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FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

Wednesday, 22 June 2022

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WEDNESDAY, 22 JUNE 2022



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 STATEMENTS

Absence of Member



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I have received advice from the member for Clayfield, Mr Tim Nicholls MP, as to his absence from the sittings of the House for the remainder of this week. The member's notification complies with standing order 263A.

Record of Proceedings, Incorporation of Material



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, sessional order 11 provides that for the debate on the annual appropriation bills it is not necessary for members to seek leave of the House to incorporate material in the *Record of Proceedings*, provided members have shown the Speaker or the Deputy Speaker the material sought to be incorporated and have obtained the Speaker's or the Deputy Speaker's consent as per standing order 25.

Before consent will be given, members must assure and undertake that: one, for a speech relative to the appropriation bills, the member's total speech must not exceed that which would normally be allowed in a 15-minute speech, thus no speech should exceed 2,600 words; two, speeches should not include graphs, charts or other material; three, members must provide the Parliamentary Reporting Service with their speech in electronic form prior to rising to give their speech—other members will be provided access, on request, to a member's speech prior to the publication of the *Record of Proceedings*; and, four, speeches intended to be incorporated should not offend standing orders in any way, such as by containing personal reflections, imputations et cetera.

PETITIONS

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

Toowoomba Hospital

Mr Watts, from 66 petitioners, requesting the House to facilitate redevelopment of the Toowoomba Hospital at the Baillie Henderson site [898].

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

Beaudesert Hospital, Peritoneal Dialysis

Mr Krause, from 758 petitioners, requesting the House to implement peritoneal dialysis services and qualified nurse at the Beaudesert Hospital [899, 900].

Toowoomba, Youth Crime

Mr Watts, from 4,471 petitioners, requesting the House to restore breach of bail as an offence in the Youth Justice Act 1992 and to request adequate personnel and resourcing to Toowoomba region's police services [901, 902].

Petitions received.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Budget, Hospitals and Health Services



Hon. A PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympics) (9.33 am): I said health would be front and centre of our budget, I said it would be historic and I said it would be a record health budget. This budget delivered for Queenslanders the biggest hospital building program this state

has ever seen. It is massive. Over the next six years, we will invest close to \$10 billion building and expanding hospitals and improving health care the length and breadth of Queensland. We will build three new hospitals: at Coomera—you can thank me later; at Toowoomba—yes, you can thank me; and, of course, at Bundaberg.

Honourable members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: And I am looking forward to those as well at the next election. On top of that, we are building a new, world-class \$750 million Queensland Cancer Treatment Centre at Herston. I think every one of us knows someone who has been touched at some stage of their life by cancer and has gone through a battle with cancer. In fact we lost our dear friend Duncan just over a year ago. This investment in a world-class Cancer Treatment Centre is fantastic for Queenslanders. We will also expand 11 other hospitals, including Cairns, Townsville, Mackay, Hervey Bay, Logan, Robina, Ipswich, QEII, PA, Prince Charles plus the billion dollar expansion at Redcliffe Hospital. This will add 2,509 beds. That is the equivalent of tripling the size of our biggest hospital, the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital. Think about that for one moment.

This unprecedented building program tackles head-on the healthcare issues affecting almost every public hospital in the country. It is the same problem in Perth, Melbourne, Adelaide and Sydney. As I said, this is a national issue and every other Premier and first minister agrees with me, and so does the Prime Minister. We all agree it is a national issue impacting everybody across our nation.

Mr Watts: Is the funding coming, is it?

Ms PALASZCZUK: Are you happy about your Toowoomba Hospital?

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Ms PALASZCZUK: If you interrupt me, I'll interrupt you.

Mr SPEAKER: Premier, it would assist the House if you were able to direct your comments through the chair.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Hospital beds are filled with hundreds of COVID patients, along with those who should be in aged care and disability care. This is creating a blockage in bed capacity impacting on all aspects of hospital care. It is compounded by a lack of GPs and the dramatic downturn of those who have private health. This is all part of a carefully considered Queensland Health and Hospitals Plan. It details which expansion program will be delivered and when. They are rolling out in order of the areas of highest need first. These extra beds will be staffed by an additional 9,475 health professionals. There will be \$1.6 billion invested in mental health, with more co-responder paramedic teams designed specifically for those patients and greater support across the board. As I said yesterday, the pandemic has impacted everybody. I would be surprised if there was one individual across our state who has not felt at least some form of anxiety or concern about the pandemic. It has impacted everybody.

It took nine years to build Queensland's first maternity hospital in Brisbane in 1929. In two years we will deliver the first 289 new beds across seven projects, with the remaining staggering and historic hospital projects delivered within the next six years.

This time last year we were still in the teeth of the pandemic, but Queensland's strong health response paved the way for our strong economic recovery. These measures we announced in the budget are only possible because of the strength of the Queensland economy—the strongest economy in Australia, with 206,000 more jobs than before the pandemic and three out of every four new jobs in Australia in Queensland.

If the pandemic has taught us anything, it is that nothing is more important than our health. I have done my utmost to protect the health of Queenslanders during the COVID pandemic—the greatest peacetime threat our country has ever seen. I will never stop doing my utmost to keep Queenslanders healthy and safe.

Budget, Highlights

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympics) (9.39 am): Our budget sets the stage for a golden decade for good jobs, better services and great lifestyle. It alleviates household cost-of-living pressures. It responsibly manages the state's finances, and I want to thank the

Treasurer for the budget he handed down yesterday. Through strong economic management, we are now able to make historic investments in hospitals, schools, transport, housing, energy and concessions.

We are delivering on good jobs with a \$59.1 billion infrastructure program over four years, almost two-thirds of that in regional Queensland. It will support 48,000 construction jobs next year. We are providing \$17.2 million to help our agricultural producers become more resilient to climate change. Our \$68.5 million Queensland Resources Industry Development Plan will drive exploration and our new critical minerals mining industry. With another \$66.4 million for tourism recovery, we will develop new experience opportunities across Queensland. The budget provides another \$50 million for grants to support our manufacturers to be competitive and make products in Queensland.

We are investing \$15 million to support work on the Central Queensland Hydrogen Project and \$15 million for the National Battery Testing Centre to support renewable batteries to be made in Queensland.

In education, there is a record \$16.5 billion for more new schools, expansions and more classrooms. Five new schools will open in 2025 and 2026 at Caboolture, Caloundra, Flagstone, Ripley Valley and Bahrs Scrub—growing areas of our state. Eleven other new schools will open in 2023 and 2024. There is an increase in school infrastructure funding of \$1.2 billion, including \$20 million for tuckshop and playground upgrades. I know there are a lot of schools across the state that definitely need their tuckshops and playgrounds upgraded, so it is money very well spent. Of course, we are passionate about universal access to kindergarten with \$1 billion over five years.

There is more which other ministers will also outline, but we are also delivering a \$262 million investment in Queensland's Protected Area Strategy to protect our world-class environmental assets. For households and individuals who deserve some cost-of-living relief, we are providing a record \$6.8 billion in concessions in this budget. Let's think about that: \$6.8 billion in concessions. This includes \$385 million for a \$175 rebate on power bills. We can do that because we own our power assets.

A government member: Not for sale.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right! The 2022-23 budget delivers in all key economic, social and environmental areas. It strongly positions Queensland for ongoing investment, growth and prosperity and, most importantly, invests in people for jobs, services and lifestyle.

Budget, Response

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympics) (9.42 am): It was very pleasing to see the AMA's warm response to our record health funding. This is great news they said. They called for 815 extra beds. We are doing three times that. The Royal College of General Practitioners also welcomes the health investment. The Queensland Alliance for Mental Health welcomed our very important investment in mental health services. In the regions, Darling Downs and South West Health Chairman Mike Horan said Toowoomba's new hospital is a wonderful announcement. In fact, he spoke to me about it when I was out there opening the Kingaroy Hospital. Bundaberg's new hospital has also been welcomed as great news for that region. Isaac Mayor Anne Baker said a new hospital—

A government member interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right, the member for Nanango can thank me for the Kingaroy Hospital any day of the week, delivering for the regions, for rural communities, and delivering for the bush. Wait, there is more! Isaac Mayor Anne Baker said a new hospital for Moranbah will give certainty to the area and encourage people to live there.

On other budget measures, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry welcomes the payroll tax relief. They say it will be an incentive for small- and medium-sized businesses to employ more people. In the Far North, Advance Cairns Chairman Nick Trompf said the budget 'ticked the boxes for health and water security'. The Cairns Post said it is a budget 'to raise a glass of water to'. In Townsville, Mayor Jenny Hill said funding for the Landsdown Eco-Industrial Precinct 'shows the value of this project for Queensland to become an advanced manufacturing and hydrogen-producing powerhouse'.

On royalties, Professor John Quiggin from the University of Queensland said it was a 'good way of capitalising on current high coal prices'. Of course, we will be interested to see in the Leader of the Opposition's reply later on this week whether or not he supports these measures.

Budget, 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympics) (9.44 am): Finally, through this week's state budget, we are addressing our greatest challenges, but we are also investing in Queensland's greatest opportunities. The 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games will create a golden runway of opportunity for our state: 91,600 good, honest jobs; \$8.1 billion in social and economic benefits; and a \$4.6 billion uplift in tourism and trade. It is the opportunity of a lifetime. To capitalise on that opportunity, we must invest now.

This budget lays the foundation for Queensland to host the greatest Olympic and Paralympic Games of all time. There is a total of \$190 million for infrastructure, planning and development and a targeted strategy for sports performance, including \$31.4 million for the Queensland Academy of Sport to identify talent and develop our best athletes in time for the games.

Perhaps the most important investment for the games is the \$100 million over four years to deliver the Go for Gold Fund. The Olympic Games are good for business. They mean jobs, infrastructure and more tourists. I want every girl and boy in Queensland, no matter where they live or where they come from, to dream about being part of the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games. Our historic world-first \$100 million Go for Gold Fund will allow Queensland boys and girls to dare to dream. With this funding, we will build new high-performance sports infrastructures in schools right throughout Queensland. I am determined that, whether you live in Pormpuraaw, up in the Torres Strait, in Cairns, Weipa, Moranbah or anywhere else in the state, you should have access to facilities in order to fulfil your dream. We really need to look at those schools which have infrastructure and those which do not; those schools which have equipment and those which do not, and let us share the dream amongst all Queenslanders to find our next Cathy Freeman, no matter which sport our school students are inclined to participate in and that one day we will see them on the Olympic stage.

Budget, Infrastructure

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics Infrastructure) (9.46 am): Yesterday, the Treasurer delivered a fantastic Labor budget on behalf of the Palaszczuk government and I congratulate him. It is a budget that builds our great state with a record infrastructure program. We have exceeded our infrastructure guarantee of \$50 billion and we are delivering \$59.1 billion in infrastructure over the next four years to create local jobs and deliver the key infrastructure Queenslanders need across our state.

The cornerstone of this budget is the historic Queensland Health and Hospitals Plan, including almost \$10 billion in hospital infrastructure building. The Palaszczuk government has always put the health and wellbeing of Queenslanders first. We did it through the pandemic, and we will continue to do it now as the whole country faces challenges delivering health care to a growing population. This is Queensland's solution to a national issue affecting health systems across the country. The Palaszczuk government has delivered the largest investment in new hospitals and new beds in Queensland's history. \$9.785 billion for 2,200 extra beds across 15 hospitals, plus 289 beds across existing facilities, fast-tracked over the next 24 months.

Mr Bailey: Huge!

Dr MILES: That is 2,509 extra beds. I take the interjection from the Transport Minister—it is indeed huge.

A government member: Awesome!

Dr MILES: And awesome! That is 209,000 extra beds across Queensland over the next six years. This is in addition to the 869 beds being delivered through current expansion projects, and builds on the 1,350 additional beds the Palaszczuk government has opened across the state since 2015.

We will build new hospitals in Bundaberg, Toowoomba, Coomera and a brand new Queensland cancer centre. We will expand the hospitals in Cairns, Robina, Mackay, Redcliffe, Ipswich and Hervey Bay as well as the PA, QEII and Prince Charles hospitals. In the beautiful Moreton Bay region we are delivering more investment in hospital upgrades and more money for services than ever before. We are delivering nearly \$400 million to upgrade Caboolture Hospital, bringing more services and more beds online, Redcliffe Hospital will get a dedicated paediatric department and the Pine Rivers satellite hospital is on track with more money in this year's budget to deliver it. This is an historic Labor budget for Queensland, one that delivers for the health and wellbeing of Queenslanders.

Budget, Response



Hon. CR DICK (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (9.50 am): The budget I handed down yesterday delivers for Queenslanders wherever they live. It is a budget for the times we face and it is a budget that has been well received across the state. The Chamber of Commerce and Industry Queensland CEO, Heidi Cooper, described—

Mr Crisafulli: AMAQ.

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

Mr DICK: I take the interjection. Is he going to back the revenue measures or is he going to sack the health staff like he did last time? That is the choice on Thursday. Anyway, we will have more on that later.

The Chamber of Commerce and Industry Queensland CEO, Heidi Cooper, described it as 'a positive step forward in ensuring Queensland businesses can grow'. CCIQ welcomed our cuts to payroll tax for small and medium family businesses, saying it gives them 'incentive to grow their workforce without facing higher tax bills'.

I was particularly pleased to see our historic and sustainable investment in mental health care welcomed by the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists. Its Queensland chair, Professor Brett Emmerson, said 'the budget shows the Queensland government is serious about delivering the mental health services that Queenslanders deserve'. As ever, most of our infrastructure spend is occurring outside greater Brisbane. I note the words—

Mr Bleijie: How are the live crosses going?

Mr DICK: Very well thank you, member for Kawana—absolutely nailed the story. I note the words—

Mr SPEAKER: Members on both sides of the House, there are far too many interjections. I am having some difficulty hearing the Treasurer. I would like to hear the ministerial statement.

Mr DICK: I note the words of Toowoomba Regional Council Deputy Mayor Geoff McDonald in welcoming our announcement of a new hospital for the garden city: 'How good is this? Fantastic to see it happening.'

The Palaszczuk Labor government will always back water projects for our regions, and the regional councils we work with across the state know it well. I read this morning that Rockhampton Regional Council Mayor Tony Williams described our \$40 million full funding of the Mount Morgan water pipeline project as 'historic'. He went on—

It's a historic day for Rocky Regional Council and an even more momentous day for the Mount Morgan community, they finally will have a permanent water supply ...

The *Cairns Post* reports that Mayor Bob Manning cheered as the budget delivered \$107½ million for the water security project. On the Gold Coast, Destination Gold Coast CEO Patricia O'Callaghan welcomed our \$66 million investment in tourism, saying, 'The continued investment and backing the industry will be so critical.' Steve Noakes, the chair of the Binna Burra board of directors, spoke warmly of our \$18 million commitment—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DICK: Thank you, member for Scenic Rim. Steve Noakes spoke warmly of our \$18 million commitment to help them rebuild, saying it is 'enormously welcomed by all of us at Binna Burra'. The Queensland Conservation Council has described our \$262.5 million protected areas investment as a 'win for nature' with 'the potential for massive outcomes for nature conservation in Queensland'.

As I said yesterday, the people of Queensland will not pay \$1 of the revenue measures I announced in the budget, the revenue measures which support these initiatives. I am proud—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members on both of sides of the House, the volume of interjections is too high. I will start naming members and I will start issuing a general warning to the entire chamber if I cannot hear the speaker on their feet.

Mr DICK: I am proud to have delivered a budget that fulfils our promises to the people of Queensland, securing good jobs and better services and sustaining our great Queensland lifestyle.

Budget, Education

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (9.55 am): Like the Premier and the Treasurer, I am so proud that the Palaszczuk government delivered yet another record-breaking \$16.5 billion education budget yesterday. We know healthy and happy kids learn better at school, which is why I welcomed the biggest investment in the health and mental health of Queenslanders in our state's history. However, it is not just our direct record investment in health that is going to make a difference. Labor governments love health and education, and in education we are delivering projects and policies that improve the health and wellbeing of our youngest Queenslanders.

There is a \$100 million Go for Gold sports infrastructure fund, which will get thousands of kids active and healthy, some of whom will hopefully represent us at the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games. Our \$183 million specialist classroom renewal will deliver state-of-the-art learning spaces including for home ec., which sets our kids up for so many career paths and provides vital health and wellbeing skills. I am looking forward to seeing the upgrades to home ec. spaces at schools including Keppel Sands State School and Bell State School in Callide. An amount of \$20 million for playground and tuckshop upgrades will also bring healthier eating and better play equipment to students right across the state, and what a difference that will make.

There is more than \$80 million—I am so proud—to support schools to transition to a game-changing new resourcing model for students with a disability. I look forward to sharing more about this incredibly important work in the House tomorrow. Our work on Respectful Relationships will get a \$15.5 million boost, so teachers are well equipped to support students in this important area of healthy relationships.

We are already delivering our \$100 million health and wellbeing plan that is bringing GPs, psychologists and other mental health and wellbeing professionals into our schools in addition to what we announced yesterday. These specific programs are life-changing, but our broader approach to record investments in health and education makes a huge difference because we know that getting the right start in life can have a big impact on our future health and happiness. We also continued to invest heavily in kindergarten as part of our \$1 billion kindergarten reform package because we know how important early education is to set our students up for success at school, in life and in their careers.

Good jobs, better services and investing in a healthy community is a big win for our state's future and the future of young Queenslanders. That is what Labor governments do.

Budget, Health

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (9.58 am): I have said many times that I consider it an honour and a privilege to be the health minister and I consider it an honour and a privilege to be a minister in a Labor government, particularly the Palaszczuk Labor government, that understands that to have a strong economy, we must have a healthy community.

I start by congratulating the Treasurer on an exceptional state budget. I am extremely pleased as Minister for Health and Ambulance Services that the 2022-23 state budget sets a new health and ambulance spending record. The budget locks in a record \$23.6 billion for our Queensland Health and Hospitals Plan as well as additional health funding of \$9.78 billion over six years to deliver 2,509 extra beds. That includes 289 of those beds to be delivered in the next two years. It builds on our seven years of investing in health, which has already seen 1,350 extra beds delivered since 2015 as well as an additional 13,000 frontline health workers and more than 1,100 ambulance workers.

This budget builds on the Palaszczuk government's ongoing investment in health. The Queensland Health and Hospitals Plan will create three new hospitals—a new \$1.2 billion Bundaberg Hospital delivering 121 beds, a new \$1.3 billion Coomera Hospital delivering 404 beds and a new \$1.3 billion Toowoomba hospital delivering 118 new beds—and \$750 million for a new Queensland Cancer Centre, the first of its type in Australia to bring all cancer therapies together in one place.

We are also pressing full steam ahead with 11 hospital expansions across Queensland including Townsville, Cairns, Mackay, Hervey Bay and across the south-east of Queensland. I am particularly pleased that Redcliffe Hospital will get a \$1.06 billion expansion to deliver 204 additional beds. This is in addition to the 869 beds being delivered through our current expansion projects. The budget also delivers \$943.5 million funding over seven years to replace rural and remote health facilities and staff accommodation.

The budget also includes \$1.64 billion in additional funding over five years for mental health, alcohol and other drug services. Under our Better Care Together strategy, there is an additional investment to deliver over 390 new beds—these are in addition to the 2,509 beds—and 1,400 new healthcare staff over the next five years across key priority areas such as infant and perinatal mental health; children and adolescent mental health; young adult, adult and older person mental health; mental health crisis support; eating disorders; suicide prevention and aftercare services; alcohol and other drugs rehabilitation; and psychosocial supports delivered by non-government providers.

The budget also includes \$1.1 billion for the Queensland Ambulance Service. This is an 11 per cent increase compared to the previous financial year. The investment will help the QAS prioritise regional and rural services to ensure accessible health care no matter the location, as well as recruit more frontline staff and open new facilities. Modernising the QAS will ensure the service continues to meet the healthcare needs of Queenslanders, now and into the future. Perhaps the AMAQ said it best when they tweeted yesterday that the budget is great news for Queensland.

Social and Affordable Housing; Neighbourhood and Community Centres

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algera—ALP) (Minister for Communities and Housing, Minister for Digital Economy and Minister for the Arts) (10.01 am): Many communities and industries across Queensland have been impacted by rising cost-of-living pressures, the flow-on effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the recent flooding events. That is why we are investing a record \$2.9 billion in social and affordable housing over four years. This will increase the social and affordable housing supply by almost 10,000 over the life of the Queensland Housing Strategy 2017-2027, including 7,400 new homes under the current Housing and Homelessness Action Plan to be commenced by June 2025. Last year's record investment of \$2.9 billion remains intact. Our target under this investment remains the same, as it responds to constraints that are being felt across the nation.

We have a proven track record, with 4,153 new social and affordable homes commenced across the state since the Palaszczuk government came to office. This includes us being on track to meet our target for this year of 727 new social homes commenced.

We are not just building new homes; we are also helping Queenslanders right across the system to find housing solutions. In fact, just last year my department helped Queenslanders with over 205,000 forms of housing assistance. We also acted quickly during the South-East Queensland floods to expand the eligibility for bond loans and rental grants, easing added pressure on people in the private rental market.

Last week we launched our Help to Home initiative. This program is designed to encourage investors sitting on vacant properties to sign up to a government headlease. As I explained yesterday, it incentivises private investors to sign up, with a guaranteed lease for two years and three months rent in advance paid each quarter. This will mean 1,000 more housing solutions for vulnerable Queenslanders.

Neighbourhood and community centres in communities across Queensland also play a vital role in supporting Queenslanders impacted by cost-of-living pressures. Neighbourhood centres have reported significant increases in presentations from community members requiring assistance with emergency relief and responses to increased costs of living. That is why the Palaszczuk government is providing an additional \$115.8 million of funding over four years to support and expand our network of 127 government funded neighbourhood and community centres. This includes \$51.8 million to support the largest single increase in base operational funding for neighbourhood and community centres. This will allow them to hire more staff, to deliver more services and supports for people in need and to run more programs and activities in the community.

Each of our 127 state government funded neighbourhood and community centres will now receive base funding of at least \$230,000—up from the present minimum of around \$124,000. This is great news for communities. I know that every single member in this House who has a community and neighbourhood centre is very pleased to be able to support them. This boosts our investment in neighbourhood and community centre operational funding from \$12.7 million in 2013-14 under the LNP to \$31.05 million in 2022-23 under this Palaszczuk government.

We are also committing \$39 million to build or significantly redevelop centres in areas of greatest need. This is in addition to our investment of \$4.55 million for a new neighbourhood and community centre for Rockhampton that I was thrilled to announce last week along with the member for

Rockhampton and the member for Keppel, who is a great supporter. Neighbourhood and community centres are at the front line of local responses to social isolation and loneliness. They have also reported increased presentations relating to mental health.

At the heart of this budget is the historic Queensland Health and Hospitals Plan. Our record health investment to deliver three new hospitals, 11 hospital expansions and 2,509 extra hospital beds, and a record investment in mental health, will be complemented by our record investment in neighbourhood and community centres across Queensland. Our record investment in neighbourhood and community centres will play an important role in supporting early intervention for many in our communities impacted by mental health concerns.

We continue to work with homelessness services, with a \$122 million investment to support those most at risk. These are Queensland solutions to national issues impacting health systems, communities and housing across our country. Through our record investment in housing, neighbourhood and community centres and health care, our government is supporting some of the most vulnerable community members across Queensland.

Budget, Roads and Transport Infrastructure

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (10.06 am): What an impressive budget handed down yesterday by the Treasurer! There were record levels of investment across the board, including for health—I know that is foreign to those opposite—and rail and roads. The Palaszczuk Labor government is proud to deliver the seventh record roads and transport budget in a row. Some \$29.7 billion will be invested over the next four years to support jobs and bust congestion across our growing state. This investment will support 25,200 jobs across Queensland. Most of those jobs—over 16,000 of them—will be in regional Queensland. This budget will see more works on the M1, the Bruce Highway and the \$2.1 billion Coomera Connector, or second M1—blocked by those opposite when they were in power.

