyal and faithful.

His extraordinary Queensland life spanned a range of careers and locations. Born in Gayndah, he worked as a banker, bookkeeper, accountant, farmer and university lecturer. He served the community in a variety of ways including agripolitics. He lived simply. He loved nature—just this year driving through New South Wales to the Victorian border to see the Darling River flowing. He loved his border collie, Patch, for whom he cared for 14 years.

I knew Boyd before entering parliament as he was an economics lecturer at the University of Southern Queensland. It was really when I was a candidate for the election in 2016 that I began to know him better. He was my pre-poll bedrock. In fact, he served as a pre-poll bedrock for other MPs—Horan, Macfarlane and McVeigh—and handed out enough for my mate here across James Street.


On cold days he was there. On wet days he was there. On hot days he was there. When a One Nation candidate wanted to chew my ear off he was there. We spent months together over the years deep in conversation. No-one was safe from a Liberal National how-to-vote card with a behind-the-back move being his patented manoeuvre.

His character drew respect easily. He believed that we had an obligation to give with a free will to those less fortunate who have arrived in that situation through no fault of their own. He believed that you treat your family heritage and forebears with respect and thankfulness. We would not be here without them.

Last week I spent time with Boyd's widow, Evelyn, who of course he met at a Country Party meeting in 1972. She gifted me a large portrait of Sir Joh that Boyd had purchased at a fundraiser 40 years ago. It will be cherished.

To Evelyn, the boys and their broader family I offer the condolences of every Liberal National member of the Darling Downs. As shared at his funeral, Boyd's life motto was God first, family second, nation third, self last and all necessary things will be added unto you. Oh for more in our world to adopt such a selfless approach to life. Vale Boyd, a quiet man who left a lasting impression on so many.

**Mount Ommaney, Community Clubs**

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (7.09 pm): I rise this evening to update the House on the flood recovery in the Mount Ommaney community. Tonight I will share the progress and otherwise of the many clubs and community groups in my community that were impacted by the floods. It is quite a list, unfortunately. I will start with the Jindalee Jags.

The Jindalee Jags clubhouse is not just home to the Jindalee Jags. They also look after the Centenary Little Athletics and the Centenary Netball Club as well. When their clubhouse was completely inundated it had a profound impact on all three of these groups. They are now back in the clubhouse and I am pleased to update the House that their coffee machine has been installed and is now functioning again so they are able to sell coffee to the parents when, of course, it is not raining. Unfortunately the fields do continue to be impacted by rain events, but they are back and playing and, as I said, that coffee machine is turned on and ready to go.


Similarly, the Jindalee Bowls Club was completely decimated in the recent floods. Unfortunately they still have a really long way to go. Like the Jags, they were also host to a couple of other community groups, the Centenary RSL and the Centenary Meals on Wheels. I am very pleased to report to the House that because their facility is unusable the Centenary RSL have found a temporary home at the McLeod Country Golf Club and Meals on Wheels have found a temporary home at the Jindalee Girl Guides, which is absolutely fantastic. The Centenary Rowing Club was also inundated and work is underway to get them back on their feet.

As members have heard in my contribution, I have mentioned a lot of clubs that have stepped up during our community's time of need and helped out by offering temporary accommodation of up to a year to some of these displaced community groups. In addition to those groups we also have the Jindalee Taekwondo who have relocated to the Centenary Uniting Church. The McLeod Country Golf

Club have offered their facilities up for a whole year—they have a beautiful new set up there for the Centenary RSL. The Jindalee Girl Guides are hosting Meals on Wheels and may offer a future permanent home, if all goes well, to the good people at the Centenary RSL.

I have previously reflected on the generous nature of the Mount Ommaney community. During the floods many Oxley residents took in hundreds, if not thousands, of their friends and neighbours who were stranded during that flooding event. They opened their hearts and their homes during our community's time of need, and I am so proud to say that these community clubs are doing exactly the same thing in the long term as we get back on our feet.

### Mooloolaba Harbour

 **Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (7.12 pm): Lives and livelihoods are at risk due to the dangerous shoaling at the Mooloolaba Harbour entrance at the mouth of the Mooloolah River, and we need the state government to urgently act to make it safe. They must get the bigger dredge that is able to operate outside the harbour entrance to clear the sand shoals not only at the entrance but also in the greater area and to deploy it in a more timely way when it is needed rather than putting lives at risk while everyone waits. I know MSQ are investigating a more permanent solution. The solution must be right for marine safety and reliability but also right for the environment. That does not explain why there has been such a delay in getting the bigger dredge engaged to do its job in a more timely way. I table a petition from more than 1,200 concerned citizens calling for the state government to fix the dangerous entrance to Mooloolaba Harbour.

*Tabled paper:* Nonconforming petition titled 'Make Mooloolaba Harbour Entrance Safe Petition' [\[714\]](#).