In South-East Queensland, motorists can see how many major upgrades are going on, from the \$1 billion Varsity Lakes to Tugun M1 upgrade and the \$1 billion Daisy Hill to Logan Motorway M1 upgrade to come, to the \$262 million Caboolture to Steve Irwin Way upgrade—a six-laning project in the member for Pumicestone's area. We are delivering more lanes, better interchanges and safer driving across the south-east's major roads. On top of that, we are building a brand new highway, the Coomera Connector, which will deliver a second M1 between Logan and the Gold Coast. It will be the biggest road project in Queensland's history. This is no thanks to those opposite, who blocked it when they were in power. When the Leader of the Opposition was sitting at the cabinet table they blocked it—it was well reported—and they have not changed their view.

It is not just in the south-east where we are delivering major road upgrades. We are backing the Bruce. Just ask Bruce, or should I say the Assistant Minister for Regional Roads. He is a big supporter of projects like the \$1 billion Rockhampton Ring Road; the \$1 billion Gympie Bypass; the \$481 million Edmonton to Gordonvale Bruce Highway upgrade; the \$350 million Mackay Port Access Road; the \$230 million Townsville Ring Road stage 5 project in the Thuringowa electorate; and the \$336 million Tiaro Bypass on the Bruce Highway. We have 50 upgrades underway on the Bruce Highway right across this state.

Statewide, we will also see 83 new school crossing supervisors and \$40 million for the important School Transport Infrastructure Program, helping deliver school safety upgrades like stop-and-drop go zones, car parks and safer roads—a program that I would hope is supported by all members in this House to make our schools safer. We will be delivering a record \$3.5 billion worth of new rail projects along with record investments in active transport and marine infrastructure. We have some of the most beautiful coastline in the world, and don't our boaties know it!

This record investment on our roads complements the other record-breaking budget highlights in national parks, in schools and, most importantly, in our historic Queensland Health and Hospitals Plan—a record \$23.6 billion investment in our health system, including 249 new beds at the PA Hospital at Woolloongabba and 112 new beds at the QEII Hospital on the south side which are very welcome. Knowing that the services people rely upon like public transport and like our hospitals are getting the funding they need, they are being funded fairly and they are being fully funded—not cut—is what our growing state needs. I am proud to be part of the Palaszczuk government delivering for the people of Queensland, not the savage cuts and horror budgets we saw under those opposite.

Mr SPEAKER: I call the minister—

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Kawana, you are warned under the standing orders. I do not like being interrupted when I am trying to give the member the call.

Budget, Resources Industries

 **Hon. SJ STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (Minister for Resources) (10.10 am): The state budget delivered by the Treasurer yesterday supports our regions and our resources communities. At the heart of this budget is the historic Queensland Health and Hospitals Plan. There is nothing more important to the Palaszczuk government than the health and wellbeing of all Queenslanders, and that is something that all Queenslanders deserve regardless of where they live. It is good to see the resources industry contributing to our economy and in particular to our regional areas where these coalmines are located. I know the resources sector is proud to support the regional communities in which they operate.

As a regional minister I know just how important regional communities are to our state and the amazing lifestyles that they offer, but it is important that these regional communities have access to top class quality facilities, and that is why these royalties are so important. These royalties will go towards giving a great mining town like Moranbah the hospital it deserves. The regions are a great place to live and offer a great lifestyle as well.

Yesterday I spoke with Isaac Mayor Anne Baker to deliver the news that these royalties are going to build a new hospital in Moranbah—one that it deserves. This government has secured funding to build a brand new hospital to help service the heart of Queensland's resources industry right there. During the Grosvenor mine blast two years ago, the work of those nurses kept those five men alive and this is giving back to those communities.

These royalties are important to upgrade our hospitals in Queensland resource centres like Townsville, Mackay and Rockhampton. In fact, in my home town of Townsville we are investing \$530 million for the Townsville Hospital expansion to deliver 143 additional beds. Townsville University Hospital is the biggest tertiary hospital in northern Australia and services huge parts of the north, so that is why this investment is so important. No matter the cause of the problem, we are acting on a solution. Part of that is investing in more health services and health infrastructure for regional mining communities like Moranbah, like Mackay, like Rockhampton and like Townsville. That is what good governments do. We are delivering a record health investment to deliver three new hospitals, 11 hospital expansions and 2,509 extra hospital beds. These are Queensland's solutions to a national issue affecting public health systems right across our nation. We will continue to invest in our health services, and that is what this budget delivers for our regional and resource communities.

Budget, Small Business

 **Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development) (10.13 am): I congratulate the Treasurer on delivering what was a record budget yesterday—a Labor budget—delivering good jobs, providing better services and supporting Queensland's great lifestyle. We have seen a record health budget which every single Queenslanders cares about, including \$9.8 billion for the biggest hospital-building program in the history of Queensland delivering 2,500 additional overnight beds and a budget in surplus which underpins strong economic growth and high employment rates. Of course I was absolutely delighted that the huge load small businesses bore through COVID has been acknowledged yet again in this budget on top of around \$2.5 billion in support which the Palaszczuk government has put towards helping small businesses get through the last couple of years.

Top of the list for small business announcements was the payroll tax relief for Queensland's small- and medium-sized businesses which will mean that more than 12,000 businesses with payrolls under \$10.4 million will save up to \$26,000 per year. Payroll tax is an issue which has been raised with me consistently by the CCIQ and individual chambers as I have travelled across Queensland over the last 18 months, so with yesterday's announcement we have shown that we have heard what they have said. We have always had the most competitive tax system on the east coast, and with this budget we are making it even easier to do business in Queensland. The CCIQ has welcomed the measure, with CEO Heidi Cooper saying—

It means small-and-medium sized businesses have been afforded some incentive to grow their workforce without facing higher tax bills, supporting them to better meet consumer or market demand, diversify, scale and grow.

Small and medium business owners have already contacted me to thank the government for the initiative, with one writing—

I am writing to provide the highest praise for the measure to effectively lower payroll taxes in Queensland. In addition to all the initiatives put in place by the Government to support businesses this is an amazing cherry on top.

I am also very pleased to advise the House that the Queensland state budget 2022-23 will invest more than \$39 million over the next four years to secure the future of our small business grants. Our investment is about helping small businesses start, grow and prosper. Since 2020 nearly 60,000 Queensland businesses have been supported by grants totalling almost \$530 million, including our COVID-19 economic support to 55,000 small businesses in 2020-21 and more than \$20 million in Big Plans for Small Business grants. We know that running a small business is hard work, and our announcement that the Queensland government, in partnership with the Queensland Mental Health Commission, is rolling out a \$7.9 million small business wellness and support package to engage small business wellness coaches has been welcomed. It is a reflection of this government's broader commitment to addressing mental health, with the announcement yesterday of a \$1.64 billion investment in mental health services.

I am also pleased that the state budget will fund the continuation of the successful Mentoring for Growth program, which this year is celebrating 20 years of supporting small business. We know our business community must be supported by a strong workforce, which is why we are developing a new workforce strategy for Queensland to ensure our businesses have the required staff to start or grow their operations here. Queensland has huge opportunities on the horizon, and a skilled workforce and a thriving small business sector will be critical to our success.

NOTICE OF MOTION

Youth Crime



Mr LAST (Burdekin—LNP) (10.18 am): I give notice that I will move—

That this House—

1. notes:
 - (a) the widespread community concern at the extent of juvenile criminal activity,
 - (b) the failure of existing laws to act as a deterrent to such activity, and
 - (c) over 53,400 petitioners, including the member for Capalaba acting in solidarity with his community, called for the reform of juvenile justice laws including breach of bail;
2. agrees to the introduction of reforms including an offence of breach of bail.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, question time will conclude today at 11.18 am.

Budget, Taxation



Mr CRISAFULLI (10.18 am): My question is to the Premier. In Kuranda during the election campaign the Treasurer was specifically asked about business taxes. He replied, 'There won't be any increased taxes.' Will the Premier admit her government has broken a promise to Queenslanders?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for the question. The Treasurer did not mention the word 'business'.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I will come to you in a moment, don't worry!

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Ms PALASZCZUK: This budget puts Queenslanders first. Unlike from those opposite, there is no impost on the households—the families—of this state. I think any Queenslanders out there, if you asked them, would understand that coal companies are earning record profits. I think Queenslanders would understand that health is their No. 1 issue and we are fixing it. We are fixing it with the largest capital health spend this state has ever seen.

Opposition members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I am happy to wait until the opposition is quiet, because I think everyone should hear me say very clearly that this is the largest health spend in this state's history. Why are we doing that? For the people of Queensland! Here is Queensland's Health and Hospitals Plan for all Queenslanders to see.

Now I will come to the Leader of the Opposition. Go back 10 years. Remember when those opposite said that public servants had nothing to fear? I say to the Leader of the Opposition that there is not a focus group that does not remember 10 years ago the 14,000 people sacked by the Newman government. The member for Clayfield was front and centre, the member for Kawana, the member for Mudgeeraba was there for a little bit of the time, then, of course the member for Everton.

Ms Bates: At least I wasn't on the red carpet!

Ms PALASZCZUK: Something that you will never do!

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Comments will be through the chair. Member for Mudgeeraba, member for Toowoomba North, member for Glass House, you are all warned under the standing orders. Premier, it is not helpful to the House for comments to not be directed through the chair. I ask you to please return to answering the question.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I work every day for the people of this state.

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, was that your interjection?

Mr CRISAFULLI: Yes.

Mr SPEAKER: You are warned under the standing orders.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I have been working my guts out to get this health budget right. Everybody knows that. The Treasurer knows that, the Deputy Premier knows that, every one of my ministers knows that. We have delivered the best health budget the state has ever seen—ever. Let us go back to the Leader of the Opposition. What did they do? They introduced an emergency levy, an insurance duty—

(Time expired)

Mr SPEAKER: The Premier's time has expired. Premier, I do ask you to please withdraw a particular word that is deemed to be unparliamentary. It related to working hard, I believe.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Ah, 'guts'.

Mr SPEAKER: We did not need it again. Will you withdraw?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I withdraw.

Budget, Taxation

Mr CRISAFULLI: My question is to the Premier. During the election campaign the Palaszczuk government said there would be no new or increased taxes. The budget revealed this promise had been broken. If Queenslanders cannot trust the state government's promise, how can they trust them to deliver for Queenslanders?

Ms PALASZCZUK: The people of Queensland can trust me! They can trust me, absolutely they can, and they do. We can try again at the next election if you want to.

Mr Dick interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: The Treasurer will direct his comments through the chair.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Let me say very clearly that the people of Queensland know I care about them. The people of Queensland know that for two years we kept them safe night and day when the threat of a global pandemic came to Queensland's doorstep. Those opposite, the member for Nanango and others, 64 times called for the border to be opened. That was when Delta was the prominent strain of the virus.

Mrs Frecklington: What rubbish!

Ms PALASZCZUK: Rubbish? Okay, to the member can I say this: when all of your counterparts—

Mr SPEAKER: Through the chair.

Ms PALASZCZUK:—got up there and wanted the borders to be opened there would have been thousands of people who lost their lives. People in your electorate would have lost their lives.

Opposition members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: The member for Currumbin was out in her car crossing the border helping them over.

Mrs Gerber interjected.

Ms Grace interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: The member for Currumbin is warned under the standing orders. The member for McConnel will cease her interjections.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I am happy to put the trust that Queenslanders place in me against the trust they have in the Leader of the Opposition and anyone on that side of the fence because we know they do not care about people. They did not care when they sacked 14,000 people when the member for Clayfield was the Treasurer and the member for Broadwater sat around the cabinet table. The member for Kawana was there. The member for Everton was there. There are many Newman ministers who are still there on the front bench who were there when those savage cuts happened.

How many new hospitals did those opposite build in those three years? Zero hospitals. How many nurses were sacked? How many doctors were sacked? How many allied health officers were sacked? One only has to be reminded of the rallies that happened outside of this chamber in reaction to the budget that was handed down 10 years ago in September.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

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

Ms PALASZCZUK: New members of the LNP, go and have a good long look at *Hansard* from those days if you do not believe me. They gave a guarantee that there would be no increases in electricity prices. They went up 43 per cent.

Regional Queensland, Health Services

Mr SMITH: My question is to the Premier and Minister for the Olympics. Will the Premier please update the House on the Palaszczuk government's investment into health care for regional Queensland in this week's state budget?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I want to thank the member for Bundaberg. The member for Bundaberg is absolutely in touch with the needs of his community and is so hardworking in standing up for his community, championing a new hospital for Bundaberg that he is delivering for the people and the community of that region. The members of that community will be incredibly proud of his hard work in his advocacy for that hospital.

We know that across regional Queensland there is a need for expanded beds. As I have said, and I am going to keep saying this, Queenslanders know that the pressures on the hospitals are a national issue. I will keep saying this every day because Queenslanders know that this is the case. It is a national issue. The Leader of the Opposition needs to be in touch with the fact that his counterparts in Tasmania and New South Wales also acknowledge that there are pressures on their public hospitals. It is a national issue. Let us have a think about it. Over those two years a lot of people did not go in to see their GPs. That was probably a time when they did actually need to see their GPs, but because of the pandemic they did not. All of a sudden our GPs are flooded with people coming in for a whole variety of reasons, whether that is the flu, whether that is COVID or whether it is other chronic illness, and if they cannot get in to see their GP or if there is no GP in their region they are turning to our emergency departments, and this is putting a lot of pressure on our emergency departments. Secondly, we know that there are people who have a disability and those from aged care who are in the hospitals who should not be there. They should be in their homes. Finally, we have a Labor federal government that is prepared to: (a) acknowledge the issue; and (b) do something about it—a breath of fresh air. We will work together on that particular issue.

In the meantime, what are we doing? We are delivering the largest health infrastructure spend in this state's history. I am incredibly proud of the expansions that are going to happen across our state. We have the new hospital in Bundaberg coming, a new hospital in Toowoomba, a new hospital in Coomera. I can understand why the LNP are so upset this week: they did not expect the budget to be so big on health. I said to Queenslanders that I would deliver the largest health spend we have ever seen, and I have delivered to the people of this state.

Budget, Taxation

Mr JANETZKI: My question is to the Treasurer. In Kuranda during the election campaign the Treasurer was specifically asked about new business taxes but failed to reveal his plans. Across multiple news networks the Treasurer has admitted he deliberately did not answer the question, saying, 'I never mentioned the word "business".' Can the Treasurer explain why he never mentioned the word 'business'?

Mr Mander: I wouldn't be so smug.

Mr DICK: I will not worry about being smug, member for Everton; I can never trump you.

Mr SPEAKER: Treasurer, you will direct your comments through the chair. The member for Everton will cease his interjections.

Mr DICK: I genuinely thank the member for Toowoomba South for the question. There must be some confusion, as he seems to have a question from a member of the government and not a member of the opposition. The reason I did not mention business is absolutely 100 per cent clear: our promise was to the people of Queensland. Our government stands with and by and for the people. Labor governments deliver for the people and this is our promise: record health expenditure in Queensland. The promise I made to the people of Queensland, the promise the Premier made to the people of Queensland and the promise every member of our government made to the people of Queensland was that there would be no new or increased taxes on the people. I did not make a promise to business.

Tomorrow the Leader of the Opposition has a choice to make. The Leader of the Opposition can choose a new royalties regime or a new hospital for Moranbah in the electorate of Burdekin, but he cannot choose both. The Leader of the Opposition can have a new royalties regime or a new hospital in Toowoomba, in the electorates of the member for Toowoomba North and the member for Toowoomba South, but he cannot have both. In his own backyard—talk about checking out: he does not even live in his electorate anymore; he has moved on—the member for Broadwater can choose a new hospital for Coomera or he can choose a new royalties regime, but he cannot choose both.

We will not be lectured to by the opposition on broken promises. Theirs was a government that promised no new taxes and, as soon as they got into government, jacked up taxes by \$3 billion, including a coal royalties increase in the first budget delivered by the member for Clayfield and supported by the member for Broadwater. Coal royalties went up by \$1.6 billion without any consultation or discussion. That was 30 per cent more than the royalty revenue that we will secure for our hospital building program. The hypocrisy of the LNP is blatant and clear for all Queenslanders to see. What do you choose, Leader of the Opposition: revenue or cutting, sacking and selling?

(Time expired)

Logan, Health Services

Mr POWER: My question is to the Premier and Minister for the Olympics. Will the Premier update the House on the government's response to the increasing demands for health services throughout Queensland, especially in the growing areas of Logan?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Logan. He is a proud advocate for increased beds for his constituents and the families that live in the Logan electorate. That is why we are pleased to be investing \$530 million to deliver 112 new beds at Logan Hospital.

In any budget, any one of those single announcements would be well received but we are doing this across the state because, as a government, we recognise the pressures that people are feeling in health care. That is why we are stepping up and delivering what we need to deliver. As I have said, we are delivering brand new hospitals. Earlier I mentioned the brand new cancer treatment centre, which I think is absolutely critical because every one of us would know someone in our lives who has been touched by cancer.

I move onto mental health. I do not think there would be a person in this state or nation who has not felt some degree of anxiety, stress or concern for either themselves or their loved ones over the two years of the global pandemic. I applaud Joe Kelly and his committee for handing down this amazing report into mental health. They went right across our state and listened to and talked with people. We had to make a choice about how we were going to fund an increased investment in mental health. I am absolutely proud that our government is going to be investing \$1.645 billion in mental health services.

During the past couple of years, our largest companies have made record profits. I do not think there would be one company that could say they do not have a single employee who has been impacted by mental health. This is called corporate responsibility. It is called delivering for Queenslanders who are going through significant issues in their lives.

Tomorrow I will be very interested to hear what the Leader of the Opposition has to say about whether or not they will continue this fund. This is \$1.6 billion to look after a very important issue that impacts everyone at some stage in their life. This is about looking after and caring for Queenslanders.

(Time expired)

Budget, Taxation

Mr BLEIJIE: My question is to the Treasurer. The Treasurer said he has zero interest in being premier. In 2015 he denied ordering the concealment of SPER debt, saying that the total had been misunderstood by public servants. On tax increases for businesses he said there would be no new taxes. Is this broken promise a case of Queenslanders just misunderstanding his promise?

Mr DICK: I will say again that I am absolutely crystal clear when I speak to the people of Queensland, unlike the member for Kawana, who promised no new taxes and then jacked them up by \$3 billion as soon as they got into government. In September this year, Queenslanders will remember the 10th anniversary of what the member for Kawana, the member for Broadwater, the member for Clayfield and all of those who are still on the frontbench did to them. 'No public servant in this state has anything to fear.' That was a promise the member for Kawana made but then promptly sacked 14,000 public servants, some of whom have never recovered from what the LNP government did to them. They said electricity prices would not increase. That is a promise that the member for Kawana made and, of course, electricity prices immediately went up 43 per cent. To answer the question of the member for Kawana, I am absolutely clear in what I say and what I do.

Mr Minnikin interjected.

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

Mr DICK: We made a promise. Member for Kawana, it was an election campaign. I was speaking to the people of Queensland. They know the promise I made to them and we have absolutely delivered on it. The reason we know that is because business campaigned against us every single day of the campaign. After the Premier, our government and I made a promise to the people, business campaigned against us. We know that and the proof point is this: the media release by the Queensland Resources Council two days before the election, on the Thursday before the election, calling on us and demanding that we continue the coal royalties freeze beyond 30 June.

The LNP did that; we did not. We kept to our promise. We promised a 10-year freeze, the longest continual freeze since the current royalty regime was introduced in 1994—almost 30 years ago. We promised that. They knew the promise did not apply to them, which is why they campaigned against that. The member for Kawana and all of those members opposite need to stop misrepresenting history. We know they are experts in that. I will table that so the members of the opposition can read it.

Tabled paper: Media release, dated 29 October 2020, from the Queensland Resources Council titled 'Labor fails to give certainty to Queensland's resources sector' [\[903\]](#).

We absolutely will deliver for our people.

Mr Mander interjected.

Mr DICK: I take the interjection from the member for Everton on credibility.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: I will wait for silence, members.

Mr Dick interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Treasurer, I just asked the House for silence. You are warned under the standing orders.

Budget, Health Infrastructure

Mr KING: My question is of the Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning. Can the Deputy Premier outline to the House how the latest Palaszczuk government budget will support the delivery of important health infrastructure for growing communities across Queensland, and is the Deputy Premier aware of any alternative approaches?

Dr MILES: I thank the member for Kurwongbah for his question. I know that, as someone who represents a growing community like my own, he knows how important infrastructure and services are to those new and growing communities. This Queensland Labor Palaszczuk government budget delivers. It delivers funding to our local hospitals at Caboolture and Redcliffe and at the Prince Charles Hospital. It delivers funding to our new satellite hospital at Pine Rivers. We guaranteed that we would deliver over the four years of each budget cycle \$50 billion worth of capital program. In this budget we

deliver nearly \$60 billion—a \$59 billion capital program. It is not just in the south-east corner of the state; in fact, two-thirds—63 per cent—of that infrastructure spend is in the regions. Of course, we have heard today about the most important component of that—the health and hospitals plan—delivering to Queenslanders. This plan delivers right throughout the state; in fact, members can see how every single part of the state benefits from this health and hospitals plan.

Some of those opposite interjected yesterday claiming that the budget goes up every year. That is not true, because for three years the capital program was actually lower. In fact, in 2012 the budget paper said, 'The capital program will be smaller than in previous years, reflecting the determination of the government to restore the state's financial position.' That is why in 2015 no new hospitals or hospital expansions were planned. Those opposite only delivered new hospitals planned and funded by the previous Labor government.

Now the choice for those opposite if they oppose our revenue measures is: what will they cut? If they come in here to support the one per cent of big businesses and the coal companies currently selling coal for \$900 a tonne, then they need to say what they will cut. Will the member for Toowoomba North let the Leader of the Opposition cut the Toowoomba Hospital? Will the member for Burnett let the Leader of the Opposition cut the Bundaberg Hospital? Will all of those Gold Coast members let the Leader of the Opposition cut the Coomera Hospital? If they cut \$1.2 billion of revenue for their mates at the coal companies and those multinational shareholders, then they have to cut those hospitals.

Budget, Taxation

Ms SIMPSON: My question is to the Treasurer. In the government's own report card on its 2020 election commitments, the 'no new or increased taxes for four years' promise has been marked 'in progress'. Will the Treasurer now give himself a fail mark for the government's broken promise?

Mr DICK: Thank you, member for Maroochydore, because I remember election costings very well. I remember what the LNP promised, including the Bruce Highway hoax and the fake Bradfield scheme. The member for Everton wants to talk about integrity. What about the biggest dam in the world they were going to build but then put in \$20 million?

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DICK: No, it was \$14 million—\$580 million short! Members opposite talked for a year about duplicating the Bruce Highway north of Gympie to Cairns. What did they put in their budget? Another \$20 million or so in their election costings. For the 'shadow minister for integrity', part of the shadow cabinet that perpetrated the greatest hoax on the people of Queensland, to be lecturing our government on integrity and promises, frankly, is embarrassing. Member for Maroochydore, the people of Queensland understand that elections are about the people.

Mr POWELL: I rise to a point of order on relevance under standing order 118(b). The question was regarding the government's election commitments report card and their ability to deliver on what they have said they will do. We have listened for a minute and a half. The Treasurer has a minute and a half left. I ask that you direct him back to the specifics of the question.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Glass House. The question was also borderline containing imputations, and I have been listening very carefully to the answer as well. I will allow the Treasurer to continue, but the point is well made. There is one minute and 30 seconds left on the clock.

Mr DICK: We have been absolutely consistent in everything we have done. We now deliver on an important parliamentary inquiry, one of the most important we have had, into mental health. We deliver, of course, on our promises and deliver a record investment in health care.

Tomorrow the Leader of the Opposition has his time to make a choice about commitments. Does he commit to revenue or does he commit to hospitals, because he cannot choose both? Does he commit to supporting an increase on overseas online bookmakers based in tax havens such as the Isle of Man, Malta or Guernsey? Does he support taxing them or does he support backing regional racing all across Queensland in terms of that \$125 million? Does he support an increase on the one per cent of Queensland companies that will pay it for mental health? Does he support that? Will he deny the most vulnerable people in our community living with the challenge of mental illness \$1.6 billion in funding? Leader of the Opposition and members of the LNP, the clock is ticking. The choice is yours: either back these revenue measures or sack health staff.

Budget, Revenue Measures

Mr KELLY: My question is of the Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment. Will the Treasurer update the House on how revenue measures in yesterday's budget will help all Queenslanders, and is the Treasurer aware of any other approaches?