In the last two weeks I have received more than 90 complaints, many hair-raising, from people with direct experience of damage to their vessels and risk to their lives, which I am submitting to the state government and Maritime Safety Queensland in addition to the petition. Let us hear the voices of these people who fear for their lives and their livelihoods on this dangerous Mooloolah River entrance. A young fisher told me—

It's only a matter of time until one of us get killed. It's a hard enough job as it is. We spend weeks at sea and steam in, not knowing if we are gunna die—or lose our vessel or catch. It plays on our minds the whole trip. When we tie up and unload it's like we have dodged a bullet—again. We get the boat ready to go to sea and head back out. This is our life. Please, we need your help.

Yesterday a trawler skipper told me about the extraordinary situation where another young fisher with a broken ankle was ferried ashore from a trawler off Mooloolaba by a volunteer jet ski operator as the trawler was unable to get into the harbour due to the conditions of the harbour entrance at the time. Another person said—

My husband and sons own a boat and are too afraid to exit the river mouth. I will not use Mooloolaba Harbour again as it is too dangerous.

Then there are the hardworking volunteers with Coastguard QF6 Mooloolaba who have at times had to suspend assists lately due to the dangerous nature of the bar. One volunteer said—

Someone is going to be injured or killed if something is not done asap. We have also noticed some trawlers struggling to cross the bar. We are just waiting for one of them to flip.

Another wrote—


Do something about this before someone's life is taken away from their family.

Another relayed their experience—

Took breaking wave over boat and had engine damaged. Our yacht is a very seaworthy vessel ... The conditions crossing this bar are becoming extreme.

The pilots that service Moreton Bay have been stopped many times going out as well. The Etchells have been cancelled. Do something and act!

### Special Disability Trusts

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (7.15 pm): Many people think that parliamentary privilege involves the opportunity to stand in this place and say what you like, but I have always felt that the greatest privilege of being a member of parliament is the opportunity you get to listen to so many different people in the community and learn about their life and journey. One of the challenges of being involved in representative democracy is that you cannot possibly know everyone's story and you cannot appreciate their experiences. I am not a single parent. I am not a First Nations person. I have never

owned a small business. I am not a teen who is transgender. All of those people have come to me, shared their stories. I have listened. They have asked for help and hopefully I have given them that help.

In my first speech to this place I made reference to young people with disabilities when I was volunteering and working with them. At that stage I was around their age. I noticed they wanted the same things I wanted in life: friends, a partner, a job, fun, hobbies. As I have gotten older and now have kids of my own I reflect on what I think their parents would have wanted for their kids. I think anybody wants the same things for their kids whether they have a disability or do not have a disability. They want their kids to be happy and healthy. They want their kids to have some sort of purpose in life, a vocation or a job. They definitely want their kids to have nice relationships with friends and possibly a partner. They would love them to pursue their hobbies and interests and perhaps their spiritual values or their political values, if that is what they are interested in. I think all parents want for economic security and the chance for their kids to have a better life.

I was so pleased yesterday when we passed the SPER bill. Chris Meimaris came to see me about his daughter Jessica's situation. Jessica has an intellectual disability. She relies on a special disability trust to give her economic security and dignity in life. Unfortunately the special disability trust, which is set up by the federal government, interacts with land tax at the state level and effectively rendered their trust ineffective. I took that issue to the Treasurer and I was so pleased that the Treasurer recognised how significant this was for a small number of people in our state and acted on this matter. I am pleased with the passing of that bill so that people like Jessica are able to live their life with economic security and dignity. I am really pleased that her family are able to now have that surety that their daughter and their sister can move forward in life and have that stream of income that gives them that dignity that would, in Jessica's situation, otherwise be difficult to obtain.

I think that is the real parliamentary privilege that I am sure every member in this House feels at times: that opportunity to listen to people, the opportunity to share and understand their journey and, most importantly, the opportunity to help people.

### Federal Election, Greens



**Dr MacMAHON** (South Brisbane—Grn) (7.19 pm): I want to take a moment to reflect on what happened over the weekend. Against every prediction of the political class and many politicians, the Greens won two new Lower House seats in Queensland, with a third being closely counted as we speak. In just one election we may well quadruple our seats in federal parliament and are on track to have our biggest party room yet with 12 senators. Across the nation, the number of everyday people who went to the ballot box and voted 1 for the Greens has soared. For some in the media and the political class, those results have come as a surprise.

However, the Greens have known for at least six years, since Johnathan Sri won the Gabba ward, that, when you give people the option to vote for someone who genuinely listens and who is fighting for their community first and foremost, people will take that option. We proved that when we won Maiwar and again when we won South Brisbane, despite all the predictions from commentators, and today we wake up in 'Greensland'.