Mr DICK: I begin by thanking the member for Greenslopes for his question. In particular, I thank him and members of the Mental Health Select Committee for their important and critical work on the report on the inquiry into the opportunities to improve mental health outcomes for Queenslanders. I thank the member for his work. I thank all members of the community who made submissions to the inquiry. Thanks to the work of this committee, yesterday I was able to announce the biggest ever investment into mental health services in Queensland history. I was able to announce a sustainable, ongoing way to fund that investment. It is a funding model that, as I said earlier, was welcomed by the Queensland chair of the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists, Professor Brett Emmerson, who said 'the Queensland government is serious about delivering the mental health services that Queenslanders deserve'.

Importantly, as I said yesterday, the people of Queensland will not pay one dollar of the revenue measures I announced yesterday. Big companies like Coles and Wesfarmers and big banks are going to pay for this. They should pay more for mental health services. Firstly, they should pay more because their massive profits mean they have the capacity to pay. Secondly, big businesses should pay more because we made no promises to them; we made our promises to the people.

Unfortunately, not everyone agrees. Both the LNP and the Greens political party want a lower tax burden on Coles, Wesfarmers and Telstra. They opposed the revenue measures in their statement of reservation in this important committee report. It is an absolute shame. I should not be surprised, but I am disappointed. Those opposite—the Greens political party and the LNP—have a choice to make. Do they support sustainable funding of mental health services or do they not want a lower tax burden on big business?

Ms Camm interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: The member for Whitsunday will cease her interjections.

Mr DICK: Do they support investment in regional hospitals or do they want that cancelled? Do they support proper funding of country racing—

Dr Miles interjected.

Ms Camm interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Treasurer, I apologise for interrupting you. Deputy Premier and the member for Whitsunday, you are both warned under the standing orders. The quarrelling will cease. I want to hear the Treasurer's response.

Mr DICK: Does the LNP support proper funding for regional and country racing or should we cut it? Tomorrow the Leader of the Opposition has to say what he will do. The Leader of the Opposition has to say what he will choose. The Leader of the Opposition can have a new royalties regime or a new hospital in Moranbah, but he cannot have both. The Leader of the Opposition can have a new royalties regime or a new Toowoomba Hospital, but he cannot have both. In his own backyard, the Leader of the Opposition can have a new royalties regime or a new Coomera Hospital, but he cannot have both. The challenge for the Leader of the Opposition is this: back these revenue measures or tell the people of Queensland what you will cut.

Mr SPEAKER: A reminder again that comments will be directed through the chair.

Budget, Taxation

Mr MICKELBERG: My question is to the Premier. Can the Premier guarantee her new and increased taxes on businesses employing nearly half of all private sector workers in Queensland will not lead to higher grocery or electricity prices during a full-blown cost-of-living crisis?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for the question. The member might want to go and have a little chat to the member for Clayfield because in their first budget they actually cut concessions. They cut concessions and then there was a public outcry so they had to backtrack. The member should go and have a look at these facts. New members are put up to ask these questions but they do not understand the history. They have no idea of the history.

Government members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right; Queenslanders would not have had the \$575 in electricity rebates because their plan was to sell the assets. Queenslanders would not have the health care they need because they sacked the nurses. We had to restore those frontline services.

Is the opposition saying that and they do not care about people with mental health issues? Just think about that for a moment. Is that what they are saying? The select committee handed down its report and we are asking one per cent of top companies to help Queenslanders who are going through a very tough time.

Mr Mickelberg interjected.

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

Ms PALASZCZUK: This is the same group of people who closed the Barrett centre and as a result people lost their lives. I met those young people and—

Mr Lister interjected.

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

Ms PALASZCZUK: They closed the one place they could go to for help. What did we do? We opened Jacaranda Place.

Mr POWELL: I rise to a point of order, Mr Speaker. I refer to standing order 118(b). The question was about the Premier's budget; it was not asking for an historical lesson on previous budgets.

Mr SPEAKER: I have been listening to the response. The Premier has been straying to some previous areas; however, she has come back to talk about the levy which I believe was at the heart of the question asked. It is also not helpful, members to my left, if I have to continually warn members and try to listen to the response to the question at the same time. That is why interjections are not helpful.

Ms PALASZCZUK: This budget is an historic budget because it is looking after the health of Queenslanders. Those opposite have been raising issues around health. Guess what? We have now delivered the biggest health infrastructure budget to deal with the growth in our hospitals.

Let me talk for a moment about the investment of \$943 million to replace rural and remote health facilities. Do those opposite not support looking at rural and remote health programs and building staff accommodation at Bamaga, Cow Bay, Normanton, Pomppuraaw, Tara and Moranbah? Does the opposition not support a new Toowoomba Hospital, a new Coomera Hospital, a new Bundaberg Hospital and a new cancer health centre? Does the opposition not support upgrades to Ipswich, Logan, Townsville, QEII and PA hospitals, delivering 2,200 beds? Does the opposition support this or not? That is the fundamental question.

(Time expired)

Ms King interjected.

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

Student Wellbeing

Ms HOWARD: My question is of the Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing. Can the minister update the House on the Palaszczuk government's continuing commitment to the health and wellbeing of Queensland students and is the minister aware of any alternative approaches?

Ms GRACE: I thank the member for Ipswich for her question. She knows that health and education are in Labor's DNA. That is what we are delivering in spades in this budget. We sit in here in question time week after week, but I have never seen the backbench look more forlorn.

Opposition members interjected.

Ms GRACE: Your backbench; those opposite—I have never seen them look more forlorn.

Honourable members interjected.

Mrs Gerber interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! That is unhelpful members. Member for Currumbin, you were on a warning. You have just interjected again. You can leave the chamber for one hour.

Whereupon the member for Currumbin withdrew from the chamber at 10.56 am.

Ms GRACE: It is great to see that I finally woke them up. Those on the LNP side have woken up. Do not point over to this side. Like you are trying to twist the words in your questions, do not twist the words spoken in this House. You know exactly who I am referring to.

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

Government members interjected.

Ms Grace interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Members to my right, I need to hear the point of order. Member for McConnell, you are warned under the standing orders.

Mr LANGBROEK: Mr Speaker, I ask you to rule on standing order 244(7). We are continually having ministers refer to us in the first person which is extremely inflammatory.

Mr SPEAKER: The point of order is a valid point of order. I have given guidance on that today on numerous occasions. It is for that very reason that we ask for comments to be directed through the chair. I will start naming ministers if that process is not followed.

Ms GRACE: It is lovely to see the member for Surfers Paradise finally on his feet making a valued contribution to this House. Wasn't it deep in value! We hear some statements in this House, but that has to top them. That was from the member for Surfers Paradise who, when he was education minister, did not employ the 500 teachers we needed to keep our classrooms going. As the former minister he put schools up for sale. Even the member for Everton had one of his schools up for sale. This is the same member who is now getting up in this House and talking about value statements. It was up to a Labor government to save each and every one of those schools. Under those on this side of the House, they are not for sale.

We are delivering for students in so many ways. They will all get the money that is in the budget spent in their electorates, as I have done in previous years. They will get their fair share, as we always deliver in our budgets. Our infrastructure budget in education since we have been elected has tripled—triple—since 2014. That is what we are delivering. I know that all of them want a new hall, a new school, new classrooms, new air conditioning. They want all of it, but they reject any way that we can pay for it.

(Time expired)

Coomera Hospital

Ms BATES: My question is to the Premier. The AMAQ says the Gold Coast alone is 500 hospital beds short right now. In what year will the first Queenslander be able to stay overnight in the new 400-bed Coomera Hospital?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Mudgeeraba. We are building a new Coomera Hospital. That is what we are doing. It is budgeted for in the budget papers. I am happy to go through all the hospitals we are building because it is very important.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr Dick: What have you built?

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right. The new Coomera Hospital will have 404 beds. We are investing \$1.3 billion. The new Toowoomba Hospital will have 118 additional beds and will cost \$1.3 billion. I think those opposite probably have not read those budget papers, so it is a good reminder today to go through it.

Mr Dick interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right. Those opposite are not building it. They did not build one single hospital when they were in office. Don't worry, Mr Speaker. I am happy to remind the Leader of the Opposition that this year marks the 10th anniversary and we are going to compare the pair. We are going to compare the 10 years of cuts, the selling of the assets and the broken promises—there were about 20 of them or more—to a budget that cares about the people of this state. It is this government that has delivered for the people of the Gold Coast—the light rail, the new train stations we are building—

Mr Dick: Gold Coast University Hospital.

Ms PALASZCZUK:—the Gold Coast University Hospital, the delivery of the Commonwealth Games. It is not the member for Mudgeeraba who is delivering for the people on the Gold Coast. It is not the member for Broadwater. Where are the new ideas from those Gold Coast members for the Gold Coast?

Mr Dick: Zero.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Zero. There are no new ideas from all of those MPs on the Gold Coast—and the member for Broadwater is the Leader of the Opposition. There are absolutely no new ideas there. Let me say very clearly: 2,200 new beds over the next six years.

Mrs D'Ath: There will be 70 on the Gold Coast next year.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right—70 on the Gold Coast next year as part of our accelerated works program, which is another 289 beds.

Ms BATES: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I rise on relevance under standing order 118(b). I asked specifically what year will the first patient be able to stay overnight at the Coomera Hospital on the Gold Coast.

Mr SPEAKER: Premier, I may not have heard a response to that, but I heard the point of order regarding relevance. I ask you to answer the question directly.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I will answer that question. It is \$1.3 billion—

Ms Bates: Year!

Ms PALASZCZUK: Just wait for a moment. It is \$1.3 billion. It takes time for planning and time for building, and it is going to be built within six years. It is a brand new hospital!

(Time expired)

Budget, Hospitals and Health Services

Mr RUSSO: My question is of the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services. Can the minister explain how the state budget will address pressures in the health system including long-stay beds in Queensland?

Mrs D'ATH: I can. It is in this document, for anyone who wants to spend some time looking at all of the investment we are making this year in the 2022-23 budget. Once again, I want to acknowledge the Premier for her leadership and the Treasurer for an historic record-breaking health budget for this year. It builds on our seven years of investment in health which has already delivered 1,350 extra beds, 13,000 frontline health workers and more than 1,100 ambulance workers.

What better example of our ongoing commitment in delivering new beds than the 26-bed medical ward opened at the QEII Hospital yesterday, representing \$12.1 million of investment. I have been sent a beautiful photo of 90-year-old Eric. Eric from Springfield was the first patient admitted to QEII's new ward 5A yesterday. I am told Eric received something of a rock star welcome to ward 5A. He was not expecting so much attention. His wife was commenting that they have spent a lot of time through his cancer treatment in and out of the QEII Hospital and about the amazing support they have had from the health workers there over many years.

We know that improving our hospitals also needs increased engagement from the Commonwealth. How refreshing it is to see the Albanese federal government stepping up to the plate on health care by extending the COVID national partnership agreement to the end of this year, committing an extra \$1 billion to transform Medicare, and identifying practical improvements to get long-stay aged-care residents and NDIS participants out of hospital and into more appropriate settings. That was done in one day. Two meetings on one single day addressed three of the things that every health minister across the country has been asking for. How hard was that! The Morrison government could not do it in nine years and the Albanese government did it in one day! It shows what we can deliver working together.

I want to acknowledge our great work with the long-stay rapid response unit, and this budget extends that funding into forward years. We have already ensured that 271 long-stay patients have been able to leave hospital, but we have over 500 still there. With cooperation with the federal government, not only will we free up beds that are desperately needed but we are going to improve the quality of life for those people who should otherwise be in home care, aged care or disability care. This is what good Labor governments do.

Aged-Care Facilities, Staffing

Ms BOLTON: My question is to the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services. Will the minister please advise how aged-care facilities on the verge of closure, due to an inability to get staff or an extension of Queensland vaccine mandates, will be assisted as a matter of immediate urgency as the federal Department of Health surge staff applied for are available only for outbreaks and staff shortages due to COVID sickness?

Mrs D'ATH: I thank the member for Noosa for her question. I understand the member for Noosa has been engaging with my office on this issue about aged-care facilities, particularly Carramar and Kabara, that have sought extensions of time for their staff to become compliant with aged-care booster mandates. Yes, when it comes to extensions and the surge workforce from the Commonwealth, it is for supporting aged-care facilities whose staff have had to isolate or quarantine during COVID as opposed to where staff choose not to get vaccinated.

Choosing not to get vaccinated in the aged-care sector is a choice. It is a choice made by those aged-care and health workers that they do not wish to get vaccinated. There are exemptions available for those who have contraindications who cannot get vaccinated because of health reasons, but we are not talking about those who get exemptions on medical grounds. We are talking about those who choose not to get vaccinated.

The requirement to get vaccinated in aged care, health and disability has been widely known for a long time. Boosters have been available for a long period of time. It is important. This is about the safety of our most vulnerable. The majority of people, sadly, whose lives are being lost right now are in aged care.

When I went to the RBWH with the Premier the other day to announce the cancer centre, one of the doctors said, 'We're still seeing people die in our COVID ward every single week.' Those health workers have to watch people die in isolation apart from their families every single week. We should not forget the impact COVID still has today, particularly on our elderly people in aged care.

I absolutely have sympathy for the aged-care facilities. The state government does not have the ability to exempt them. The mandates are a nationally agreed Commonwealth position and there has been sufficient time granted to those individuals. I know there is pressure on the workforce. We have pressure on our workforce. First and foremost, we have a responsibility to keep workers safe. It is a workplace health and safety obligation. Those private aged-care providers have a responsibility to everyone else who works there who is fully vaccinated to keep them safe. They also have an obligation to the residents and their families, the elderly people who are at those aged-care facilities who may contract COVID. We have to do everything to ensure we use the tools we have to keep people safe, and we know the COVID vaccine is that. I am happy to continue to work with the member for Noosa. This is an AHPPC decision and I stand by it.

(Time expired)

Police Service, Personnel

Mr WALKER: My question is to the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services. Can the minister please update the House on this government's commitment to police and supporting the mental health of Queensland police and whether the minister is aware of any alternatives?

Mr RYAN: The Queensland Health and Hospitals Plan and record health budget reflect the partnership with the Queensland Police Service. It is so good, I have two copies. There are very good partnerships between the Queensland Police Service and Queensland Health. We see it right across every community in Queensland. It is great to see a record health budget supporting the work of Queensland Health in partnership with a record police budget supporting the great work of the Queensland Police Service.

It was only last month in Townsville—and the member for Burdekin was there—that I was able to celebrate one of those partnerships with the permanent launch of the Mental Health Co-Responder program. This is a great initiative and great partnership between Queensland Health and the Queensland Police Service, providing better and more effective services to people in need. It means that those people in need get the support they need but also our emergency services and Queensland Health services are best used for the work they are employed to do.

When we talk about how we support our Queensland Police Service, we support them by giving them job security. This government has a very proud record of supporting our police—not only increasing the number of police but giving them job security. I did hear that the Leader of the Opposition got a bit of a frosty welcome at the Queensland Police Union conference recently when he was challenged about his record around job security for Queensland Police Service officers as a member of the Newman government. Of course we remember that when they were in government there was not much job security for the Queensland Police Service. In fact, we saw police officers sacked when they were in government.

Talking about the budget, I thought I would reflect on the last budget—hopefully the last budget ever—of the LNP when they were in government. In 2014-15 we saw the number of police personnel in the Queensland Police Service go from 15,200 to 14,000—a reduction of 1,200 FTE from the Queensland Police Service. That is no surprise, because the LNP has not seen a police officer they did not want to sack. They were even doing that to ex police officers.

Poor old Jim McDonald, the member for Lockyer, is up the back there. He keeps moving back. He will soon be on our side. That is probably no surprise, because he is a big supporter of our investment in the Lockyer Valley. Dan Purdie, the member for Ninderry, is moving back. He has been sacked. I found it really surprising, because I think the member for Burdekin wants to sack himself. On his last remaining social media channel, Twitter, the biography for Dale Last describes him as ‘the member for Burdekin, shadow minister for natural resources, mines and energy and shadow minister for North Queensland’. He has sacked himself as shadow police minister already.

(Time expired)

Gas Supply

Mr KATTER: My question is to the Premier and Minister for the Olympics. The Premier was part of the government that sold Queensland’s gas resources to foreign corporations without a gas reserve policy, destroying our local competitive advantage and strongly contributing to the current energy crisis. Will the Premier immediately direct the government to implement a proper gas reserve policy like Western Australia?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for the question. As we know, yes, the former government did set up the LNG export industry, and guess what? This government is determined to set up a hydrogen export industry. We will be looking at new opportunities for Queenslanders as we embrace more renewables in this country. Queensland will be at the forefront of the new hydrogen industry. The Deputy Premier recently went to Japan to help try and secure more jobs for Queenslanders in this new industry. In relation to a gas reserve policy, in fact we absolutely did do that when it came to the supply that was needed for some of our biggest industry users, which is exactly what we did. We secured those gas tenements for them.

Mr Dick: Twenty-thousand square kilometres.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Twenty-thousand square kilometres. As I have said on the record, Queensland is an energy rich state. Unfortunately, New South Wales and Victoria have failed to open up gas exploration for domestic use, so what happens is that our gas is exported. Western Australia is not connected to the National Electricity Market. They are separate. In fact, some people refer to them as another country.

In Queensland we have jobs in the gas industry, we have jobs in the coal industry and we have jobs in the renewables industry. There are going to be hundreds, if not thousands, of jobs coming our way in the new hydrogen industry as we embrace working with companies and countries that want to invest in Queensland’s green hydrogen, which will be exported for many, many years to come.

Health System, Investment

Mr HEALY: My question is to the Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement. Can the minister advise the House on how the Palaszczuk government’s public works expertise and procurement approach will deliver real value for our record health investment?

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, you have one minute to respond.

Mr de BRENNI: I thank the member for the question, because he knows the Queensland Health and Hospitals Plan will deliver jobs in his community. Through the \$250 million project the member for Cairns will see an additional 96 beds but, even better, 611 jobs for tradies in his community. At the Townsville University Hospital in the electorate of Mundingburra our procurement approach will see 1,276 jobs for local tradies in that community, delivering an additional 143 beds. The member for Mackay has secured new health facilities in her community too. Even better, our public works experience and our procurement policy will deliver 610 jobs for tradies in that region. In Hervey Bay an additional 35 jobs will deliver 100 jobs for tradies in that community. Better health services and more jobs for Queenslanders!

Mr SPEAKER: The period for question time has expired.

MOTION

Business Program



Hon. YM D'ATH (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (11.18 am): I move—

1. That a motion without notice to be moved by the Leader of the House in relation to the 2022 estimates process and time frames be completed within 30 minutes of being moved;
2. that all remaining stages of the Personal Injuries Proceedings and Other Legislation Amendment Bill be completed by 6.55 pm on Wednesday, 22 June 2022;
3. that the Revenue Legislation Amendment Bill be completed within one hour and 30 minutes of the minister having finished his contribution in reply; and
4. if all stages of the bills listed in 1. and 2. have not been completed by the specified times in 1. and 2. respectively, Mr Speaker:
 - (a) shall call on a minister to table any explanatory notes to their circulated amendments, any statement of compatibility with human rights or any statement relating to an override declaration
 - (b) shall put all remaining questions necessary to either pass that stage or pass the bill without further debate
 - (c) may interrupt non-specified business or debate on a bill or motion to complete the requirements of the motion
 - (d) will complete all stages required by this motion notwithstanding anything contained in standing and sessional orders.

I want to thank the member for Sandgate, Minister Hinchliffe, for attending the Business Committee meeting yesterday on my behalf. At the Business Committee meeting the Personal Injuries Proceedings and Other Legislation Amendment Bill and Revenue Legislation Amendment Bill were discussed. In addition, the procedural motion regarding estimates which has been moved in previous years was flagged to be moved by myself as Leader of the House during this week's sitting.

Members will see from the motion circulated that the Personal Injuries Proceedings and Other Legislation Amendment Bill has been allocated the remainder of today if required, with the question being put no later than 6.55 pm tonight just before the adjournment. Members will also see that the Revenue Legislation Amendment Bill, which was introduced by the Treasurer as part of the budget bills yesterday and was declared urgent via a motion agreed to unanimously by this House, has time parameters for consideration in detail. This bill is part of the Palaszczuk government's budget bills, which also included the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill and the Appropriation Bill, and will be debated this week.

All members of parliament will be afforded the opportunity to address the cognate debate of the budget bills. It is important that all members of parliament are afforded this opportunity to talk about the budget and how the Palaszczuk government's record budget, including record health budget, supports their communities and the people of Queensland. We will not guillotine the debate on the appropriation bills, unlike when those opposite were in government and the member for Clayfield came in and replied to the budget without affording all members of the opposition with the opportunity to address the budget. That is why all members will be able to discuss the budget during the second reading.

As we know, the appropriation bills go off to the estimates committees and then we will have up to 1½ hours to debate the consideration in detail stage of the revenue bill. This time frame was derived by looking at past practice. There will also be a motion moved to allow up to 30 minutes to debate the establishment of the estimates committees, which I am sure will be an entertaining and enthralling debate for those opposite.

With those short remarks, I look forward to the support of the House for this motion. I look forward to hearing the speeches of all members this week on the Palaszczuk Labor government's budget for all Queenslanders, which includes a record health investment for Queenslanders.



Mr POWELL (Glass House—LNP) (11.21 am): Whilst members of the opposition are very supportive of the usual conventions around a budget sitting week and the debate on the Appropriation Bill, it will disappoint the Leader of the House to hear that we will be opposing this motion based on two aspects of the motion she just moved. The first one I want to speak to relates to the motion that will be put forward by the Leader of the House in relation to the 2022 estimates proceedings. Yes, when that debate comes it will be entertaining and it will be informative, but it will be the only opportunity we on this side of the House get to address aspects to do with those committees—such as the length of time the committees will actually sit and what allocation of time will be afforded to each minister who appears before the committees.

Over the last six years, we have heard issues around protection—not only in terms of the allocation of time given to the ministers but in terms of protection given by the chairs of the committees. Those concerns have not just come from members of the opposition; members of the media and the

broader community have raised concerns around the operation of the committee process in respect of the appropriation bills in this House. Many very informed practitioners of parliamentary process have also raised concerns about how those committee hearings are undertaken. The structure of those committee hearings—the allocation of time, the ministers who will appear, who else will appear, the types of questions that can be asked and the government interference within those processes—will literally be debated in that 30 minutes and that will be the only time this House will have to debate that. Thirty minutes is simply not long enough for those on this side, and I suspect the crossbenches as well, to challenge those allocations within those committee hearings.

The other aspect I want to address is the guillotining of the consideration in detail debate of the Revenue Legislation Amendment Bill. I heard the Leader of the House mention that she went back and looked at historic practice around this. I would like to go back to my first budget in 2009. The bills that were debated alongside the Appropriation Bill then had to do with asset sales. I recall after a very long sitting week—where we sat well into the early hours of Friday morning and we then continued into Friday night and Saturday morning—we debated at length consideration in detail around the sale of Queensland's government owned corporations such as Queensland Rail, Forestry, Ports. Who sold them? The Labor government did, when the Premier was a minister, when the Treasurer was a minister and when the Speaker himself was a minister. That is when those assets were sold.

We were quite happy to stay here as long as it took to ensure that Queenslanders had input into that consideration in detail. In fact we sat until four o'clock on that Saturday morning. We would have sat longer but for the practice that is also occurring now. Back then it was the members for Rockhampton and Sunnybank—ministers Schwarten and Spence—who came in here at 4 am and literally guillotined that debate.

We on this side of the House are very happy to stay as long as it takes to debate in this instance a bill that has come as a surprise to all of Queensland—not just businesses, not just mining companies, not just that one per cent that the government keeps referring to. Mind you, it is that one per cent that employs nearly 50 per cent of all private sector employees in this state, it is that one per cent that often sells our groceries or our electricity and, as was asked during question time, it is that one per cent that potentially will see greater cost-of-living expenses imposed on all Queenslanders. It is those kinds of things that we in the opposition and I suspect the crossbench as well want to unpack during consideration in detail on the Revenue Legislation Amendment Bill. We are quite happy to repeat 2009. We are quite happy to sit very late on Thursday night to ensure that every member of this House gets their opportunity and gets their 15 minutes—

Mr Watts: Democracy is served.

Mr POWELL: I take that interjection from the member for Toowoomba South—so that democracy is served and everyone gets their 15 minutes on the Appropriation Bill. When that is concluded and those bills are sent off to the estimates hearings, we should then debate in detail the Revenue Legislation Amendment Bill. That does not need to be guillotined. That is not a long bill. The clauses can be unpacked during consideration in detail. Indeed, the LNP will be unpacking and challenging aspects of those. We do not want that part of this debate to be guillotined, and therefore we will be opposing this motion.

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (11.26 am): I see the member for Glass House but I hear the member for Kawana. Not much has changed on the other side. This motion is put up as an orderly and modern way of organising business in the Legislative Assembly. If you had listened to the member for Glass House, you would have thought that all the issues were about the chairs. I recall that when the member for Glass House was my shadow he was at times one of the most aggressive and least respectful members when it came to people chairing the estimates committees. He can complain all he likes but I remember his record. He is not pure as the driven snow on that one, and he is smiling at me right now because he knows I am right.

I am not going to take up a lot of time here. We need to get on to substantive issues. It is disappointing to see the opposition continue this silly tactic to chew up time in this House. They say that debating time is valuable and that they are being guillotined, yet they always chew up this 20 or 25 minutes trying to allege some sort of conspiracy of anti-democracy when this is standard procedure in parliaments right across this country and in fact right across the Westminster system.

It is a case of the opposition needing to prioritise their speakers. I have been in here many times and have heard opposition speeches that are almost identical. They dust off the notes and they want to get their little speech up, but we hear the same thing six, seven or eight times by the end of the bill. That is not enhancing democracy; that is not even enhancing debate. That is laziness. The opposition

need to prioritise their speakers, as any decent opposition would do. They clearly are afraid of their own backbench and of having a bit of discipline and a bit of backbone because they are obviously beholden to them.

I endorse the motion moved by the Leader of the House. This is normal parliamentary business. Let us not waste more time on procedural, arcane machinery and let us get on to real debates on substantial matters.

 **Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (11.28 am): I rise to oppose this motion. I just heard the Minister for Transport describe administrative motions as supporting some inane or arcane process to suggest that a gag is somehow acceptable. It is only this Labor government in the history of the Queensland parliament that has had a standing gag that has limited debate across the parliamentary sitting week. The transport minister might think that is good practice. We think it is lazy practice. It is a government that is afraid of scrutiny. It is a government that is so arrogant that it thinks listening to dissenting voices is an inconvenience.

We have been elected by the people of Queensland, too. We have been elected to come into this parliament and speak on their behalf. The Labor ministers may not like it, but our people have a right to be heard as well.

Let's talk about this gag motion that we are debating and opposing. It puts a gag on the Revenue Legislation Amendment Bill and allows only an hour and a half for this broken Labor promise to be properly scrutinised. This is a broken Labor promise where they are introducing new taxes and increased taxes. One of the things about this lazy Labor government is they do not like to allow time not only for debate but also for consideration in detail where members can ask questions about clauses and ministers have to answer. I can tell members of this House that if you were to look at what has happened since this standing gag, this guillotine motion has been repeatedly put in place, there are very few instances of consideration in detail; there is very little opportunity to ask ministers questions about specific clauses in bills. As a result, we have ministers who are not across their briefs and are never asked questions because debate is shut down by these sorts of motions, and then inevitably we see a few months later—

Mr Watts: They come back in!

Ms SIMPSON:—as with the Minister for Industrial Relations and the Minister for Racing, they come back in and have to amend it because they have mucked it up. It has not only caused a lazy government that is intolerant of different voices but also resulted in ministers who are not across their briefs and has resulted in legislation which is not only poorly drafted but also put into this House without the opportunity for ministers to explain clause by clause what it means.

There is a lot of detail in this Revenue Legislation Amendment Bill. As my colleague, the member for Glass House and Leader of Opposition Business alluded to, there is the issue of the appropriation. All members will get an opportunity to speak in regard to the budget component, but the issue of the estimates and also the limitations on being able to speak and to ask questions in estimates has become quite ridiculous. We are going to have 30 minutes to consider the program which has been put together by the government and we are being asked to support the time frames that they suggest for those various portfolios. However, what we have seen happen within the estimates process has been an abuse where Labor chairs have allowed the running down of the clock with legitimate questions being asked of ministers, and it has been an abuse. The arrogance of this government has no bounds. We want to hold this government to account, but they do not want to answer questions. They do not want to be open to scrutiny, open to transparency of the people, and they hate coming into parliament and listening to voices that dissent from their own.

I want to pick up on something that the Treasurer said earlier, because it is relevant to this debate about this motion, where he tried to defend the indefensible about misleading people about the increase in new taxes that this Labor government is bringing in. He said there would not be any and now he says, 'Oh, well, businesses should have known. They campaigned against us.'

Mr BAILEY: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The honourable member is no longer speaking to the procedural motion. She is now on substantive issues that are extraneous to this debate and I ask you to make a ruling.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Lister): I have been listening closely. I believe I have afforded a degree of latitude to both sides, but I would ask you, member for Maroochydore, to be mindful of the motion being debated.

Ms SIMPSON: This motion talks about the Revenue Legislation Amendment Bill which the Treasurer tried to claim was not a broken promise, but then went on to basically outline why he was introducing revenue taxes for businesses that did not agree with them. This is an extraordinary government. It cannot handle dissenting voices, so it gags them in this parliament. It does not like dissenting voices in the community. Not only do they tell deliberate mistruths about increasing taxes, but they then get revengeful. No wonder public servants are worried for their jobs when they are bullied by this government and their revenge culture.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Before we proceed, I have taken advice from the table and, member for Maroochydore, I am advised that there was some technically unparliamentary language in your description of the government. I ask you to withdraw, please.

Ms SIMPSON: I withdraw.

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

AYES, 48:

ALP, 48—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, Kelly, A. King, S. King, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Madden, Martin, McCallum, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Walker, Whiting.

NOES, 32:

LNP, 29—Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Camm, Crisafulli, Hart, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister, Mander, McDonald, Mickelberg, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, O'Connor, Perrett, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Stevens, Watts, Weir.

Grn, 1—MacMahon.

PHON, 1—Andrew.

Ind, 1—Bolton.

Pairs: McMahon, Frecklington; Pease, Crandon; Tantari, Nicholls.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Speaker's Ruling, Unparliamentary Language



Mr SPEAKER: Earlier, whilst I was not in the chamber, I understand that there was some concern around the use of the term 'lazy' and there was a withdrawal requested. Just to be clear, my ruling is the use of derogatory terms must apply to a person, not a party or a broader body, in the same way that someone cannot take offence to the use of any terms related to their party or the government. Hopefully that provides some clarification to the House.

PERSONAL INJURIES PROCEEDINGS AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from 21 June (see p. 1535), on motion of Ms Fentiman—

That the bill be now read a second time.

Ms BUSH: Mr Deputy Speaker—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Lister): Before I call the member for Noosa, I will remind the House of the members who have been warned under the standing orders this morning. They are the members for Kawana, Toowoomba North, Mudgeeraba, Glass House, Broadwater, Nanango, Chatsworth, Woodridge, Whitsunday, Murrumba, Buderim, Southern Downs, Pumicestone and McConnel. I call the member for Noosa.

Ms BUSH: Mr Deputy Speaker—

Mr BROWN: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I note that the member for Cooper still has four minutes remaining to contribute to the debate.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will take some advice. Take your seat, please. I thank the member for his point of order. I had already called the member for Noosa and I will give the call at the next opportunity to the member for—

Ms GRACE: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. With all due respect, I do not know whether the member for Noosa actually sought the call. I thought the member for Cooper was on her feet, if you would like to seek clarification.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I recall the feeling that the member was seeking my call at the time. Does she no longer seek my call?

Ms BOLTON: No, I was following the sheet and did not realise the member for Cooper had not finished. That is all.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I thank the member for Noosa. Member for Cooper, my apologies. You have four minutes to continue your contribution.

 **Ms BUSH** (Cooper—ALP) (11.42 am), continuing: Following on from my speech yesterday, the final point I want to make is about the final reform in the bill in relation to terminal benefits payments that are payable to an eligible worker with a terminal condition under the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Act. The lump sum terminal benefits enable workers to secure appropriate medical and palliative care and support and allows them to attend to the financial needs of their family and their dependants. These types of financial compensation schemes recognise that workers who have suffered an injury in the workplace, like silicosis or asbestosis, really do not have the time or the energy to be pursuing common-law damages for negligence where that has contributed to their terminal condition.

Two concerns arose from the consultation about this during the committee proceedings, the first being the proposed retrospective application and the second being the imposition of a three-year eligibility period. A number of submitters suggested removal of the retrospective application with the proposed commencement date being a future date so that the provision operates prospectively and not retrospectively. The date most commonly suggested was 1 July 2022, and we have incorporated this feedback into recommendation 3 of the report.

Further, I understand that considerations will be made during the passage of the bill that do reflect submitters' concerns regarding the proposed eligibility date of three years. It is my hope that this will bring a sense of relief to those affected by this proposal. On that note, I am pleased to commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms BOLTON** (Noosa—Ind) (11.43 am): There are a number of aims, as we have heard, of the Personal Injuries Proceedings and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022 including to stop claim farming for personal injury and workers compensation claims as well as preventing any undesirable costs agreement practices by law practices for personal injury claims. It also sought to confirm the policy intent for when an entitlement to terminal workers compensation arises under the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Act 2003, which I spoke about in my dissenting report, and to make technical and clarifying amendments to the Electoral Act 1992 relating to fundraising contributions and state campaign accounts and disclosure concerns.

Firstly, I turn to the claims. Most submitters, including the Australian Lawyers Alliance—the ALA—and Maurice Blackburn, supported measures to curtail claims farming and the principle of expansion of current legislation. However, submitters noted that the new provisions need to be workable at a practical level and not impede access to justice. I will speak further on this later in relation to the law practice certificates.

Many submitters raised concerns in relation to abuse survivor claims, otherwise awfully known as survivor farming. What disgraceful terminology that is. These practices were highlighted by survivor advocacy organisation knowmore, which noted behaviours that extend beyond cold calling in the targeting of these abuse survivors to sell their personal information. Observed as having the potential to be particularly reprehensible was the evolving business of survivor farming in relation to institutional child sex abuse survivor claims.

One survivor reported to knowmore about an unsolicited phone call from a survivor advocacy business that breached the survivor's confidentiality. This was due to the disclosing of the survivor's status as an institutional child sex abuse survivor to their family member, who took the call and who was previously unaware of the survivor's experience of childhood sexual abuse. This is just one really sad example amongst the many that were shared during the inquiry into this bill.

In 2019 the Motor Accidents Insurance and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2019 was enacted to stop claim-farming for compulsory third-party claims. Whilst successful, the MAI amendment act was limited to CTP claims. This was because at the time claim farming was only perceived to be an issue in that area. Consequently, it has become necessary to expand claim-farming prohibitions into other

areas. Secondly, the bill aims to combat undesirable cost agreements and billing practices by reportedly disreputable law practices through a number of avenues, as outlined by the minister, which currently exist in the area of speculative personal injury matters.

Overall, during the inquiry submitters on the issue of claim farming and related activities unanimously condemned the practice, noting that 'claim farming is abhorrent, brings the profession into disrepute, threatens the viability of our insurance schemes and causes unnecessary distress to potentially vulnerable members of the community'.

Thirdly, I turn to the law practice certificates, which is a certification approved by the Legal Services Commissioner in an effort to reduce the incidence of claim farming. Essentially, LPCs require law practices acting for claimants to declare that claim farming has not occurred in relation to the claim. The bill requires an LPC be given at various stages of an injury claim to claimants, the WC insurer, respondents and respondents' insurers. My Legal Affairs and Safety Committee noted its concerns about the complexity of the LPC regime as proposed and made a number of recommendations. The majority of the committee also recommended that the obligation in relation to common-law damages claims is to provide one certificate to the Legal Services Commission at or shortly following the law firm being retained by the client in respect of a damages claim.

Even though the minister has notified members of amendments regarding the need to streamline, they do not go far enough to ameliorate the deficiencies. Current problems will continue to exist as there is still a focus on the claims procedure instead of the relationship between a law practice and a claimant. The proposed amendment should be redirected to focus on the latter because it is the retainer of a law practice by a claimant that creates an opportunity for claim farmers to profit. A more practical solution would be to require a law practice to give one single, uniform law practice certificate per claimant to a single regulatory authority. This would decrease the administrative burden placed on practices and regulators, negate the problem of siloing and clarify the mission of the relevant regulatory authority.

It is essential that these issues be addressed by the working group formed by the three regulators over the coming months. With the last-minute amendments and the bill brought forward without notification on the *Notice Paper*, it was impossible to provide reassurance around the proposed amendments to obtain the support for the amendments that are required. This, again, demonstrates the flaws in our system. I table the draft amendments so that the department and the working group have them going forward.

Tabled paper: Personal Injuries Proceedings and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022, draft amendments by Ms Sandy Bolton [904].

We need a consultation process to be designed and commenced quickly. I also urge the government to engage fully with the two peak lawyer groups, the ALA and QLS, as they were closely involved in the formation of the CTP anti-claim-farming laws yet they have reportedly not properly been engaged to date on this bill and the changes needed and recommended by my committee.

Fourthly, the bill will make technical and clarifying amendments to the Electoral Act 1992 concerning the new political donation caps that are scheduled to commence on 1 July 2022. These amendments address issues regarding the implementation of the caps identified by the Electoral Commission concerning fundraising contributions that may be deposited into a state campaign account and how the ECQ will monitor compliance with the caps, particularly in relation to electoral committees.

Lastly, I come to the component of the bill in relation to entitlements for terminal workers compensation. As a committee member, this was the first time I had ever done a dissenting report, which was against recommendation 1, to pass the bill with recommendations, as there was no recommendation to amend the time frame for a terminal payout from three to five years, which was sought. As I outlined in my dissenting report, this is about human beings—not dollars. Using the sustainability of the scheme, without appropriate analysis, as a rationale to traumatise Queenslanders who are dying through their efforts for us all, was unacceptable. I thank the minister for responding to this and rectifying, through amendments, not only the time frame but also the retrospective nature of it.

To finish, I thank the committee chair, fellow committee members, the secretariat, the departments, ministers, all submitters and those who attended the hearings. Most of all, I want to thank one Noosa constituent, a firefighter who is dying as a result of saving lives over so many years. Your story brought forward not only tears but also the reality of where this bill was flawed. I thank you for having the honesty and strength to share with me.

 **Ms LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (11.52 am): As per the Register of Members' Interests, I have current proceedings regarding a personal injury claim. Despite it being declared on the register, out of an abundance of caution I rise to declare this to the House.

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (11.52 am): I rise to speak in support of the Personal Injuries Proceedings and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. The bill includes important reforms to protect vulnerable Queenslanders from predatory claim farmers and ensures workers with latent onset injuries facing terminal diagnosis receive support through the workers compensation scheme at the time they need it most. I thank the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee and its chair, the member for Toohey, for their work regarding the consideration of the bill, for their consideration of the public submissions and for the conduct of public hearings.

I am pleased to announce that, as a consequence of this bill, Queensland will be the first workers compensation scheme to legislate against the activity of claim farming. We have listened to the evidence. I can honestly say that I think everyone was alarmed by what was going on. This is definitely a step in the right direction. It prevents these types of activities from occurring. It makes sure that lawyers do not use the information that can be harnessed from cold-calling vulnerable workers injured through no fault of their own. I thank the Attorney-General for introducing this bill. We have seen success in relation to the Motor Accident Insurance Commission and we are hoping that we now can stamp out this insidious type of activity.

Every worker deserves to return home each and every day safe and sound. One of the Palaszczuk government's key priorities is to ensure robust work health and safety and worker protection laws. As we know, workers compensation is beneficial legislation for injured workers and their families. Since its election in 2015, the Palaszczuk government has restored all of the rights and entitlements stripped away by the previous LNP government. They did that in just three years, yet they come into this House and try to lecture us on workers compensation for injured workers. It is an embarrassment for them.

Mr Power interjected.

Ms GRACE: I take the interjection of the member for Logan. They did a number of things, but the threshold they applied to accessing common law was the most unconscionable. This resulted in almost 6,000 of Queensland's most vulnerable workers being targeted by the LNP and denied access to common law. That is their legacy. When we enact beneficial legislation relating to emerging dust lung diseases, they sit on their laurels.

Mr Krause interjected.

Ms GRACE: The member for Scenic Rim can talk all he wants. He was in this House when these changes were made and he should be ashamed of himself. I am proud that the Palaszczuk government reinstated these rights. We have improved compensation to support workers with coal workers' pneumoconiosis and other work related dust lung diseases. We have also enacted presumptive workers compensation laws for the firefighters whom the member for Noosa spoke about. Presumptive legislation that gives rights to people with specific forms of cancer was enacted by our government. There have been improvements in support for workers suffering from psychological injuries. We removed the definition of 'injury' that prevented people claiming and we provided presumptive legislation for first responders suffering from PTSD. I note that the member for Caloundra is in the House. I will never forget when he reached over and said, 'That changes the lives of people.'

In relation to the onset of terminal conditions, these are unique provisions. Workers are able to access a lump sum payment of up to \$750,000 to provide for palliative care and additional support that is urgently needed. No other scheme in Australia offers an equivalent provision. This is unique to Queensland. In 2005, when I was the general secretary of the QCU, we introduced this measure because of how long it often took for workers to settle their common-law activities. We put in a period of time of two years for them to access this.

In 2018 we saw the recurrence of a number of dust lung diseases. Silicosis in the engineered stone benchtop industry emerged, as did other dust lung diseases such as coal workers' pneumoconiosis. We took decisive action and led the nation in our response to dust lung diseases in terms of workers compensation. I would not mind so much if those opposite understood what these amendments are about. This is about recognising that stonemasons, including young workers in their

30s and 40s, were coming forward. Previously, workers with asbestosis and mesothelioma were much older because of the latent onset of these dust lung diseases. It soon became apparent that we needed to extend the two-year time frame. The policy intention was always three to five years; we used that as an example.

We wanted to test it, because with beneficial legislation you do not want workers being paid out a lump sum earlier than they should be, because once they have been paid out they no longer have claim to WorkCover. You have to get the balance right. We tested how the legislation would operate with a policy intention of three to five years. There was a decision made that was not in line with the intention of the policy. The concern was not only the strain on the fund but also that workers could be denied ongoing compensation because they are issued a lump sum sooner than they need to be because they are driven by certain advice.

We went through the parliamentary process. We heard the submissions. WorkCover looked at the claims history and at the cost. We have listened to what people have said and have decided that the policy intent now can extend to five years. I thank the member for Noosa; the chair of the committee, the member for Toohey; and the members of the committee who spoke to me. It is about trying to get the balance right. You do not want to go too soon and you do not want to go too late.

Members opposite talk about issues that they obviously do not understand. No worker will be denied a lump sum. This is a matter of timing, not of denial of a lump sum. For them to get up and say otherwise totally exposes their lack of understanding of this amendment. This is a sensitive issue; this is an issue on which we have listened. Those opposite have never introduced one ounce of beneficial legislation to injured workers and I will not be lectured to by them. This is a great step in the right direction. We have listened to the concerns.

I commend to the House the amendment to include the five-year time frame. We have listened and have achieved a great balance. I will not be lectured to by members opposite. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Ms Grace, adjourned.

Sitting suspended from 12.00 pm to 2.00 pm.

PERSONAL INJURIES PROCEEDINGS AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed, on motion of Ms Fentiman—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Ms KING** (Pumicestone—ALP) (2.00 pm): I rise to make a brief contribution in support of the Personal Injuries Proceedings and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. The objectives of the bill, as we have heard, are to stop claim farming for personal injury and workers compensation claims; to prevent unethical and harmful costs agreement practices by law practices for personal injury claims; to clarify when an entitlement to terminal workers compensation arises under the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Act; and to make technical and clarifying amendments to the Electoral Act regarding fundraising and state campaign accounts and disclosures. I turn to the aspects of this bill designed to put an end to the abhorrent and unethical practice of claim farming in personal injury and workers compensation matters. These reforms of course follow on from our groundbreaking measures to prevent claim farming in relation to claims under Queensland's motor accident insurance scheme in the Motor Accident Insurance and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2019.

Claim farming, as we have heard, is the practice of approaching individuals thought to be eligible to make a compensation claim, often by cold-calling or doorknocking them, and soliciting or inducing them to make such a claim. The bill before the House will prohibit giving or receiving compensation for referring claims and undermine even the potential for claims referral practices under workers compensation and personal injuries schemes. The bill goes further in prohibiting the practice of personally approaching or contacting a person for the purpose of getting them to make a claim or soliciting or inducing them to make a claim. These measures are important because the committee heard repeatedly about the high-pressure sales techniques used by claim farmers, often involving

unsolicited contact and often involving the harassing of potential claimants over long periods of time to wear them down. Claim farmers are known to imply that they act on behalf of government or insurers, and they may also seek to deliberately confuse potential claimants by misrepresenting the speed, ease or financial outcomes of a claim. I myself received unsolicited text messages following the recent floods in relation to insurance claims which I had not lodged, so it is my view that claim-farming practices are also intimately linked with scamming practices more broadly.

Claim farmers do not necessarily adhere to ethical or professional practice standards as to privacy and confidentiality, and therefore some cases have involved profoundly inappropriate disclosures of sensitive and personal information, whether that is somebody's illness, their terminal condition, their injuries or the fact that they have been potentially a victim of abuse. Claim farmers may hold themselves out as an advocacy or support service that can connect people with medical treatment or psychological services, and then they go on to profit by selling that potential claimant's personal information to a legal practitioner or claims management service provider which then prosecutes the claim. This has such troubling outcomes.

We heard that referral fees are invariably passed on to claimants as costs or disbursements from any eventual settlement or payout. The committee heard of such referral fees amounting from between \$9,000 and \$14,000 out of a person's settlement—a vulnerable person's settlement in many cases. Any prospect of high-quantum litigation can attract bottom feeders and charlatans who seek to financially exploit ill, injured or harmed people. Tragically, of course, that exploitation is often attempted when potential claimants are at their most vulnerable following their diagnosis with a terminal condition, following on from an accident or, worse, when they have possibly after many years finally reached the point of disclosing they are a survivor of institutional abuse.

I was particularly concerned to hear about the practice of survivor farming, often self-described as survivor advocacy. It is a profoundly distressing example of this kind of exploitation. Providing very little, if anything, in the way of actual advocacy, these self-appointed consultants pose as survivor advocates, in some cases to attempt to gather the names of people who have experienced compensable abuse, and their methods can stoop very low indeed. The committee heard, as other members have mentioned, of survivor farmers paying for information from prisoners about their fellow inmates, and of course other members have spoken about a really horrifying incident where an unsolicited cold call was made to a survivor's family member and in the course of that cold call the fact of that survivor's abuse was disclosed to a family member who was hitherto unaware. Nothing could be more disgraceful, nothing could be more unethical and few things could be more exploitative than some of these practices. So-called survivor advocates gather people's details and sell them on, thereby attracting a commission payment undisclosed to the survivor without ever advising that free services may be available to these survivors of abuse.

Submitters to the committee were universally scathing about these practices, noting that they bring the legal profession into disrepute, they reduce people's trust in those who are meant to be there to support them following disclosure of an illness, injury or abuse and that they threaten the ongoing viability of important insurance and compensation schemes. From harassment, intimidation and high-pressure tactics, claims farming exploits injured, sick or traumatised Queenslanders experiencing distress and uncertainty, and I could not be more pleased that we are putting an end to these practices. Queenslanders who are injured, who are ill or who have been harmed deserve so much better than these practices, and this bill will deliver.

I acknowledge those who made submissions to the committee, particularly in respect of matters addressed by the circulated amendments relating to terminal illness lump sum compensation payments. The RTBU, AMWU and Maurice Blackburn Lawyers all spoke clearly and honestly about what they saw as the impact of the originally proposed changes which limited the payment of terminal illness lump sum benefits to workers diagnosed with a terminal condition to those expected to pass away within three years.

I was fortunate to substitute in on the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee for a hearing that was largely around these issues, and the submitters provided really thoughtful and considered contributions. I particularly acknowledge the Australian Lawyers Alliance, which addressed its very strong submissions primarily to the clauses of the bill that would have rendered some terminally ill workers who had previously lodged end-of-life lump sum compensation claims ineligible until later in the course of their disease progression.