I want to reflect on how this change came about and what it means for the next state election. Very likely there are members wondering what the results will mean for their own political careers. It is no secret how we won Ryan, Griffith and, potentially, Brisbane. We have been up-front about it for years. We go out there and we listen to people at their doorsteps, on their streets, in their communities, during the floods and during COVID, and we connect with them on issues that matter to them. Any progressive movement that is serious about changing the face of politics in Australia should be doing that and we are ready to scale up our campaigns right across the state.

What have we learned? Everyday people are fed up with the political status quo. Whether it is a family struggling to pay the rent in Ipswich, a single parent trying to afford child care in Mackay or a student in Greenslopes who is hoping for a future where they will not have to worry about floods, heatwaves and bushfires, people want change. That is why, across this state and across the country, people voted for a party that is fighting to build a million public homes, cap rents and scrap negative gearing. They voted for a party that is committed to fighting to abolish uni and TAFE fees and scrap student debt. They said 'yes' to a party to phase out coal and gas in 10 years, bring dental and mental health services into Medicare, and tax builders and big corporations. Voters across the country said 'no thanks' to major parties and their corporate backers and 'no thanks' to politicians who help drive up house prices, drive up the cost of living, drive down wages and drive our public services into the ground.

Voters across Queensland voted for change. I am thinking about voters in Paddington, Carina Heights, Greenslopes, Bulimba, Coorparoo, Clayfield and New Farm who are looking at their current sitting members here in the Queensland parliament and are thinking, 'What if I had a representative who was genuinely fighting for me?' Every time you sell off public housing or give subsidies to fossil fuel corporations—

*(Time expired)*

### **Small Business Month; Toombul Shopping Centre**

 **Hon. LM LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (7.22 pm): This month is Queensland Small Business Month. It is a time to celebrate and acknowledge the significant contribution that small businesses make to our local communities and across Queensland, and of course to pay special tribute to their incredible resilience over the past two years of COVID. They stimulate the economy, create local jobs and are part of the very foundation of a strong and connected community. That is why Small Business Month is also a time to remind our communities to shop local and support families, friends and neighbours.


My community is a real village. Whether it is Nundah, Banyo, Boondall or Zillmere, we really ban together and support our local community—our village. That is what has made the recent news of the Toombul Shopping Centre closing due to catastrophic flood damage such a blow to my community and our village. It has created an uncertain future for many of the businesses that operated there.

I want to assure my community that I continue to work alongside the Queensland Small Business Commissioner to see that every available support is provided to those tenants as they move forward. Soon after the floods, the federal member for Lilley, Anika Wells, and I held an information session onsite for tenants, with representatives of local, state and federal agencies, to provide information on available grants and supports. Now that tenants have received formal notices terminating their leases, I want to see them receive any and all available support under the terms of their contracts and the Retail Shop Leases Act where relevant. I will also continue to advocate to the site owner, Mirvac, and the Brisbane City Council for real and meaningful consultation on any future plans on that site.

The community outpouring that has followed this news has been a testament to the people of my local community and their support, which runs deep for our local businesses and the people who work within them. My electorate is made up of a rich and diverse business community, from hospitality to fitness, trade services and manufacturing. I cannot recognise every one of them in the time I have left tonight—I cannot come close—but I can shine a light on just a few in honour of Small Business Month.

It is with much warmth and local pride that I acknowledge Louisa and her gorgeous team at The Closet in Banyo—Australia's biggest online fashion reseller. They are passionate about fashion recycling to combat the huge impact that discarded fast fashion is having on the environment. I dropped out there recently and had a fabulous time with Louisa, discussing how she can take her business to the next level. Stevie and Nadia established Active Truth in Nundah. It is an online activewear company that is channelling stereotypes and bias around body image. There are no photo shopping of models there; just real women celebrating and loving how they look. A warm shout-out to the father-and-son team of Geoff and Michael at Laws Laser cutting service in Geebung. Recently, they received a state government grant. A warm hello goes to Sharlene at Big Dad's Pies at Boondall who welcomes everyone with a smile.

### **Beaudesert Hospital, Maternity Services; Scenic Rim Electorate, Floods**

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Scenic Rim—LNP) (7.25 pm): Last Thursday at the HESTA Australian Nursing and Midwifery Awards, Beaudesert Hospital's maternity section was awarded the top prize in the Outstanding Organisation section. Congratulations! The team was recognised for their 'commitment to improving the health and wellbeing of women and babies in rural Queensland by providing high-quality maternity services to the local community'. Beaudesert is proud of this achievement and so am I, because it was the LNP government that brought maternity back to Beaudesert in 2014 after the Labor Party let it wither away in the years before. Thank you to Lawrence Springborg, Dr Michael Rice, the RDAQ and many others who made that happen.