The work of the committee and the impact of those submissions stands testament to the value, effectiveness and importance of our committee system in this place. Members opposite like to claim on occasion that our committee system is ineffective, but I note this bill provides an example of legislation that a committee examined closely, heard from stakeholders about their concerns, made recommendations based on that feedback and ultimately saw significant amendments. I see that as part of the strength of our committee system and something to be proud of. I acknowledge the work of the committee, particularly the member for Toohey but all members, and of course the secretariat. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (2.09 pm): I rise today to speak in support of the Personal Injuries Proceedings and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. As all members who have preceded me have done, I acknowledge the bipartisan work of the committee that put this bill together. It is a great example, as the member for Pumicestone and others have acknowledged, of a bill where the committee worked well together and made good recommendations. The result is this fantastic piece of legislation. I acknowledge the members of the committee by name: the committee chair, Peter Russo, the member for Toohey; Laura Gerber, the member for Currumbin; Jonty Bush, the member for Cooper; Sandy Bolton, the member for Noosa; and Jon Krause, the member for Scenic Rim.

Earlier this year the committee invited stakeholders to make submissions. It received almost 20 submissions. The submissions that were received came from groups including the Bar Association, the Insurance Council of Australia, the Queensland Law Society and the Legal Services Commission, to name just a few.

The objectives of the bill—and there are a number of them—are in essence: to stop the practice of claim farming for personal injury and workers compensation claims; to prevent undesirable cost agreement practices by law firms for personal injury claims; to make technical and clarifying amendments to the Electoral Act 1992 relating to fundraising contributions and state campaign accounts and disclosure returns; and to confirm the policy intent for when an entitlement to terminal workers compensation arises under the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Act. I particularly acknowledge, as we have heard earlier today, the good work of the committee in this space and how it worked together.

For the few of us in this House who are unfamiliar with it, claim farming is a process by which a third party, the claim farmer, cold-calls or approaches an individual to pressure them into making compensation claims for personal injuries. The tactics they use, as the member for Pumicestone said, are in a lot of ways quite closely related to scamming. I think that is a timely analogy because we are talking about preying on vulnerable people, preying on people who have been through a traumatic or life-changing incident who need our protection, and I think this legislation provides that. They are targeting people when they are at a low point in their life when they need to be protected from insidious and unscrupulous behaviour. That is exactly what this legislation aims to do.

To give examples of the kind of behaviour we are talking about, the claim farmer can imply that they act on behalf of government agencies or insurers, they can offer an inducement or they can just plain harass individuals to make a claim. Often they will use an inducement like a quick, easy or significant form of compensation. They may even offer to help coordinate that person's medical treatment when we all know it is very unlikely that anything of the sort is on offer. Claim farmers will then sell the individual's personal information, which often includes traumatic details about that person's life which for good reason needs to be protected and kept private.

Earlier today we heard some horrendous examples of people who have had information they disclosed to a claim farmer disclosed to family members. I cannot imagine anything worse than having my personal business disclosed because I have trusted someone at a low point in my life. It is really sad to think that happens, but it does. That is why we are passing this legislation today. That information is sold or passed on to a legal practitioner or another claims management service provider who then handles the claim. We heard from the members of the committee what having that information revealed looks like in terms of the long-term damage it can do to people and the lifelong impact that it can have on a person's mental health and wellbeing.

I will move now to amendments related to the Motor Accident Insurance and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2019. The bill is seeking to extend the prohibition to halt the same phenomenon for WorkCover. The bill will prohibit the giving or receiving of consideration for claim referral or even the potential for claim referral. It will also prohibit personally approaching or contacting a person for the purpose of making a claim or soliciting or inducing them to make that claim. We heard from members

of the committee that submitters to the committee universally condemned this practice. Nobody spoke out in support of it, and for very good reason, as I think we know: it brings the profession into disrepute, it threatens the viability of insurance schemes and, of course, it causes great distress to potentially vulnerable community members, to say nothing of the distress I imagine it would cause to the legal fraternity, to have these issues brought up in this way.

In some cases we have heard that harassment of potential claimants has gone on for a long time—for a full year. When a person is at their lowest ebb I cannot overemphasise how that would impact somebody's mental health and wellbeing. We may have people who never had any intention of making a claim pushed to the nth degree and making a claim simply because they want to get this person off their back. I can easily imagine that might happen. These amendments, with the provisions surrounding law practice certificates, will reduce incidents of claim farming.

The bill has also sought to make changes around terminal conditions as they pertain to WorkCover. As I said, I commend the committee on its good work in this space and on working together. Terminal benefits were first introduced to the WorkCover scheme back in 2005. Lump sum benefits quite rightly enable workers to secure appropriate medical and palliative care and allow them to attend to the financial needs and future planning of their family. We know that when you are in that space of life almost everyone's thoughts will be on how they can secure their family's legacy—planning for the future of their family when they are no longer there.

This scheme allows workers to seek common-law damages if negligence has contributed to their terminal condition. It specifies that a condition is terminal if it is certified by a doctor as being a condition that is expected to terminate a worker's life within three years after the terminal nature of the condition is diagnosed. It is fair to say that this was the subject of a fair amount of submission and feedback from a number of submitters: the Queensland Law Society, the AMWU and the United Firefighters Union. The committee was able to come to a good place in relation to those recommendations and ensure that the bill will bring much relief to many of those people who spoke so eloquently. I know the member for Toohey is pleased with the changes that were made through the committee process. As I said, I commend the committee for its work on this bill. This is a great example of a committee working well together in a bipartisan fashion. Members who had the opportunity to sit in on the process and participate, such as the member for Pumicestone, found it to be an engaging and important piece of legislation to be a part of. It is wonderful that we have the opportunity to speak on this today.

I finish by commending the secretariat. The Legal Affairs and Safety Committee deals with a fulsome body of work. It is a very busy committee. It does an excellent job in the pieces of legislation it brings before the House. I thank the committee and the secretariat for this most excellent piece of legislation. I am very proud to speak in favour of it on behalf of people who will be affected by this legislation, in particular those who are terminally ill and the victim survivors who will no longer be subject to the insidious practice of claim farming. I think this bill is a win for Queensland. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Scenic Rim—LNP) (2.18 pm): The LNP is not opposing this bill. I will comment primarily about the changes to the terminal illness compensation arrangements. In doing so, I reflect on the journey these provisions have been on to get to where we are today, taking into account the amendments to be moved by the Attorney-General.

First, in 2019 the Minister for Industrial Relations changed these provisions to remove any prescribed time period within which a terminal illness was expected to cause the end of a worker's life in order to access compensation for a work related terminal illness diagnosis. This was of course welcomed, especially by those impacted by such terminal illnesses and their families. Previously, there had been a prescribed period of two years in such a case. However, it seems that back then the minister failed to appreciate what should have been an entirely foreseeable consequence; that is, if limits on applications were removed there would be a greater call on the financial resources of the funds that are utilised to make compensation payments for those impacted by terminal illness. As the explanatory notes to this bill allude to, there are impacts on the workers compensation scheme from such changes. It is expressly stated that the bill is aimed at protecting the financial sustainability of the scheme, which indicates that the present situation may be unsustainable. Therefore, when this bill was introduced by the Attorney-General it contained provisions to reinstate such a prescribed time frame.

The bill before the House, unamended, contains a three-year time frame. In addition, that time frame was to be imposed in respect of work related terminal illnesses resulting from events dating back to 31 January 2015. Having listened carefully to evidence in the committee process given by unions

and others, the impression I gained was that this would have the perverse and disgraceful effect of eliminating compensation claims already in the system if they were outside the time frame set out in the bill as it originally stood. During the committee process, which many members have spoken about, the committee heard significant evidence from stakeholders, including unions—the very people members in the government and the Labor Party are meant to represent—about the huge amount of stress this would cause for people impacted by the bill as it stood. I note that the bill has not been amended yet; it stands as it was introduced.

I ask: how could the government have got it so wrong? How did such a provision in a bill get through cabinet? Was nobody paying attention that day? It just shows how tone-deaf those members opposite are when it comes to these types of provisions. By removing the prescribed time frames in 2019, the government opened the way for more claims to be made in respect of a particular terminal illness. However, when they figured out that the legislation they had implemented—and that allowed the decision made in the case of Blanch—was simply not sustainable in the longer term, they changed tack. In this case, they did so in a careless manner.

The amendments foreshadowed by the Attorney-General fix these issues and again extend the prescribed time frame to five years; however, I heard the angst caused to those impacted by the original bill. It is a terrible shame. In fact, it is hugely reckless that the government did not address these issues from the outset and save those impacted by the stress of it all. Here we are now, with the amendments circulated by Attorney-General removing the retrospectivity and legislating a period of five years in respect of these types of compensation claims. These amendments fix mistakes that should never have been made if the government were truly on the ball and knew how to deal with such a sensitive and financial matter for Queensland workers. That applies on two counts. It applies in respect of the 2019 amendments that must have been inadequate and poorly constructed, because they are being changed, and also the original draft of this bill. As the member for Clayfield said, what a shemozzle. A quick definition of shemozzle is a state of chaos and confusion and a muddle. That perfectly sums up the actions of the government in respect of this legislation and these provisions.

Earlier I heard the comments of the Minister for Industrial Relations on this matter. I say to the minister that I will not be lectured to by her about the treatment of workers suffering terminal illness in this case. She made feeble attempts to compare these changes to reforms made by the LNP in respect of common-law claims. That is laughable. There is simply no comparison with those changes, which limited claims in respect of injuries where there was less than a five per cent permanent impairment. I am told by solicitors I know that that could be something like a fractured limb that has not healed properly and causes ongoing pain or disability or both. There is simply no comparison between that and the provisions that have been amended in this bill which were amended in 2019 and which the government got wrong. For the minister to claim there is some comparison reeks of desperation. No LNP government sought to retrospectively remove a right to claim from the workers compensation scheme like this bill in its original form did. As far as I can recall, no LNP measure removed a right to compensation under any statutory scheme like WorkCover. In fact, our amendments were about strengthening WorkCover and ensuring its sustainability into the future.

Mr Power interjected.

Mr KRAUSE: You will have your go, member for Logan.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Lui): Member for Scenic Rim, through the chair.

Mr KRAUSE: Member for Logan, I just spoke about the common-law claims.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Through the chair, member.

Mr KRAUSE: There is no comparison between common-law claims and claims made under a statutory scheme, as we are dealing with in this bill. One deals with terminal illnesses and the other deals with five per cent impairments. As I said, an example of that could be a fracture that does not heal properly and leaves ongoing pain or disability. There is no comparison between those two things. For the Minister for Industrial Relations to stand over there earlier today and make that claim is appalling. In my years in parliament, the only measure I can recall that retrospectively removed a right to compensation under a statutory scheme is in the bill before the House right now. That is the minister's fault. I think that by trying to throw mud this way she protests too much.

In relation to the amendments proposed by the committee in respect of legal practice certificates, I note that the government have indicated they are not accepting those amendments. I feel for the member for Toohey and other members of the committee who worked to put together those

amendments. To have such experience in the legal system and to work collegiately to put together proposals that appeared to strengthen and make better the provisions in relation to legal practice certificates only to have them disregarded by your own party must be very disappointing. As I said at the outset, the LNP will not be opposing this bill, but we need to reflect on the journey that the provisions in relation to terminal illness compensation have been on and the complete debacle in terms of their handling by the Minister for Industrial Relations.

 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (2.26 pm): I rise to support the Personal Injuries Proceedings and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. I note that the Economics and Governance Committee, under a former name, did some work on claim farming. At this point we should acknowledge that the first person to recognise these issues and bring them into an Australian parliament was the former treasurer of this House, Jackie Trad. Often we hear people, especially those opposite, trying to besmirch the career of the former member for South Brisbane. However, in understanding and thinking about the impact of matters to do with insurance claims, she did excellent work in bringing those issues to this House. She was the first minister to bring these issues to an Australian parliament. Let us not forget that genesis. That these matters have now gone throughout parliaments throughout Australia is a legacy of Jackie Trad and a testament to her care and compassion in thinking about the impacts on ordinary people.

I want to limit my comments to the amendments to the Personal Injuries Proceedings Act to prohibit claim farming. We have heard ample evidence thanks to the excellent work of the committee. I recognise the committee and its erstwhile chair. They have real knowledge about the legal process and the impacts of these issues. That is not my area of expertise so I do not intend to speak about that.

However, while I am not a lawyer I do think about those who are impacted by these practices. I want members to imagine someone who receives, out of the blue, a cold call from a stranger asking them about the worst period of their life. That person might have been in the midst of the afternoon routine, preparing dinner while their kids are tugging at their sleeves and demanding attention. Instead of being in that warm family situation, a stranger cold-calls to drag them back to a point in their lives when they were hurt. Maybe that person is a childhood sexual abuse survivor who is suddenly drawn back to the moment when they were betrayed. Often such a betrayal comes from an elder or someone in a position of trust. In some cases, the betrayal comes from within a person's faith community.

From evidence given to the committee, in some cases they had not told—and it is their choice and their power to make these declarations—their workmates, parents, partners or children. For some getting these calls out of the blue, they would not have told a single soul in the world. It was a secret that they dealt with in their own time and place.

This was not a discussion, as we hope it is, with services that really have a knowledge of these things or with someone who is trained, trusted and has dealt with how people hurt in this way face up to these issues. They are also not with someone who is purely on their side supporting them. Instead, they are being cold-called out of the blue by a stranger, simply interested in reading a script to get a lead. It is about a cold and calculating financial decision not in the interests of those whom this society has hurt the most. I think that everyone in this House recognises that we have to take action to prevent this.

We are deeply disappointed that those who went from being injured—and Jackie Trad dealt with them—when travelling to work in a car accident—have been even more severely betrayed by this insidious practice. Sometimes we need to recognise this. If I can be political here, sometimes on the other side they want to cut regulation by the kilogram. Instead, we need to recognise that sometimes even this most trusted of professions, the legal profession, needs some regulation. I recognise that all those in the legal profession who appeared before the committee agreed that they did not want to see anyone in their profession undertake these acts. They supported the regulation and universally condemned this practice.

For that reason, I reflect that we are dealing with real people who should not against their will be dragged back to the worst period of their life. Let it be on their terms that they come to services that support them and let them get the financial support they deserve for the betrayal they faced.

We note, as I said, that there is claim farming. For those listening, we can define that as the giving or receiving by a process, of a potential claim that could come under the Personal Injury Protection Act or section 325 of the WorkCover legislation. When someone personally approaches or contacts the person for the purposes of making a claim or soliciting or inducing them to make a claim,

that is when this would be enlivened. This makes sure that it is not about contacting those giving support, because those are the people we trust to do the right thing, but they should not be reaching out to them for the purpose of making a claim or soliciting them to make a claim. I recognise Kare Lawyers said it best when they said—

... claim farming is abhorrent, brings the profession into disrepute, threatens the viability of our insurance schemes and causes unnecessary distress to potentially vulnerable members of the community.

I credit them because I think that well sums up the fundamental view of the legal profession.

We also want to see those who have been injured and qualify for this compensation use this avenue, if they wish to, on their own terms and in their own time. I think everybody in this House would have sat down with somebody who is a survivor—and ‘survivor’ is the right word—of childhood sexual abuse and would know that it affects every person differently. It is not our place to judge how they deal with that but to be there as a support. This practice undermines the very fabric of that in terms of it being on the survivor’s own terms.

Of course, too often claim-farming practices target those who are most vulnerable at probably their most vulnerable time. We also know that it adds an expense that is taken out of their claim. It seems a process that hurts them is taken further with the injustice of high costs that take away from what truly belongs to those who have been hurt. We want to see this practice stamped out. We also want to say clearly to those legal firms which are going to engage in any further process that we will act. We, along with the entire profession, recognise that the unsolicited dragging out of claims for any sort of compensation is not the right way to go. It brings the profession into disrepute. It is quite easy to say that you will set standards to stop your law firm or practice from engaging in these practices and, further, that you will also bring to the attention of any of us in this House, especially the Attorney-General, any practices that are seen going forward, because we will support the legal profession by increasing the integrity of the profession by ensuring that those potentially making claims will not be subject to the harassment, intimidation and high-pressure tactics that we heard of during committee considerations.

With that, I support the bill. I note, of course, that my declaration of interest shows my wife’s work at the Industrial Relations Commission. That was highlighted by the member for Clayfield.

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (2.36 pm): I rise to speak in support of the bill. One of the reasons I want to do that is because it really does strengthen the provisions against claim farming. It has been an eye-opener to read the minister’s introductory speech, the explanatory notes and the report to find out more about this insidious practice being perpetrated on some people within our communities.

In reading these, I was led to a place of reflection on where we are in society today in reference to claim farming as we experience it. Many of us do experience some part of that. I am sure that we all know the scenario: we are having dinner at night, the late afternoon or the early evening and the phone rings, most often on a landline—if you still have one—but sometimes we get those calls on the mobile phone. We do not know which number it is. It could be a relative, ‘Better answer it just in case.’ We hope it is no-one trying to sign us up for something or trying to get money off us. I do not know about many of you, but I seem to be constantly disappointed these days because most of the time it is not someone I want to talk to. It might be someone trying to convince you to sign up on another electricity plan, maybe it is someone holding an imaginary parcel for you, or maybe it is someone who wants to talk to you about your claim for a recent car accident or potential flood damage as the member for Pumicestone pointed out. This is interesting. For me, these calls come from Melbourne at the moment. I am not sure what the legislation is down there. As the member for Logan said, we in this state are leading. I surmise that perhaps other states are yet to catch up and that cold callers are avoiding the Queensland law as it will become.

It lets us reflect on what kind of society we live in. When we were growing up, the telephone was still a pretty special invention that helped connect us to our loved ones. It was not an instrument used to harass or to chase money out of us. It is a sad situation that we are in today. It also leads me to reflect that I have an 11-year-old son and that we are trying to teach him about how to handle money, how to build up lifelong, good financial habits. One of the things we are teaching him—and this may reflect our political beliefs—is that working-class people have to constantly be on the lookout for other people trying to separate them from their hard-earned wages. That includes gambling. Do not get sucked into pointless and mindless consumerism.

Mr Brown: Oi!

Mr WHITING: I may be on the wrong track in that case—that pointless consumerism does not have a place.

Mr Brown: Gamble responsibly.

Mr WHITING: We are back on gambling. My apologies to the gamblers in the room. We are teaching our son to be aware of strangers who use fear to try to extract money from people. We are teaching him that people who will try to separate him from his money, like claim farmers, may contact him online or by phone.

We have heard it said often today—and we cannot repeat it enough—that claim farming is an abhorrent practice. We know that it causes distress to vulnerable people. We know that it is not going to deliver the outcome that many people hope it will. Often the canvasser will promise the world but the claimant may be left with a pittance at the end. As we have heard, this undermines the effectiveness and robustness of our insurance system.

Claim farming is abhorrent because the claim farmer can use high-pressure sales tactics such as, ‘You need to do this or you will miss out’ or ‘Do this because time is running out.’ That is a sales technique we have all been exposed to. Claim farmers may imply that they are working on behalf of government agencies. That is a common technique that we have all seen scammers use.

Listening to this debate and from doing the reading for this speech, what I find particularly abhorrent is that it is not only people who have had a vehicle accident or flood victims who are targeted but also victims of institutional abuse who are targeted. The thought of claim farmers trawling through lists or databases to find and target people who have been victims of institutional abuse I find especially abhorrent. I note from members’ speeches that many of us feel the same way about this particular practice.

I applaud and support the provisions in this bill because it means that no-one can pay claim farmers for the details of potential claimants. It means no-one can approach or contact another person to solicit or induce them to make a claim. It also limits the undesirable billing practices we heard about during the hearings on this bill. Some practices may inflate disbursements through the charging of additional amounts. That increases the legal costs that can be charged. From now on those additional amounts will be treated as professional fees instead of disbursements and that will increase the amount a successful claimant can receive. That stops claim-farming referral fees being included as disbursements in the final tally when these cases finish.

I applaud the minister for introducing this bill. I am pleased that our government is pivoting and addressing the new business model that evolved after we acted on claim farming and introduced the Motor Accident Insurance and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2019. That bill targeted claim farming around compulsory third-party claims. As I said, I think that has been successful. We have now seen claim farmers move on to claim farming around personal injury and workers compensation claims. This bill expands the prohibition on claim farming to that market.

I started off by saying that I am trying to teach my children financial literacy and to be aware of people who are trying to separate them from their hard-earned money. I am also trying to teach them about fairness. We live in a society where if a person suffers injury through negligence, malpractice or malice we have a system where they will be treated fairly. We have a system where they will not be revictimised. As Queenslanders we are a society where people will not be left behind.

This bill embodies the notions of fairness and equity that animate many of us in government. I believe the notions embodied in this bill are at the core of what we do as a government. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Mr SMITH** (Bundaberg—ALP) (2.44 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Personal Injuries Proceedings and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. As outlined, the objectives of this bill are to: stop claiming farming for personal injury and workers compensation claims; prevent undesirable costs agreement practices by law practices for personal injury claims; confirm the policy intent for when an entitlement to terminal workers compensation arises under the Workers’ Compensation and Rehabilitation Act 2003; and make technical and clarifying amendments to the Electoral Act 1997.

This week many of us are keen to speak about the budget and we will no doubt be hearing a lot about how it is a Labor budget that looks after those who are vulnerable. This bill also aims to protect the vulnerable people in our community. At the end of the day, at the core of the Labor principles and

the union movement principles that our great party was formed on is making sure we take care of vulnerable people. Sometimes it is done financially and other times it is done through legislation such as this.

I thank the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee for their work. I note the work of the member for Toohey who leads this committee. I have sat in on this committee once and I know that he is a passionate legal mind and dedicated to those core principles—

Mr Russo: I thought you would never forgive me; I would not let you ask a question.

Mr SMITH: I will not take that interjection, member for Toohey. His dedication to the legal rights of Queensland is second to none.

It is said that money is the root of all evil. In the pursuit of money some people will almost sell their soul. Such pursuits come through the terminology of claim farming. Claim farming is the approaching of individuals or institutions via cold calls, emails, personal approaches and many more ways in our ever-changing world of modern technology. They imply that they act on behalf of government agencies or insurers. They often use harassment techniques on vulnerable people in the pursuit of money. They collect personal information and then onsell it to a legal practitioner. This bill will achieve its objectives by removing the financial incentive to engage in claim farming and also prohibit a person from personally approaching or contacting another person to solicit or induce them to make a claim. We heard this from the many submissions to the committee. We have heard members give examples of claim farming.

We have heard the word abhorrent used quite a lot in this debate. To think that there are individuals or institutions out there that see dollar signs above the survivors of child sexual abuse, the word abhorrent is not enough. It is absolutely disgusting that there are people whose pursuit of money is more important than humanity and that they have targeted people who have endured the most horrific experiences a human being could face. Just because the incident happened years before does not mean that those people do not see it every time they close their eyes. I hope that those who have engaged in this form of claim farming are watching this debate. I hope that they are squirming. I hope they feel uncomfortable. I hope they feel sick to their stomach as we shine a light on the practices that they have engaged in in the name of money and show their lack of humanity.

We had a submission from Beyond Abuse which advocates for survivors of child abuse. They spoke about how victims are exploited in four different ways. In their submission to the committee, Beyond Abuse stated—

First they are exploited by the abuser; second they are exploited by an institution (in cases of institutional abuse); third they are exploited by legislation and legal processes which until post-Royal Commission have consistently failed to meet the needs of victims—

as I mentioned, this is a Labor bill making sure that we are there to protect the most vulnerable—

and fourth, they are often exploited by their own lawyers who may engage in practices such as:

- trapping victims in unfavourable 'no win no fee' agreements ...
- advising the client to settle for an inappropriately low quantum so the law firm can close the matter and guarantee payment for the law firm;
- charging oppressively; and
- entering into deals where the defendant pays more to the law firm in 'costs' than is paid to the victim as actual damages.

We also had a submission from knowmore, and I know that they have been quoted a few times throughout this debate. They practice a trauma-informed approach. When they advocate for the survivors who come to them, they understand that those survivors are dealing with trauma. It is that trauma-informed approach that allows knowmore to work with survivors and empower them to make informed decisions—not just decisions but informed decisions—about which legal options they choose to pursue. That trauma-informed approach is so important.

I know that many of us in this chamber come from many different walks of life. There are those who have served on the front line as police officers, ambulance officers and paramedics. There are those who have seen horrific things on work sites. In my role as a teacher I have seen the effects of child abuse. I have seen the effects of child abuse on students whom I have taught and I have seen the effects of child abuse on parents whom I have engaged with who are still struggling with that abuse in trying to get their kids to school and making sure that they have the books and uniforms they need.

You know when there is a pressure situation or anxiety or when a parent may not feel as though they can pay for an excursion. You see that trauma start to come out in something as simple as a conversation between a teacher and a parent. Imagine how that must be for people who are being constantly harassed in the pursuit of money by these claim farmers. Again, I hope they are watching every single part of this debate. I hope they think about those children whom I have taught who have been abused and the parents of some of those students who were abused as well. I hope they feel sick in their stomach, in their throats and in every single part of what is left of their humanity, if there is any left. To quote knowmore's submission, in speaking of a survivor, they say—

- One survivor complained to knowmore about the receipt of an unsolicited phone call from a survivor advocacy business. This involved the business breaching the survivor's confidentiality by disclosing their status as a survivor of institutional child sexual abuse to family members taking the call who, until then, were not aware of the survivor's experience of childhood sexual abuse.
- One client was sent a cost agreement by a law firm, being unaware of ever having been in contact with that firm. It is believed that an acquaintance of our client gave their name to a survivor advocacy business, which in turn passed our client's name on ...

When it comes to claim farming and 'survivor farming', as it is also known when it deals with institutional child sex abuse, I reiterate that this bill will protect our vulnerable people in our community. I commend all of those who have taken on this effort—all of the committee members and the minister—to ensure that we are prohibiting such an insidious form of pursuit of money, as I said before.

I will touch very quickly on working related onset injury that results in a terminal condition. Again, as a Labor government we should do everything we can to ensure that we are providing the best outcomes for those in such vulnerable situations. I know the effects that a terminal illness because of a work related injury such as asbestosis can have on somebody. My grandfather passed away in such circumstances. He lived a full life, but he suffered for the last 20 years of his life with what asbestos had done to him. He worked as a carpenter. He worked as a boat builder. In the last two weeks in the emergency department at Hervey Bay when I was there I heard every single last gasp and how much his lungs had failed him at the end of his life and were not enough to deal with what was a virus in the end. I commend all of those who work in the pursuit of protecting our most vulnerable people in Queensland.

 **Mr SULLIVAN** (Stafford—ALP) (2.54 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate in support of the Personal Injuries Proceedings and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. We as a government want to strengthen the protections of Queenslanders, protecting them from the worst sorts of predatory behaviour—and this legislation delivers just that.

Queensland will be the first jurisdiction in Australia to introduce explicit claim-farming offences for a workers compensation scheme. The coverage of the amended scheme prevents the workers compensation scheme from becoming unregulated when it comes to claim farmers. This builds on the strong underlying and fundamental support from the Australian Labor Party for a strong, sustainable and fair workers compensation scheme over many years. It is a legacy of Labor reformists. It requires continued vigilance against attacks, particularly from the LNP at both federal and state levels. We on this side will continue to stand up for workers, especially when they are at their most vulnerable.

This bill delivers the following: lawyers will be required to certify that they have not engaged with a claim farmer for the claim when one is made, settled or when a new practice is retained after a claim has been made; these changes will ensure claimants are not overcharged for legal costs, including certain associated fees and charges in relation to speculative personal injury claims, including clarifying those that can be classified across different criteria; the bill will require law practice certificates to be completed and provided by law practices representing a claimant at various points throughout that personal injury and workers compensation process; and, unlike previous attempts from those opposite, this legislation ensures that we will not limit the rights of genuinely injured Queenslanders.

This is in strong contrast to the so-called reform that the LNP rammed through under the Newman-Bleijie-Crisafulli years, when it came to Queensland's workers compensation scheme. They kneecapped what is the best workers compensation scheme in the country. Apart from attacking the prospects of injured workers, the only achievement those opposite could claim was forging a broad and unique coalition of people who vehemently opposed the reforms. I am talking about, yes, the union movement. I am talking about the Law Society and legal practitioners. I am also talking about members of the LNP's own policy council—Splatt, I believe his name was, who came out in public and ripped up his party ticket in disgust at what those opposite did.

I am not casting aspersions on all of those opposite. In fact, I would like to commend the member for Coomera. It is not my usual practice, but those who were around at the time will know that he was chair of the committee tasked with doing in-depth analysis of the workers compensation scheme. He worked with the late Tim Mulherin, the now Speaker, Curtis Pitt, and others and with stakeholders and prepared reasoned, evidence based recommendations—not all of which I agreed with, but he put them forward genuinely.

What did the member for Kawana do? He took one look at it, threw it in the bin and introduced alternative legislation the next day and rammed it through without another committee hearing. That is what they did. The member for Coomera, for his hard work, was sent to the backbench and not given a chairmanship ever since. That is their approach to workers compensation, particularly the approach of the member for Kawana and those opposite who support him and support that approach in promoting him as their deputy.

I would also like to touch on some of the other elements of this bill, particularly when it comes to the reforms of the Electoral Act. These are sensible, practical changes to assist the administration of good electoral law reform undertaken by this government. As the explanatory notes point out, this is at the reasonable request of the ECQ in terms of their administration of this new regime.

I recognise the work of the Electoral Commission of Queensland and the enormous job they do not just on election day every four years but for the ongoing work in administering the electoral system, including donation transparency, every week of the year. That transparency is so important to an open and modern democracy. The LNP members, including the member for Clayfield and the member for Kawana, have attacked these changes to electoral reform.

Let's compare our record when it comes to transparency and the electoral system. The LNP raised the donation threshold to such a degree that, with CPI increases, any person could walk in to a member's electorate office with \$12,000 in cash, hand it to a member of parliament, and nobody would have to know about it. That is not an exaggeration. You could walk in with \$12,000, hand it to a member of parliament and you would not have to tell a soul. That is their record.

What we have done in government is reduce the disclosure threshold and capped it at \$1,000. We have introduced real-time disclosure, leading the nation. We have banned property developer donations, which were identified as a key risk for corruption, and we have placed fair and equitable limits on spending and donations which strike the right balance both in terms of policy and constitutional issues that other jurisdictions have not been able to land.

In his contribution the member for Clayfield showed that he has learned nothing. Not content with his legacy in sacking public servants when treasurer, he now attacks them even while in opposition. Yesterday the member for Clayfield said—

This is a bill that the entire resources of the Department of Justice and Attorney-General could not get right ...

He went on to say this is a bill that the entire resources of the Office of Industrial Relations could not get right. This member, who is putting himself forward as the alternative attorney-general, not wanting to rest on his history of sacking public servants is now criticising the very people he seeks to lead. I do not know how he puts himself forward as the alternative attorney-general when he comes in here and attacks the independent statutory office holders at the ECQ who requested these changes, the officer holders in the Department of Justice and Attorney-General who would deliver any reforms he would request, let alone the drafters and other workers at the OQPC who deliver all of the work that we in here vote for in any given week. The absolute disdain that the member for Clayfield, his front bench and the LNP more broadly hold for public servants and professional advice is there for all to see in black and white.

The member for Kawana also then went on to try and criticise the Attorney-General for moving amendments in relation to the IR elements of the bill with absolutely no reflection on his own record. Like the time Jeff Seeney, the then member for Callide, on a totally unrelated bill—I think it was state development—had to suck it up and undertake the task of withdrawing the industrial relations laws of the member for Kawana. Why? Because they were not just ideologically extreme; they were found by the courts to be unconstitutional. The member for Kawana let poor old Jeff do his dirty work for him. I am not usually one to have sympathy for Jeff—

Mr HART: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance. This is all very interesting but it has nothing to do with the bill.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Martin): I apologise, I was just conferring with the Clerk. I would ask the member to continue, but make sure his comments are relevant.

Mr SULLIVAN: I am responding directly to contributions on this very point. I am not one to have sympathy for Jeff, as I said, but it was painful to watch. This was even before so-called 'Operation Boring' had come into effect. Imagine having an entire party strategy based on an individual not saying anything in public. Imagine that person not being allowed to say anything, and imagine that person actually being the attorney-general at the time.

Mr HART: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance. This has nothing to do with the bill.

Mr POWER: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. We have heard extensive debate about the process of how these bills were put in place. This is merely responding to—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Logan. I will get some advice on the member for Burleigh's point of order.

Member for Stafford, you did begin your contribution by rebutting statements of the members for Clayfield and Kawana. You have been doing that quite a bit. You have one minute and 50 seconds left. I ask that you come back to the long title of the bill.

Mr SULLIVAN: Every time those opposite, including the member for Burleigh, back the member for Kawana as their deputy it shows they have learned nothing. In relation to these electoral law changes the member for Kawana specifically used the term 'form of modern gerrymander'. As someone whose parents marched against the extremes of the Joh years and as someone with deep respect for the reforms of the Goss government and the massive changes it brought to this state, I find it utterly and deliberately offensive to use that term. It shows that the member for Kawana has no regard for history and no understanding of this state and his own party.

In summary, this government continues to deliver for Queenslanders. This is decent, responsible reform. We are delivering for Queenslanders, especially working Queenslanders, when they are at their most vulnerable. I want to thank the Attorney for bringing this reform to the House. I want to thank the chair and committee members for their report and bringing this legislation to where it is today. As everyone has reflected, they deal with really sensitive, meaningful issues that affect Queenslanders at the most difficult, vulnerable times of their lives. We need to do everything we can to stand by them in those times. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr BROWN** (Capalaba—ALP) (3.05 pm): From the outset I make the declaration that I received a gift of legal services from Hall Payne Lawyers. My understanding is that I am not required to declare this under the standing orders with regard to this bill, but in the interests of being open and transparent I make that declaration before my contribution.

Ms Fentiman: It is a great firm.

Mr BROWN: It is. I will take that interjection. I rise today in support of the Personal Injuries Proceedings and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. This bill makes sensible and commonsense changes to support Queensland workers. It addresses a range of issues Queenslanders currently face when dealing with the process of personal injury or workers compensation claims, including cracking down on the practice of claim farming. Claim farming is the process by which a third party, a claim farmer, cold-calls or approaches an individual and pressures them to make a compensation claim for personal injuries. This claim farmer uses high-pressure and deceptive tactics to gain the individual's information and have them agree to submit a claim. They often lure individuals with carrots such as promises of fast, easy and significant compensation. In some cases, they will even offer to coordinate their medical treatment.

It sounds too good to be true, and that is because it often is. There is a big catch. Once these claim farmers have your personal details they sell that information to a lawyer or claims management service to handle the claim. These speculative claims can result in false promises, misinformation about rights and entitlements, impose significant costs on defendants and their insurers, and potentially increase insurers' premiums. In 2019 we introduced legislation to put an end to the increasingly prevalent practice of claim farming of compulsory third party claims. Unfortunately, it has become clear that claim farmers have adapted their business model and moved on to other types of claims, particularly workers compensation claims. We are introducing these changes to close this market off.

This bill will ban the practice of cold calling and coaxing people into making a claim. It will also make it an offence for anyone to pay claim farmers for someone's personal details or receive payments for a claim referral. There will also be obligations on legal practitioners who represent injured clients to

show they have not paid for their claim from a farmer. Of course lawyers will still be able to inform people of their rights and entitlements at law and advertise and promote their services, but this bill aims to stop harassing and intimidating behaviour which in many cases targets the most vulnerable in our community. This bill will also make Queensland the first jurisdiction in the country to introduce explicit claim-farming offences for the workers compensation scheme and prevent the scheme from becoming an unregulated avenue for claim farmers.

I also want to touch on the amendments relating to terminal compensation. The government will seek to amend the reinstated time frame to five years into the definition of a terminal condition. This is consistent with the policy intent of the 2019 amendment and provides an additional three years for claims. It is important to note that workers who have already received terminal compensation will not be impacted by this amendment.

I also point out that the proposed amendment does not prevent workers from accessing terminal compensation; instead, it confirms when the entitlement arises. This ensures terminal compensation is accessed when most needed by workers in the end stages of life and protects the sustainability of the scheme for all workers who may need it. The key purpose of the workers compensation scheme in Queensland is to balance between the provision of fair and appropriate benefits to injured workers and their dependants and maintaining reasonable insurance costs for employers. These amendments, in my view, strike the right balance.

Finally, the bill makes some clarifying amendments concerning the new political donation caps that are scheduled to commence in July. Those in this House know that the Palaszczuk government has been a leader in this space. This government introduced caps on political donations and electoral expenditure to ensure that election campaigning is done on a level playing field—so that cashed-up egos cannot buy their way into parliament.

Mr Hart interjected.

Mr BROWN: I am toying with the idea about taking that interjection, but I will go on. How did that campaign turn out for Clive? We can all breathe a sigh of relief that we have a reprieve at long last from the visual affront of Clive Palmer yellow, not to mention the cringe-worthy jingles.

The bill clarifies that a fundraising contribution that may be paid into the state campaign account is limited to an amount of \$200 without being subject to the political donation caps. The bill also amends disclosure return requirements for gifts to registered political parties and candidates. It will be a requirement that a disclosure return for these gifts specifies whether the gift is a political donation. For political donations given to an electoral committee established by a registered political party, it will also be a requirement for the disclosure return to state the relevant electoral district. This additional information will ensure that the Electoral Commission of Queensland can effectively and efficiently monitor compliance with the political donation caps.

The amendments in this bill make practical changes that continue the Palaszczuk government's proud record of supporting Queensland workers as well as enhancing transparency and compliance of our nation-leading electoral donation and disclosure rules. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr DAMETTO** (Hinchinbrook—KAP) (3.12 pm): I rise to give my contribution on the Personal Injuries Proceedings and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. From the outset, I will say that the KAP will not be opposing the bill. The objectives of the bill are to stop claim farming for personal injury and workers compensation claims; prevent undesirable costs agreement practices by law practices for personal injury claims; and confirm the policy intent for when an entitlement to terminal workers compensation arises under the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Act 2003. I want to speak to the fourth objective of the bill, which is to make technical and clarifying amendments to the Electoral Act 1992 relating to fundraising contributions and state campaign accounts and disclosure returns.

I acknowledge what the member for Capalaba said about the Clive Palmer sea of yellow that we have all been subjected to in previous election campaigns, so I understand why the state government has introduced this legislation to put caps on that. However, the legislation does two things. It erodes the ability for grassroots political parties like the KAP to fundraise. We do not have the opportunity to have large unions or large property investors behind us. At the end of the day, what we will see is the KAP being unable to fundraise in a traditional way. These amendments regarding the ability to deposit fundraising contributions in the state campaign account are no longer about transparency and political accountability. This is about adding extra layers of work for small political parties that do not have the big party machine of the two major parties—namely, the Labor Party in this case which is pushing the legislation forward.

Mr Whiting interjected.

Mr DAMETTO: I cannot hear what you are saying so I will not take the interjections. Minor parties are the voice of regional Queensland right now and we need every opportunity to make sure we have the funds to keep going. Unfortunately, this legislation erodes democracy as far as we are concerned—mainly because we will not be able to take in donations in the traditional fashion. It may help the Labor Party snuff out some of the larger donations of the LNP, but it is more about making sure those small minor parties do not rise up. I am against that.

This is not about creating a level playing field; it is about getting rid of a separate voice in this parliament—the third voice. Minor parties will find it harder and harder to get off the ground because this affects everything from insurance costs through to administration costs of dealing with the ECQ when it comes to reporting on this. I have gone through the information and the work that needs to be done by officers to put these claims and reporting forward. It might be great for someone who has a million dollars in backing from a union somewhere, but it is difficult for a small, minor party.

That is my only contribution on the bill. Like I said, we will not be voting against this bill. We will be supporting the bill, but we want to make people who are listening aware that there are forces working against democracy and it is happening right here in this House.

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (3.16 pm), in reply: At the outset, I thank all members who have contributed to the debate of the Personal Injuries Proceedings and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. As I indicated in my earlier speeches, the main purpose of the bill is to amend the Personal Injuries Proceedings Act 2002 and the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Act 2003 to: prohibit a person cold calling or personally approaching another without their consent and soliciting or inducing them to make a claim; make it an offence for any person to pay claim farmers for the details of potential claimants or to receive payment for a claim referral or potential claim referral; impose obligations on legal practitioners who represent injured claimants to certify during the claims process by way of a law practice certificate that neither they nor their associates have paid a claim farmer for the claim; and require law practices retained by respondents and insurers to notify the Legal Services Commission if they suspect a contravention of the law practice certificate requirements.

The claim-farming provisions in the bill are modelled on those applying to compulsory third-party claims under the Motor Accident Insurance Act 1994. The measures contained within the Motor Accident Insurance Act 1994 have been so successful—which has been widely acknowledged. The Motor Accident Insurance Commission has seen a decline in reported claim-farming activity. I would like to join with the member for Logan in thanking and recognising the former member for South Brisbane, Jackie Trad, for championing the original reforms to the Motor Accident Insurance Act.

Mr Power: Pioneering work.

Ms FENTIMAN: I take that interjection—it was pioneering work. She commenced this reform process, which is so important, and now we are extending it to personal injuries and workers compensation claims.

The bill also provides the Workers' Compensation Regulator and the Legal Services Commission with additional powers to oversee and enforce the new claim-farming provisions, including 'special investigation powers' like those possessed by the Motor Accident Insurance Commission. The bill also amends the fifty-fifty rule in the Legal Profession Act 2007 to ensure claimants receive a fair and equitable share of settlement funds and addresses concerns that certain disbursements are used to potentially disguise a claim-farming arrangement. It confirms the policy intent for when an entitlement to terminal workers compensation arises under the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Act, and it makes technical and clarifying amendments to the Electoral Act 1992 relating to fundraising contributions and state campaign accounts and disclosure returns.

I would now like to address comments made during the second reading debate. The members for Clayfield and Kawana made much of the fact that the bill will require amendments during consideration in detail. However, the honourable members will be aware that there can be a range of reasons why amendments are necessary, and a prime example of that might be the fact that we are listening and responding to matters raised as part of the committee process or by key stakeholders post introduction of a bill. Important legislation may also need to be developed at short notice and consideration in detail of the bill provides an opportunity for any amendments to clarify the operation of provisions and ensure the bill achieves its objectives. These amendments show our parliamentary and democratic processes are working.

For the LNP, a party that constantly says that the committee system is somehow broken, it is a little bit hypocritical to then say we should not make amendments after receiving feedback from a committee. However yesterday, as I heard the ongoing criticism by the member for Kawana and the member for Clayfield about so many amendments being needed to this bill, I thought to myself, 'I wonder what their track record might be when it comes to amendments to bills when they were ministers.' I had a look at how many amendments the former attorney-general, the member for Kawana, introduced during his time in office.

Mr Power: How many?

Ms FENTIMAN: 456! That is how many amendments to his legislation he moved in 2012 alone—363 amendments to one bill! He comes in here saying, 'This government do not know what they are doing.' We have 18 amendments to this bill; he had 363 to a bill! I recall that the member for Kawana yesterday referred to the government as #confused—who speaks in hashtags?—and #incompetent. Excuse me, #hypocritical, #worstattoynegeneralinqueenslandshistory! It surely then begs the question what the member for Kawana must think of his own time in office. Over the three short years he was attorney-general, he moved more than 900 amendments. If we judge them on that standard they have set themselves, it is no wonder the title 'worst attorney-general in Queensland's history' is beginning to stick. To stand up in this chamber and make a fuss about 18 amendments, responding to people who had contributed to the committee process, is embarrassing.

Mr Hart interjected.

Ms FENTIMAN: Clearly, the member for Kawana and the member for Clayfield were too lazy to write a speech that actually dealt with the issues that are facing Queenslanders.

Mr Hart interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Martin): Member for Burleigh.

Ms FENTIMAN: They just decided to get up and criticise.

Mr Hart interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Burleigh!

Ms FENTIMAN: Well, look at their own record. It is absolutely embarrassing!

Mr Hart: If you are going to screech at me, I'm going to screech at you.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Attorney-General, you can take your seat. Member for Burleigh, you are warned under the standing orders for continually interjecting. I would ask everyone to remain silent and listen to the rest of the minister's submission.

Ms FENTIMAN: It is absolutely embarrassing when the shadow minister and the former attorney-general come in here and criticise the government for having 18 amendments which respond to community concerns about the bill, when their own record shows that the former attorney-general had 900 amendments in his term—over 300 in one bill. It is astounding!

Let me move on to some of the other contributions in the debate. The member for Clayfield also implied that the scheme for the management of law practice certificates was overly complex and framed to shift costs from the Legal Services Commission to the profession. I want to make it very clear that all of the views have been considered at various stages of the policy development process. The government has worked incredibly closely with legal stakeholders in the development of this legislation, and these bodies are to be commended for their support for combatting claim-farming practices and working with us. I know that there were some concerns raised about the complexity; however, this legislation builds on the current successful model that applies to CTP claims, and we want to continue that successful model.

For PIPA claims, a law practice certificate is required when a lawyer is retained. That is critical to breaking the nexus between claim farmers and law practices, as well as removing the financial incentive to participate in a claim-farming scheme. Provision of a fresh certificate at judgement or settlement is consistent with the approach under the Motor Accident Insurance Act. During the development of amendments to the Motor Accident Insurance Act, the Queensland Law Society strongly advocated for the completion of a certificate on settlement of judgement. Under the provisions, in certain instances it will be sufficient for a copy of the certificate previously provided to the claimant to be provided to a respondent or, if the circumstances require, to multiple respondents. Completion of a

law practice certificate is not considered to be a particularly time-consuming task when compared to the many other documents that are required to progress a claim. It is considered that, at this stage, any further simplification would undermine the effectiveness of the system.

The member for Clayfield also repeated comments about hybrid claims. Again, advice has been taken from the various regulators on this issue and there is no scope, at this stage, to simplify this process. The option of providing all the law practice certificates to the Legal Services Commission and the Office of Industrial Relations was considered. However, no clear benefit was seen in requiring all law practice certificates to be given to these entities as a matter of course. Centralising all the certificates at the commission and the Office of Industrial Relations would have been at considerable cost to government and would not have materially assisted the detection of cases where a certificate has not been provided.

The related suggestion that the Legal Services Commission crosschecks certificates against every personal injury award and settlement is also not practical. Instead, the obligation was imposed on law practices because, as part of their representation of respondents and insurers, they would already be required to closely examine the claim documentation to ensure compliance with the various legislative requirements applying to the claim and, as such, they would know whether a law practice certificate has or has not been provided to them as required.

It is not unreasonable to expect members of the profession to do their part in combatting claim farming where they are well placed to do so. It also provides oversight, whether or not an insurer is involved, and allows the Legal Services Commission to focus on cases where possible breaches have been identified. This additional responsibility is fully funded and will not impact the commission's performance of its other responsibilities. Once the scheme is implemented, I will be happy to hear further from stakeholders and regulators about whether or not there are options for further improving the processes.

In terms of costs to clients, the legal practice certificate will be a very simple document for the supervising legal practitioner to complete: was the claim claim farmed? Where it is appropriate, copies rather than original certificates will suffice. The cost to the practice in preparing these certificates, if passed on to the client, would be very minimal.

I note the member for Currumbin's concerns about the charging of excessive legal costs. The amendments in the bill concerning legal costs are intended to address concerns relating to law firms contracting out work that they would normally do in-house, with the effect that these amounts can be treated as disbursements and therefore outside the operation of the fifty-fifty rule. The amendments address the potential to disguise payments to claim farmers as disbursements and ensure that interest on credit arrangements associated with a claim are treated as legal costs for the purpose of the fifty-fifty rule. Provision has also been made for the prescription of other disbursements and expenses to be treated similarly, if the need is identified. I will continue to work with legal stakeholders in considering whether any other disbursement should be prescribed for this purpose and would be pleased to receive representations from any member who has any suggestions to make this work better.