Late last year it was reported that some midwives at Beaudesert may be forced by Metro South Hospital and Health Service to shift to Logan Hospital, reducing the capacity at Beaudesert. HESTA's award for Beaudesert Hospital should send a clear message to Metro South administrators: keep your hands off maternity services at Beaudesert and do not take their midwives away. Queensland Health

must guarantee the job of every midwife at Beaudesert Hospital's maternity service. A shortage at Logan Hospital is no reason to pilfer Beaudesert's midwives. HESTA's award shows that they are doing a great job and we should support them in every way. Indeed, we should build up other services at the hospital too.

Recent flooding in Scenic Rim has caused a huge amount of damage and significant losses to farmers who had worked hard to recover from February's flooding. Now they are staring at the prospect of another lost season. In significant parts of the region the flood's impact was worse than in February. Category C grants of up to \$75,000 to help farmers, community groups and small businesses to recover were activated following February's flooding. Last Monday I wrote to the Minister for Agriculture calling for that assistance to be activated for May's flood events. The Scenic Rim's economy and many jobs are very reliant on farmers. The damage is real and category C support for this flood is needed to protect those jobs and get farmers back on their feet. I call on the Minister for Agriculture to make this happen, together with the federal government.

Roads all over the region have also been hugely impacted by the recent flooding. While today I mention state-controlled roads around Tamborine Mountain, the whole region is impacted. Quite a few sections need immediate fixes. In fact, they needed to be fixed before the floods but now their condition is absolutely disgraceful. The few hundred metres downhill of the Eagle Heights sign on Tamborine Mountain Road, heading towards Tamborine, is Third World in condition and immediate work should be commenced. Potholes near the roundabout at the southern end of Gallery Walk need a permanent fix. My lobbying has seen work programmed from Curtis Road to the shopping village roundabout, but there are issues all along Main Western Road that need fixing.

Tamborine Mountain is the jewel in Scenic Rim tourism sector. For too long its residents have put up with roads that need a long-term fix, not band-aids. Main Roads should put together a significant package of rehabilitation across Tamborine Mountain so that our roads will stand up better to rain events. As it stands, the \$6 billion backlog on repairs and maintenance means that the roads crack up and disintegrate. It is not good enough. I call on the minister to do more for the resilience of our region's road networks.

### **Fitzroy River Barra Bash**



**Mr O'ROURKE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (7.28 pm): One of the great jobs I have is attending the Fitzroy River Barra Bash—someone has to do it! Since that event first started in 2018, it has continued to grow in strength. The 2022 Fitzroy River Barra Bash has been added to the 'It's live! in Queensland' events calendar. The Fitzroy River Barra Bash will receive \$20,000 in funding support through the latest round of the Queensland Destination Events program. The Fitzroy River Barra Bash plays a crucial role in driving visitation numbers to Rockhampton. We all know how tough the past few years have been, so it is good to see our government investing in the barra bash to support our local tourism sector and create jobs. The event incorporates a four-day catch-and-release fishing competition in the net-free Fitzroy River.

Last year during COVID there were 176 participants with 69 visitors and their families who came from outside the region. I am sure that this year's event will be even more exciting. About eight years ago the state government ended net fishing in the Fitzroy 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 economy growth via tourism in Queensland. The Frenchville Sports Club brought a bigger and better Barra Bash last year and I am sure this year will be even better. I must congratulate Graeme Brady OAM, chairman; Damien Massingham, general manager; and all the staff involved of the Frenchville Sports Club on a great weekend. The 2022 Fitzroy Barra Bash is Australia's richest barramundi fishing tournament, attracting fishing devotees, teams and amateurs and is set to be launched next month with the competition running from 16 to 19 October.

As I said, the Fitzroy River Barra Bash cements itself again as Australia's richest barramundi competition with an increase in guaranteed cash and prizes to over \$60,000—including a boat! I encourage all to come up to Rocky, enjoy this event and the many attractions that Central Queensland has. It is only an hour and 10-minute flight and plenty of accommodation is available right there on the Fitzroy River. It is a wonderful place and is great to see in Central Queensland.

The House adjourned at 7.31 pm.

**ATTENDANCE**

Andrew, Bailey, Bates, Bennett, Berkman, Bleijie, Bolton, Boothman, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Camm, Crandon, Crawford, Crisafulli, D'Ath, Dametto, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Frecklington, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Hart, Healy, Hinchliffe, Hunt, Janetzki, Katter, Kelly, King A, King S, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Lauga, Leahy, Linard, Lister, Lui, MacMahon, Madden, Mander, Martin, McCallum, McDonald, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Mickelberg, Miles, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Mullen, Nicholls, O'Connor, O'Rourke, Palaszcuk, Pease, Perrett, Pitt, Powell, Power, Pugh, Purdie, Richards, Robinson, Rowan, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Simpson, Skelton, Smith, Stevens, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Watts, Whiting