With regard to the wider concerns raised during the debate about legal costs and the decision in *Adamson v Enever*, which are outside the scope of this bill, I can inform the House that the Legal Services Commission has issued a regulatory guide in relation to charging outlays and disbursements. Under the guide, the commission is clear that a law firm is not entitled to charge clients for practice overheads as if they were outlays or disbursements. It is also clear that items, including postage and photocopies, can only be billed to clients as disbursements if the actual cost to the client is capable of being and has been accurately costed.

The assertion that has been made that this bill somehow removes the right to claim terminal compensation on diagnosis is simply incorrect. The proposed amendment clarifies the timing of when a worker is able to access a terminal compensation payment; that is, when they are in the final stages of their injury and, sadly, their life. It does not remove a worker's right to access a terminal compensation payment into the future.

The proposed amendment does not stop a worker from accessing other workers compensation entitlements or those at common law including weekly benefits, medical, rehabilitation, return-to-work support and lump sum payments before their injury is in its final stages. The bill before the House today directly aligns with the policy intent. However, this amendment responds to a decision in the QIRC that well extended the discretion in the legislation beyond the policy intent to workers who were not in the terminal phase of their illness, and it aims to ensure funds are provided at the right time so workers and

their families receive it when they are most in need. The government recognises that a diagnosis of a terminal latent onset injury has a profound and complex impact on a worker's life and is an incredibly difficult time for workers and their families. We have listened to the evidence given to the committee, and amendments to the bill today will extend the time frame to five years to ensure workers can plan for their needs and their families during that difficult time.

Some members have commented on the proposed amendments to the Electoral Act that have been included in this bill. I can assure honourable members that the amendments which are proposed at the request of the ECQ are merely intended to clarify and improve the operation of new laws in relation to donation caps before they commence on 1 July 2022. Again, the member for Kawana's contribution yesterday that somehow capping donations is corruption is more nonsense from Queensland's worst attorney-general in history. In fact, getting rid of big money donations in politics is all about getting rid of corruption. Again, I just cannot fathom how the member for Kawana and the member for Clayfield came in here and made these contributions clearly not wanting to actually write a speech that dealt with significant issues that affect Queenslanders and their families.

Finally, in my second reading speech I foreshadowed an amendment to be moved during consideration in detail to facilitate the use of a single approved form across the three claim-farming schemes. Following advice that this can be achieved without a legislative amendment, I would like to inform the House that there is no amendment in relation to this issue and the feasibility of a single form is being considered by the regulators.

In conclusion, the bill is a further testament to the Palaszczuk government's commitment to stamp out the insidious practice of claim farming in Queensland. Provisions contained in the bill will prohibit the harassing calls and intimidating behaviour associated with claim farming and break the nexus between claim farmers and law practices. I commend the bill to the House.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Consideration in Detail

Clause 1, as read, agreed to.

Clause 2—



Ms FENTIMAN (3.31 pm): I move the following amendments—

1 Clause 2 (Commencement)

Page 10, line 7—

omit, insert—

(1) The following provisions commence on 1 July 2022—

(a) sections 5 to 10;

(b) sections 58 and 65;

(c) section 66, to the extent it inserts new chapter 37, heading, and sections 743 to 746.

2 Clause 2 (Commencement)

Page 10, line 10, '14'—

omit, insert—

13

3 Clause 2 (Commencement)

Page 10, after line 11—

insert—

(iaa) section 39;

4 Clause 2 (Commencement)

Page 10, lines 15 to 21—

omit, insert—

(c) section 59;

(d) section 60, to the extent it inserts new chapter 6B, parts 2, 3 and 5;

(e) section 66, to the extent it inserts section 747.

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

Tabled paper: Personal Injuries Proceedings and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022, explanatory notes to Hon. Shannon Fentiman's amendments [905].

Tabled paper: Personal Injuries Proceedings and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022, statement of compatibility with human rights contained in Hon. Shannon Fentiman's amendments [906].

Amendments agreed to.

Clause 2, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 3 to 15, as read, agreed to.

Clause 16—



Ms FENTIMAN (3.32 pm): I move the following amendment—

5 Clause 16 (Amendment of s 347 (Maximum payment for conduct of speculative personal injury claim))

Page 16, lines 19 to 21—

omit, insert—

services provided—

- (i) after notice of the claim is given under the *Motor Accident Insurance Act 1994*, section 37; or
- (ii) after notice of the claim is given under the *Personal Injuries Proceedings Act 2002*, section 9 or 9A; or
- (iii) after a notice of claim is given for the claim under the *Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Act 2003*, section 275; or
- (iv) before a notice mentioned in subparagraph (ii) or (iii) is given, if an urgent proceeding is started for the claim under—
 - (A) the *Personal Injuries Proceedings Act 2002*, chapter 2, part 1, division 5; or
 - (B) the *Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Act 2003*, section 276 or chapter 5, part 7, division 1.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 16, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 17 to 35, as read, agreed to.

Clause 36—



Ms FENTIMAN (3.33 pm): I move the following amendments—

6 Clause 36 (Amendment of schedule 2 (Dictionary))

Page 36, line 5, '1A'—

omit, insert—

1AA

7 Clause 36 (Amendment of schedule 2 (Dictionary))

Page 36, line 29, 'section'—

omit, insert—

definition

Amendments agreed to.

Clause 36, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 37 to 41, as read, agreed to.

Clause 42—



Ms FENTIMAN (3.34 pm): I move the following amendment—

8 Clause 42 (Amendment of s 9 (Notice of a claim))

Page 42, lines 20 to 23, from 'a law' to '9A(3)(j)'—

omit, insert—

section 9A does not apply in relation to the claim

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 42, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 43 to 50, as read, agreed to.

Clause 51—



Ms FENTIMAN (3.34 pm): I move the following amendment—

9 Clause 51 (Insertion of new ch 3, pts 2 and 2A)

Page 51, line 32 to page 52, line 1—

omit, insert—

person contacts the other person—

(a) whether in person or by mail, telephone, email or another form of electronic communication; and

(b) whether the other person is contacted individually or as a member of a class of persons.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 51, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 52—



Ms FENTIMAN (3.35 pm): I move the following amendment—

10 Clause 52 (Amendment of s 73A (Proceeding))

Page 58, line 24, '1A'—

omit, insert—

1AA

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 52, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 53—



Ms FENTIMAN (3.35 pm): I move the following amendment—

11 Clause 53 (Insertion of new s 73B)

Page 59, line 27, '1A'—

omit, insert—

1AA

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 53, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 54 to 57, as read, agreed to.

Clause 58—

Message from Deputy Governor



Ms FENTIMAN (3.36 pm): I present a message from the Deputy Governor.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Martin): The message from the Deputy Governor recommends the amendment circulated by the Attorney-General. The contents of the message will be incorporated in the *Record of Proceedings*. I table the message for the information of members.

MESSAGE

PERSONAL INJURIES PROCEEDINGS AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2022

Constitution of Queensland 2001, section 68

I, HELEN PATRICIA BOWSKILL, Deputy Governor, recommend to the Legislative Assembly that an appropriation be made for the purposes of the attached amendment, to be moved by the Minister, to a Bill for an Act to amend the Electoral Act 1992, the Electoral and Other Legislation (Accountability, Integrity and Other Matters) Amendment Act 2020, the Legal Profession Act 2007, the Motor Accident Insurance Act 1994, the Personal Injuries Proceedings Act 2002 and the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Act 2003 for particular purposes

DEPUTY GOVERNOR

Date: 21 June 2022

Tabled paper: Message, dated 21 June 2022, from the Deputy Governor recommending an amendment to the Personal Injuries Proceedings and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022 [\[907\]](#).



Ms FENTIMAN: I move the following amendment—

12 Clause 58 (Amendment of s 39A (Meaning of *terminal condition*))

Page 63, line 4, '3 years'—

omit, insert—

5 years

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 58, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 59—



Ms FENTIMAN (3.36 pm): I move the following amendment—

13 Clause 59 (Amendment of s 275 (Notice of claim for damages))

Page 63, line 12, after 'certificate'—

insert—

, or a copy of a law practice certificate,

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 59, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 60—



Ms FENTIMAN (3.37 pm): I move the following amendments—

14 Clause 60 (Insertion of new ch 6B)

Page 66, lines 20 to 22—

omit, insert—

(b) the supervising principal of the law practice has not previously given a law practice certificate to the claimant in relation to the claim.

15 Clause 60 (Insertion of new ch 6B)

Page 67, lines 2 to 25—

omit, insert—

3251 Law practice retained by claimant after notice of claim for damages given or urgent proceeding started

(1) This section applies if—

(a) a law practice is retained to act in relation to a claim for damages after—

(i) the claimant has given a notice of claim for damages under section 275; or

(ii) an urgent proceeding for the claim for damages is started under section 276; and

(b) the supervising principal of the law practice has not previously given a law practice certificate to the claimant in relation to the claim.

(2) The supervising principal of the law practice in relation to the claim must, within 1 month after the day the practice is retained—

(a) complete a law practice certificate for the claim; and

(b) give the certificate to the insurer and a copy of the certificate to the claimant.

Maximum penalty—300 penalty units.

Amendments agreed to.

Clause 60, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 61, as read, agreed to.

Clause 62—



Ms FENTIMAN (3.37 pm): I move the following amendment—

16 Clause 62 (Insertion of new s 573A)

Page 96, line 22, '1A'—

omit, insert—

1AA

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 62, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 63 to 65, as read, agreed to.

Clause 66—



Ms FENTIMAN (3.38 pm): I move the following amendments—

17 Clause 66 (Insertion of new ch 37)

Page 99, lines 9 to 19—

omit.

18 Clause 66 (Insertion of new ch 37)

Page 99, lines 25 to 32—

omit, insert—

- (2) Former section 39A continues to apply in relation to the condition if, before the commencement, the worker, or the worker's dependants—
 - (a) made an application for compensation under section 132; and
 - (b) gave the insurer medical evidence about the terminal nature of the condition.
- (2A) For subsection (2), it does not matter whether the application was decided, or lump sum compensation under section 128B or 128D was paid, before the commencement.

Amendments agreed to.

Clause 66, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 67, as read, agreed to.

Third Reading



Hon. SM FENTIMAN (Waterford—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (3.39 pm): I move—

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

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

Long Title



Hon. SM FENTIMAN (Waterford—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (3.39 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.

INSPECTOR OF DETENTION SERVICES BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from 26 May (see p. 1484), on motion of Ms Linard—

That the bill be now read a second time.



Mr RUSSO (Toohey—ALP) (3.40 pm), continuing: I rise to continue my speech in support of the Inspector of Detention Services Bill 2021. The Legal Affairs and Safety Committee invited both government and non-government stakeholders across a range of sectors to make written submissions on the bill. As part of their examination of the bill, the committee received a public briefing from the department and received written advice from the department in response to the matters raised in submissions. All of the submissions received indicated support for the establishment of an inspector in Queensland; however, a number of submitters—as is to be expected from stakeholders with diverse interests—did raise concerns about the appointment model proposed under the bill and the resourcing of the inspector.

Concerns about the model of the appointment of the inspector and the issue of resourcing the inspector were raised a number of times during the public hearing. The department's response to these concerns was—

The Bill establishes the Inspector as a separate and functionally independent statutory appointment with distinct functions and powers. The Inspector will report separately to Parliament on its operations, and following inspections and reviews.

Further the department commented—

In consultation with the Queensland Ombudsman, DJAG is working to finalise the resourcing requirements and budget allocation. Pending passage of the Bill and once established, the financial and performance reporting for the Inspector will be reported on separately as part of the Queensland Ombudsman's annual report.

The committee noted—

... the independence of the Inspector and the sufficient resourcing of the Inspector were both significant issues raised by stakeholders ...

The committee also noted—

... the department has advised that the Queensland Government has set aside funding to ensure the Inspector can fulfil the functions set out in the Bill. ... It is the committee's view that it is important that the Ombudsman is adequately resourced to ensure that the role of the independent Inspector can be fulfilled effectively by the Ombudsman as contemplated by the Bill.

Concerns were raised by a number of submitters that the definitions of 'detention services' and 'place of detention' in the bill were too narrow. For example, Sisters Inside submitted—

The Bill adopts a very limited definition of "detention service" (clause 5) and "place of detention" (clause 6). We recommend the definitions of "detention service" and "place of detention" must be expanded to align with the reality that many prisoners experience multiple, intersecting forms of imprisonment and control.

The department's response to this submission and to the stakeholder concerns in relation to the inclusion of the transport to hospitals for medical treatment and the definition of 'detention service' was—

The policy intention is to capture transportation of detainees from a place of detention (for example, to a hospital for medical treatment) where the detainee is in the custody of a 'relevant custodial entity' as defined in Schedule 1 ...

...

In relation to a detainee's medical treatment in hospital, this would not fall within the scope of the Inspector and would be subject to existing oversight mechanisms, such as the Health Ombudsman.

In relation to the inclusion of the journey after arrest to the watch house in the definition of 'detention services', the department's response was—

As set out in the Explanatory Notes (page 17), this does not include the journey after arrest to a watch-house for processing as this is before a person is remanded in custody by a prescribed police officer.

...

A person is also entitled to make a complaint to the QPS about their treatment by police, and to external oversight bodies including the Crime and Corruption Commission and Queensland Human Rights Commission.

Clause 8 of the bill sets out the functions of the inspector, which include

- (a) to review or monitor a detention service at any time; and
- (b) to inspect a place of detention at any time; and

...

- (d) to prepare and publish standards in relation to carrying out inspections; and
- (e) to report to the Legislative Assembly on—
 - (i) each review ...
 - (ii) each inspection ...

In addition, it will be a key function of the inspector to undertake mandatory inspections. The inspector will be required to conduct mandatory inspections at set intervals of certain places of detention, consistent with its preventive focus. At a minimum, the inspector will be required to inspect at set intervals certain places of detention, such as youth detention centres, and each prison that is a secure facility and all or part of a particular place of detention prescribed by regulation.

The explanatory notes provide that the investigation of incidents is not within the inspector's scope of functions under the bill. They state—

While the Inspector will not investigate specific incidents or complaints, the Inspector's reviews may consider systemic themes that arise from the individual experience of detained individuals or groups of people and/or an issue in one or more places of detention.

The bill provides the inspector with broad powers in order to carry out their functions. These powers allow them to do all things necessary to fulfil their preventive, proactive and independent mandate. To facilitate full and frank disclosure to the inspector, the information obtained will be protected, except in specific circumstances. The bill also provides for evidentiary immunity to protect a person from victimisation or reprisals.

The bill will contain some offences to ensure compliance with lawful requirements made by the inspector. These offences will assist the inspector to effectively perform the required functions and will foster cooperation in any of its investigations. It will also be an offence for the inspector to disclose information obtained under the act, except in specific circumstances.

Under the bill, specific prisoner complaints are not within the remit of the inspector's functions; nor is the investigation of critical incidents. Stakeholders raised concerns regarding the lack of investigative requirements of particular complaints or critical incidents, and the department dealt with that in its submissions to the committee.

There are a number of clauses in the bill relating to vulnerable detainees, the key ones being clauses 9 and 38. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mrs GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (3.48 pm): The Inspector of Detention Services Bill seeks to establish an independent inspectorate to promote and uphold humane treatment and conditions of people who are being held in detention, including prisons, community correction centres, work camps, youth detention centres and police watch houses. It is my sincere hope that the proposed bill will be effective in protecting detainees from harm and in particular encouraging rehabilitation. However, I am concerned about this government's track record. It has become very apparent that this tired, third-term Labor government is more concerned about how things look rather than how things actually are, because without proper planning, sufficient resourcing and true independence the establishment of this office may only check the box and give the appearance of making good on a policy that Labor took to the last election.

Crime is on the rise and the state government must start listening to our community and implementing real solutions with real funding. Part of that must include a focus on rehabilitation of offenders. If the Inspector of Detention Services is to be effective, it will need significant resources to do that. Considering the size of our state, the number of detention centres, the workload that is required and the potential to expand into other areas such as the movement of prisoners or people in detention from one place to another, the task for the inspector is a large one. Section 33 appoints the Queensland Ombudsman as the Inspector of Detention Services, utilising the existing offices and facilities of the Ombudsman to perform the role of Inspector of Detention Services. Adequate funding of the role was a key issue during the committee hearings. The vast majority of submitters were concerned that the inspectorate role would be another obligation lobbed onto the Ombudsman's office that it would have to do with existing resources. The Human Rights Commission informed the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee of the issue that this could pose, stating—

... there is a real risk that housing the inspector inside the Ombudsman's office will ultimately lead to those functions competing with the existing functions of the Ombudsman. I do not think there is any doubt about that risk. A separate line item would certainly help ... to mitigate that risk to some extent ...

To further prove this point, other submitters drew our attention to the Tasmanian model and the Tasmanian Ombudsman's struggle with its balance of functions and custodial inspector role. There it was reported that the Ombudsman could only dedicate 10 per cent of its time to the inspectorate role. As a result, there were long delays between onsite inspections and publication of associated reports. I do appreciate and understand that the Tasmanian Ombudsman holds some different responsibilities when compared with the Queensland Ombudsman. However, it is nevertheless clear that in order to fulfil the obligations of the bill and the intent the inspector will need adequate resources and staffing. It is pleasing to hear from the minister's contribution that the funding will be \$9.38 million over four years and \$2.97 million per annum ongoing with the engagement of up to an additional 16 full-time-equivalent staff for the office of the inspector to support the Ombudsman in its inspectorate role. Funding and resourcing will be key to the inspector operating effectively.

It must be noted that the vast majority of submitters did not support the dual model and mainly supported the creation of a separate inspectorate. That was the evidence of many of the submitters, including Sisters Inside, knowmore and a number of other organisations. Mr Steven Caruana, who previously worked for the inspector of prisons in Western Australia and the Commonwealth in a similar role, made a compelling submission to amend the bill. He said that appointing the Ombudsman does not align with the acceptance of recommendations arising from several past reports, including the reports of Mr Walter Sofronoff, the recently retired Chief Judge of the Court of Appeal. He advocated for a standalone independent statutory authority like the Western Australian Inspector of Custodial Services. Based on the public hearings, it is clear that the community would have preferred to see the Inspector of Detention Services as a standalone statutory body. However, the government is going to push on with the Queensland Ombudsman performing the role, and time will tell whether the government got this one right.

Another pretty serious concern among the stakeholders is the minimum requirement for inspections which has been called out for being far too low. The bill only requires an inspection once every five years, with the exception being youth detention centres at once a year. It is concerning that the minimum requirement for inspections is only once every five years. The average term of imprisonment in Queensland is 3½ years. This means there are a significant number of detainees and inmates who will never see an inspector come through the facility during their term of detention. If we look to other states, we can see higher expectations when it comes to minimum requirements. In the Australian Capital Territory, Tasmania and Western Australia, there is an expectation that an inspector visit prison facilities once every three years, and in the Australian Capital Territory it states a further step requiring new facilities be visited within two years of opening.

Why has our state Labor government set the bar so low? If it were serious about its commitment to uphold the humane treatment and conditions of people in detention, then surely it would require the inspector to come through a facility at least once during the average term of a detainee. To me this smacks of a government paying lip-service to its commitment, of a government more concerned with how things look rather than actually achieving the goal set out in the bill. I would encourage the state government to genuinely look at these concerns and to accept feedback from the Ombudsman regarding the level of funding and the support it will need to effectively maintain the position of inspector.

Throughout the committee process we also heard many stakeholders critical of the definition raise the need to expand the definition of ‘detention facility’ and whether transportation by police upon arrest should be included. In the Queensland Law Society’s submission to the committee it wrote that, in its view, consideration should be given to expanding the range of places subject to inspections to better align with the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhumane or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. Throughout the committee process, both in submissions and during public hearings, there was a lot of discussion around OPCAT—specifically, whether the bill sufficiently supports the convention.

The Prisoners’ Legal Service noted during the public hearing that its key concern with the bill as it currently stands is the lack of acknowledgement of OPCAT and the aspects which it fails to comply with. While the bill closely aligns to the wording of OPCAT, it is not identical and a number of submitters have raised concerns as to why that should not be. There is also a lack of acknowledgement of OPCAT at all and the chair of the committee responded to these concerns by acknowledging a decision that OPCAT’s implementation in Queensland is yet to be made. I also note that the minister has addressed this by stating in her second reading speech that Queensland will not make a formal commitment to implementing OPCAT until Commonwealth funding is secured, citing the significant cost implications in properly giving effect to OPCAT.

A further concern is that the bill does not allow for the inspector to investigate or respond to specific prisoner complaints or critical incidents such as riots. This was defended by the department in saying that the inspector’s focus is on preventing harm through a system of regular reviews and inspections—regular reviews and inspections that will only happen once every five years, mind you. It is assumed that this role will continue to be carried out by the Queensland Corrective Services Chief Inspector.

It should also be acknowledged that while this bill focuses on the rights of prisoners we have many hardworking Queensland corrective services staff who are being put in danger every day. We have heard from a number of these staff about the assaults they have survived, the serious injuries that have been caused and the subsequent trauma that they have suffered. What is this government doing about that? The state government has failed to meet its targets, particularly in relation to assaults by prisoners against officers; the state government has reduced frontline service delivery for corrective

services, with the number of full-time-equivalent staff falling by two across the state; and our prisons remain overcrowded at 125.8 per cent and are becoming dangerous. This state government needs to do so much more to ensure the safety of corrective services officers as they go to work. This state government needs to do so much more to support them when incidents happen to ensure that it is a safe and healthy workforce.

As already stated in this debate, the LNP will not be opposing the bill. We will keep an eye on how it goes through the appropriate processes of the reports of the inspector and the estimates process. As I stated, we are concerned with the minimum requirement in relation to inspections of detention facilities. The bar has been set too low in that only one inspection is required every five years. If this state government truly was concerned with implementing the objectives of this bill, then I would have expected that bar to be a bit higher and more in line with WA, where an inspection happens at least once every three years, particularly considering the average term of a detainee is 3½ years, so that means that a detainee may not see an inspector during their average term of detention.

If the government truly was concerned with the objective of this bill in ensuring rehabilitation and ensuring that our correctional facilities are safe for the corrective services officers who work there, then I would think that it would raise that bar a little bit higher. We are pleased to see the funding that has been announced by the minister. We look forward to seeing the inspectorate continue in this role and will keep a close eye on the Ombudsman in the inspector role.

 **Mr HUNT** (Caloundra—ALP) (3.58 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Inspector of Detention Services Bill 2021. As is ever the case, thanks go to the secretariat staff who time and again do such excellent work in the administration and the culminating periods leading up to and including the formation of these reports. The committee members themselves—Peter Russo, member for Toohey; Jonty Bush, member for Cooper; Sandy Bolton, member for Noosa; Laura Gerber, member for Currumbin; and Andrew Powell, member for Glass House, who was still on the committee at the time of this report—have all worked effectively and collaboratively on this report.

The objective of the bill is to establish an independent inspectorate to promote and uphold humane treatment and conditions of people in prisons, community correctional centres, work camps, youth detention centres and police watch houses. To that end, a public hearing was held in November of last year. Twenty submissions were received in total and of those seven organisations presented at the public hearing on November 29. These organisations comprise Together—the union representing prison officers—Change the Record, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service, Sisters Inside, Queensland Advocacy Inc., Queensland Human Rights Commission, knowmore legal service and, finally, the Queensland Law Society.

The purpose of the bill is to improve detention centres with a focus on promoting and upholding the humane treatment of detainees, including the condition of their detention, and preventing the detainees from being subject to harm, including torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment. That said, let me make one thing abundantly clear: our custodial officers in Queensland are a well-trained and enormously professional group of staff doing a very difficult job in extremely difficult conditions.

No prisoner in Queensland is subject to torture or cruel or degrading conditions. When, for example, a prisoner is placed in restraints, handcuffs or spit hoods, it can look very daunting to the untrained or the unfamiliar. But make no mistake, a prisoner is invariably restrained in this way to prevent them doing harm to others. In the case of certain restraints which look even more imposing—body belts et cetera—they are put into effect to preserve the prisoner's life. More times than I care to remember I have seen a prisoner protest during the application of restraints, only to make an immediate and very graphic self-harm attempt literally within moments of the restraints being removed. Events of that type are not torture; they are a concerted effort by the staff who are straining every sinew to preserve the life of a detainee until such time as they can return to a more measured state of positive ideation.

To finalise this specific point and to remove all doubt, it is worth quoting from the written submission from Together, the union representing all Queensland prison officers. That they now represent all prison officers is testimony to this government's excellent decision to reclaim the last two private jails in Queensland to the lasting benefit of the staff in those centres, a move that the LNP described as wasteful spending, as though enhancing staff safety was somehow wasteful. The submission from Together stated—

... the Bill focuses almost entirely on the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and in doing so seeks to solve a problem that, in the main, does not exist and loses sight of the need to adopt a holistic view of the operation of detention centres.

...

While it is accepted that one of the aims of OPCAT is to prevent torture of detained persons that must be understood in the context of an international standard aimed at prison systems very different to those in Queensland. The union is unaware of any issue with 'torture' in state run prisons, yet the explicit inclusion of that language implies that the issue exists. This is highly insulting to the thousands of Correctional Officers that do a difficult and dangerous job on behalf of the community.

I commend the union on the central messaging of their submission. Under this bill the inspectorate will cover the operations and management of facilities and the treatment and conditions of people detained in accordance with national and international rules that speak to best practice, including the Nelson Mandela Rules for minimal standards for the treatment of prisoners, the Beijing Rules for the administration of juvenile justice and the Bangkok Rules for the treatment of women prisoners.

All of the submissions received were broadly supportive of the establishment of an inspector in Queensland. However, two concerns were raised by the majority of submitters around resourcing and whether the bill provides an avenue for staff concerns as well as those of detainees. To that end I can reassure all submitters who spoke to the issue that, although the inspectorate will not investigate specific incidents or complaints, staff will be able to provide information to the inspector which may be relevant to reviews or inspections. If staff provide information to the inspector they will be protected from reprisals under clause 40 of the bill. If relevant, the inspector may choose to use this information to inform reviews or inspections.

While the main purpose of the bill and the role of the inspector is to promote the improvement of detention services and places of detention, it is possible the inspector could look at staff related issues as part of an inspection or review. For example, the inspector may choose to review the conditions or treatment of staff where the issue is linked to a detainee's wellbeing at a place of detention. In 2014 the Western Australian inspector conducted a review of the assaults on staff in Western Australian prisons. Of course, it will be a matter for the independent inspector to decide the focus of the reviews and inspections.

Insofar as resourcing is concerned, there were certainly questions asked around the resourcing of the inspectorate. Sisters Inside called for a model that was based entirely on the Western Australian model. Prisoners' Legal Service expressed some concern that the Queensland Ombudsman would be required to provide administrative support services to the inspectorate. In a similar fashion, knowmore touched on concerns that shared administration may lead to competition of resources and priorities with the Office of the Queensland Ombudsman which may impact on the performance of the inspector's function and the quality of scope, while the Human Rights Commission was more cautious and reinforced its desire that the inspectorate be adequately resourced so as not to impede the Ombudsman's preventive work. The QHRC, however, was pleased to see the commitment in the explanatory notes that indicated that the inspector will have its own resourcing dedicated to the performance of its functions.

In response to the points raised about resourcing, the department was able to provide that the bill establishes the inspectorate as having a separate functionality and is an independent statutory appointment with distinct functions and powers. Further, this government has set aside funding to ensure the inspectorate can fulfil its functions set out in the bill. In consultation with the Queensland Ombudsman, DJAG is finalising work around the resourcing requirements and budget allocation pending the passage of the bill and once established the financial and performance reporting will be reported on separately as part of the Ombudsman's annual report.

I would be remiss if I did not highlight the remarkable track record of the LNP in this space. As a CCO during the term of the last LNP government I speak from lived experience. In April 2013, the LNP's responsible minister categorically stated that rape does not occur in Queensland jails. I can tell you it does. In November 2014; the LNP's responsible minister indicated that he was advised that officers were not facing any more dangers as a consequence of overcrowding. In essence, he was stating that overcrowding did not present a danger to staff or prisoners. That is absolute nonsense and the outcome of that was disastrous. Three days after that now infamous statement telling custodial staff at Maryborough Correctional Centre that everything was going really well, that same centre had a code black or a prison riot where GP dogs and chemical agents had to be deployed. That is fine, because according to the LNP everything was going really well.

Having been made aware of the potential for overcrowding, the LNP decided to try to solve that problem by making it immeasurably worse. In response to the looming crisis of overcrowding in Queensland jails, the LNP closed the correctional centre located in the Darling Downs. Their response to a potential overcrowding crisis was to close a 140-bed jail. Who could forget the spectacular failure

of the VLAD laws and the corresponding bikers unit at Woodford Correctional Centre, a unit where the prisoners wore pink or, as it was coined by the staff, 'aggressive salmon', so laughable was the idea? The unit's existence was announced on TV before the staff at Woodford knew anything about it. The training was so rushed that the staff were advised to try to find some material on YouTube to fill the void. There is a well thought out criminal justice policy position for you!

Mr Millar: Who was the minister?

Mr HUNT: Need you ask? I will conclude as I began: by praising the staff who work in these centres of detention. Any bill that brings greater security to the operation of these places of detention is a step in the right direction because it will directly and indirectly highlight the excellent work of the officers who work there.

 **Ms BOLTON** (Noosa—Ind) (4.08 pm): The main objective of the Inspector of Detention Services Bill 2021 is to establish an independent inspectorate to ensure the safety and health of people who are held in places of detention in Queensland, including in prisons, community correctional centres, work camps, youth detention centres and police watch houses. It should be noted this includes detention in vehicles if under the care of a custodial officer during transportation, such as to a watch house or a hospital for treatment.

Presently, there is no single body that focuses on the independent oversight of detention and detention services, which leaves the system open to mistreatment, neglect and potential corruption. The main role of this independent inspectorate will be to ensure that all detainees are treated humanely; that there is a proactive assessment of treatment including the conditions they are held in, such as overcrowding; and, importantly, that detainees are kept from harm. This should not override the understanding that human rights violations continue to occur in prisons every day, often closely linked with the lack of adequate health screening and provision, which must be a focus of the new inspectorate as well.

Imprisonment is a punishment. However, a prison should also be a place where inmates can gain and promote self-worth, and rehabilitate themselves with assistance from in-house programs with the aim of becoming productive members of society who will not reoffend should they be released. During the hearings, a number of concerning aspects were raised that can hinder this, including an inability of prisons to provide enough access to programs due to prisoner numbers, which leads to a loss of job and life skill development as well as the ability to apply for parole. In addition, the lack of a transitional housing program for those who have nowhere to go on release—with examples given as to the volume of prisoners eligible for parole remaining incarcerated for that reason—is adding to the overloads on our system.

Sisters Inside and other submitters raised concerns that people being transported or detained under the Mental Health Act 2016 are not included. However, our committee's examination of the bill determined that the Chief Psychiatrist continues to have responsibility and oversight in those instances, which is reassuring.

The Department of Justice and Attorney-General noted that the new inspectorate will not take over the usual internal oversight that is provided by existing government departments, such as Corrective Services, Police and Youth Justice. Rather, it will provide a consistent and systemic approach based on continuous inspections and reviews to ensure that best practice is being maintained at a system-wide level.

An important aspect of this bill and one that needs to be monitored is that the inspector will be an officer of parliament, that is, an independent inspector who is not able to be directed or controlled by any particular government minister or department. With recent debates about the integrity and impartiality of independent authorities, commissioners and those in senior public roles who are not allowed to exercise their impartial judgement, this is a very important aspect.

It is now up to government to ensure adequate resourcing to support the inspector and ensure that it does not become ultimately an annexure of the Queensland Ombudsman's office and budget. In a state as large and diverse as Queensland, this new inspectorate should be a stand-alone office and resourced accordingly. It was reassuring to hear from the Ombudsman that he is confident regarding this. While all submitters to the committee supported the introduction of the independent inspectorate, many stakeholders also raised concerns about adequate resourcing and independence. These included the Queensland Law Society, the Queensland Human Rights Commission, Sisters Inside, the Council of Civil Liberties and the Prisoners' Legal Service. In addition, the role should not be isolated from reporting on aspects that may be considered outside its jurisdiction and that contribute to systemic

issues such as overcrowding. At a recent hearing we were advised by the Ombudsman that resources have been determined and will be reported separately and that he is confident this will not impact their office or workloads, which is imperative given the delays being experienced through higher case volumes.

Even though this bill could not cover all the particular concerns of stakeholders and submitters, an avenue has been provided through future evaluations and by the department recognising and incorporating key aspects of OPCAT, whilst awaiting the upcoming decision by government on how OPCAT will be implemented in the context of a national preventive mechanism. In closing, I thank our chair, my fellow Legal Affairs and Safety Committee members, our extremely hardworking secretariat, and all submitters and hearing attendees for their work on the bill. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms BUSH** (Cooper—ALP) (4.13 pm): I rise to support the Inspector of Detention Services Bill. I start by acknowledging and thanking the secretariat, Hansard, and my parliamentary colleagues on and the chair of the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee. I also acknowledge those who made submissions to the hearings, both in writing and presented to us in person.

This bill provides for a new role of the Inspector of Detention Services to provide independent oversight over places of detention, specifically, prisons, community correction centres, work camps, youth detention centres and watch houses. Independent inspectors in places of detention are very important and the committee heard from submitters who have advocated strongly for this. Independent inspectors ensure accountability and transparency in the way that those places are managed. They are a set of independent eyes and ears in places that are often closed off, to some degree, to the public. The purpose of the inspector is to promote the improvement of places of detention and detention services, with a focus on ensuring the humane treatment of those who are detained and the prevention of harm, including torture and cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment.

This bill comes as part of the broader government response to recommendations in a number of reviews, including the Independent Review of Youth Detention; the Queensland Parole System Review; Taskforce Flaxton, which was an examination of corruption and corruption risks in Queensland's corrective services facilities; the Queensland Productivity Commission's report on its inquiry into imprisonment and recidivism; and the Royal Commission Into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. Importantly, the bill represents this government's continued commitment to upholding human rights in Queensland.

The inspectorate will not be subject to direction by any person about the way in which it performs its functions. The bill provides that the inspector will provide independent oversight through a system of regular inspections and reviews of places of detention and detention services. There will be independent and transparent reporting to ensure accountability and transparency in the way that places of detention and the people detained are managed and the inspector will adopt a preventive focus, preventing harm by examining the systems and experiences of people who are detained. It is intended that the inspector will consider the operation and management of facilities and the treatment and conditions of people in light of the national and international materials that establish best practice.

Under the bill, the Queensland Ombudsman will be the Inspector of Detention Services and staff from the office of the Queensland Ombudsman will support the exercise of the inspector's functions. The inspector, like the Ombudsman, will be functionally and operationally independent from government and will be appointed as an officer of the parliament.

There were 21 submissions received from representatives across the government and non-government sectors. All of the submissions received indicated support for the establishment of an inspector in Queensland. However, a number of submitters raised concerns about the appointment model proposed under the bill and the resourcing of the inspector. For example, the Queensland Human Rights Commission submitted—

The Commission notes the synergies between the functions of the proposed Inspector and the Ombudsman's current functions, and that the Ombudsman satisfies many of the principles set out in OPCAT for an NPM [National Preventive Mechanism]. This includes being functionally independent from the executive government, providing safeguards from reprisal and powers to regularly examine and visit places of detention.

Nonetheless, the experience of other jurisdictions emphasises the need to balance these new functions with the existing role of the Ombudsman. For example, the Tasmanian Ombudsman, who is also the Custodial Inspector, has reported that he can only dedicate ten per cent of time to the inspectorate, and long delays between onsite inspections and publication of reports due to inadequate staffing.

A number of stakeholders noted that the dual appointment model proposed under the bill was most similar to the existing Tasmanian model and expressed to the committee the importance of the QO giving sufficient resourcing and attention to this function.

In response to stakeholder concerns about the appointment of the Queensland Ombudsman as the inspector, the department stated—

The Bill establishes the Inspector as a separate and functionally independent statutory appointment with distinct functions and powers. The Inspector will report separately to Parliament on its operations, and following inspections and reviews.

The Bill provides that when performing functions of the Inspector, a staff member will not be able to also perform delegated functions under the Ombudsman Act ... Further, the Bill provides that when performing functions of the Inspector, the officer is subject to the direction of the Inspector and not the Ombudsman ...

The committee noted that the department has advised that the Queensland government has set aside funding to ensure the inspector can fulfil the functions set out in the bill. In addition to this funding allocation, the bill establishes the inspector as a separate and functionally independent statutory appointment that will report separately to parliament on its operations.

A key function of the inspector will be to conduct inspections of places of detention within its scope and review detention services provided in those places of detention. The bill will provide for mandatory inspections of particular places as well as allow the inspector to inspect a place of detention within scope at any time. These visits can be either announced or unannounced.

The inspector will also be able to review a detention service at any time, including the transport of detainees between places. It will not be the role of the inspector to investigate specific incidents such as riots, deaths or escapes. These will remain the responsibility of existing internal and external oversight bodies. The bill provides that the inspector may refer matters to an appropriate body for further investigation.

Under the bill the inspector will be empowered to refer matters to the relevant minister who has responsibility for the place of detention. This is for cases where the inspector reasonably suspects that there is or has been a serious risk to the security, control, safety, care or welfare of a detainee, or a detainee is or has been subject to cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment.

In order to carry out the inspector's functions, the bill provides the inspector with broad powers to do all things necessary to fulfil this preventive, proactive and independent mandate. This includes the power to take any equipment to a place of detention; enter a place of detention at any time; access any information, including documents, about the place of detention or services provided to people detained, including health information; require answers to questions; speak to detainees privately; and require reasonable help for a review or inspection. The inspector can also report on any issue that it considers to be in the interests of any person or to be in the public interest. These reports may include advice or recommendations from the inspector.

This bill continues to demonstrate the government's commitment to human rights and will ensure that the oversight, accountability and transparency of our places of detention and the treatment of detainees are strengthened. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Hon. CD CRAWFORD** (Barron River—ALP) (Minister for Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (4.21 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Inspector of Detention Services Bill 2021. I commend the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee for its report on the bill. I welcome the submissions that came particularly from my stakeholders.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and people with disability are both over-represented in the criminal justice and juvenile justice systems. When faced with detention, they often are in a more vulnerable position than non-Indigenous detainees and those living without disability. This is because Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people face challenges arising out of intergenerational trauma. For those with disability or cognitive impairments, their ability to handle challenges is impacted. That is why the Inspector of Detention Services Bill and the safeguards it aims to legislate are so important.

In 2021 we acknowledged the 30-year anniversary of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, which investigated 99 Aboriginal deaths in custody across both police and prison settings, of which 26 were here in Queensland. Unfortunately, not a lot has changed. We have seen nearly 500 Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander deaths in custody nationally since 1991 and incarceration rates continue to rise. The royal commission made 339 recommendations concerning procedures for

persons in custody that were both preventive and protective. This bill promotes improved detention services and places of detention that are focused on preventing detainees from being subjected to harm or cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment.

When it comes to safeguards for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in detention, the bill proposes that the inspector must have regard to the cultural background of the detainee when carrying out inspections or reviews. If a review relates to an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person, it is mandatory that the inspector uses a representative who identifies as an Aboriginal person or Torres Strait Islander person to undertake that function. The inspector is also enabled to consult with or engage culturally competent professionals who can help the inspector perform its functions. This means that, in the case of providing culturally considered support for First Nations people to engage in a visit, an inspector can seek the assistance of professionals such as First Nations language interpreters or community liaison officers who understand the complexities of the detainee's background from a culturally appropriate perspective. These specific provisions speak to a bigger picture.

The Palaszczuk government has committed to meeting its justice targets under the national Closing the Gap agreement by 2031. This includes by reducing the rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults held in incarceration by at least 15 per cent and youth aged 10 to 17 years by 30 per cent. Implementing culturally appropriate supports in our justice system and working to ensure detainees are treated with dignity and humanity will promote stronger relationships with First Nations people.

When dealing with detainees with disability during inspections, the inspector can use specialised equipment and/or support persons when communicating with detainees with disability. It is intended that the inspector, when carrying out a review or inspection relating to a detainee with disability, will assess the need for support persons or communication aids on a case-by-case basis.

I am aware that submissions during the committee's examination noted the importance of the Forensic Disability Service and authorised mental health services being captured within any approach to implement the OPCAT in Queensland. The Queensland government is considering the best approach in terms of OPCAT implementation in Queensland and is considering options for these facilities. However, the Forensic Disability Service is currently subject to considerable oversight, including from the Queensland Ombudsman, the Public Guardian and the Director of Forensic Disability. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr SMITH** (Bundaberg—ALP) (4.25 pm): I, too, rise to contribute to the Inspector of Detention Services Bill 2021. The bill seeks to establish an independent Inspector of Detention Services. The reason for the creation of such a position is to promote and uphold the humane treatment and conditions of those individuals detained within prisons, community correction centres, work camps, youth detention centres and police watch houses. The promotion and upholding of humane treatment includes actions towards detainees as well as the conditions of their place of detention. This role is focused to ensure the prevention of harm to detainees including torture, acts of cruelty and inhumane and degrading treatment.

'Prevention' is a word of great importance when we consider the desired outcomes of installing an inspector to fulfil their role and responsibilities. The prevention of harm, rather than responding to complaints of harm, is the key focus of the inspector. Engaging with the experiences of those who have been detained will enable the inspector to examine the systems and practices in place across places of detention in Queensland. Indeed, whilst those detained may well have lost their liberty, it is important to ensure that those detained do not lose their important sense of humanity. That is why the mandate for the inspector will be of a preventive, proactive and independent nature.

The explanatory notes highlight that 'detention services' are defined within the bill as—

- (a) the operation, management, direction, control or security of a place of detention;
- (b) the security, management, control, safety, care or wellbeing ... of a detainee at a place of detention;

Extending beyond the places of detention, the bill also provides the inspector with oversight of transportation of detainees whilst still in custody. Examples of such scenarios would be transportation between places of detention or transportation from a watch house to a court.

The inspector will be an officer of the parliament reporting to the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly and will be able to provide the advice or recommendations that have been considered during their inspections of the detention services outlined in this bill. The reporting ensures transparency as it will be able to be considered and read through this parliament. We also know that having an inspector

whose role is preventive and proactive means that we need to ensure we have high-quality staff in our prisons. I echo the words and the sentiments of the member for Caloundra, who spoke so strongly of his now former colleagues, although I am sure in many ways he still considers himself a fellow colleague.

Any job on the front line is tough. Last year we debated the issue of people in particular workplaces being able to claim for PTSD events and I still remember the member for Caloundra's speech where he provided an insight into what custodial officers face each and every day. It is with them in mind that we must ensure we have the best Inspector of Detention Services. We know that prevention is better than having to follow-up.

With prevention, proactive measures and reporting back to the House we will be able to engage with systems which mean we not only have correctional facilities that are safer for those who are detained within them but also correctional facilities that are safe for our men and women custodial and non-custodial officers. That is what this bill is about. It is about ensuring that those who have lost their liberty maintain their humanity. We also need to ensure that we are providing for our custodial and non-custodial officers within our correctional facilities. At the end of the day, we are the party for the workers.

With the safety of those who are detained and those who are employed within those facilities in mind, we must again reflect on the words of the member for Caloundra concerning the cuts of the Newman LNP government. They made the great decision when prisons were overcrowded to cut workers from those prisons. Those opposite might argue that they were non-custodial staff, but those non-custodial staff were delivering programs for prisoners—prisoners who wanted to maintain a sense of humanity and wanted to grow as individuals so that upon their release from the correctional facility they would have a smoother transition back into the community as hardworking taxpayers with a sense of humanity.

That was not good enough for the LNP. We saw their record when it comes to frontline workers. It did not just happen in our correctional facilities but right across frontline services. What about the nurses who were marched out the doors of our hospitals? In Bundaberg, nurses who were made homeless by the floods in 2013 and were living in tents on Salter Oval were sacked. They were handed their papers whilst they were living in tents. This is the track record of the LNP when it comes to the safety of people on the front line. What about the teacher aides they tried to sack time after time? What about the cleaners they tried to sack time after time? It all rings true when we consider what they did with non-custodial staff. I know a delegate who at the time had to sit with those staff as they faced the cut, sack, sell mentality of the Newman LNP government.

Given we are talking about correctional facilities, we should also talk about police. We know that police play an important role in this regard. I note that at in the 2020 election the LNP committed to 600 fewer police officers than the Palaszczuk Labor government. We know that under the LNP not only did they sack nurses, sack non-custodial staff and march 14,000 public servants out the door; they also sacked 110 senior police. That is the LNP's record. That is what they do—they cut, sack, sell. We saw the LNP cut training for our police officers.

Mr KRAUSE: I rise to a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. The member is not being relevant to the bill.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Martin): Member for Bundaberg, I have given you some latitude. I would ask that you bring your speech back to the long title of the bill.

Mr SMITH: The Inspector of Detention Services Bill is about ensuring we have safe correctional facilities and safe detention services. Part of making sure we have safe detention services is ensuring we engage with all elements of the criminal justice system. The police are very much a part of that. I understand that the LNP might not want to hear about how they continually sacked public servants who were there for us. I understand that they do not want to hear about their track record of not funding training for police officers. I understand that they do not want to hear about their failures. They probably do not want to hear about what happened in question time when they backed in billionaires over battlers. That is what we saw today when they backed in billionaires—

Mr KRAUSE: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Bundaberg, I think there is a point of order. In the one minute and 12 seconds remaining, I ask you to come back to the long title of the bill.

Mr SMITH: There is someone who will not be sacked. That is the chair of the committee that considered this bill. He is absolutely sensational. I pass on my congratulations to all members of that committee who worked so hard. I note the special contribution of the member for Caloundra. He brings a unique perspective that has not been shared in such a manner before. I thank the parliamentary staff who assisted with the consideration of this bill. I also thank the minister's office and the department.

This is about good reform for all in our community. People may be in detention but it is about ensuring we recognise the hardship that they may have gone through before that. We know that we need to ensure that the law is adhered to and we need to be firm, but we need to ensure that we provide opportunities and maintain dignity for those on the inside. We need to ensure that those of us on the outside do not lose our humanity. I commend this bill to the House. I note that the Palaszczuk government will never have the Newman cut, sack, sell mentality.

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (4.36 pm): I rise to make a brief contribution to the Inspection of Detention Services Bill 2021 and to provide a slightly different slant to many of the previous contributions. It has been more than five years since Walter Sofronoff QC delivered his report into the Queensland parole system, more than five years since the independent review of youth detention, over three years since the Taskforce Flaxton report was published and more than two years since the Productivity Commission inquiry into imprisonment and recidivism. Yet, despite all those reports and all that time, those opposite have missed the point. Let us make it very clear: there is not one Queenslander who would condone the inhumane treatment or torture of people in detention.

Queenslanders will also not tolerate people being forgotten, especially by governments. Queenslanders will not tolerate people calling out for help and being ignored, especially when those people are some of the people we rely on to keep our communities safe. This government has failed to deliver for people who work in our prisons, community correction centres, work camps, youth detention centres and police watch houses. Since becoming shadow minister for corrective services, I have heard from corrections officers who are at breaking point thanks to a government that will not listen, will not respect them and will not pay them properly. As recently as yesterday I had a conversation with a corrections officer who had been bashed into unconsciousness in recent weeks and feared that they were going to lose their life. This person may never go back to work. These are the dangers that corrective services staff face on a daily basis.

On that side of the House we have at least two members who, according to their member details, have worked in correction centres—the member for Mundingburra and the member for Caloundra. Given that both of those members have worked in these environments—one of them has been employed by a union and one of them attended the public hearings on this bill—we would have to question why both of them would ignore issues raised by staff regarding safety.

These are not minor issues. According to Together Queensland, they include exposure to poisonous chemicals. The best they can do is a longwinded question from the member for Caloundra at a hearing which was shot down by departmental staff. All the while we have staff being seriously assaulted. We only have to look at the budget papers for confirmation that the rate of serious assaults on staff by prisoners has increased. The best the minister can do is to include a footnote in the department's SDS to say assaults are investigated.

Just like those opposite's so-called tough action on youth justice, their action on prisoners who assault staff amounts to little. We need to be doing a lot more to protect staff who work in those environments. Without the inclusion of the health and safety of workers in prisons, youth detention centres and other places of detention, this bill falls a long way short of the mark.

 **Mr McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (4.39 pm): I rise in support of the Inspector of Detention Services Bill, part of our commitment to establish an independent inspectorate to promote and uphold the humane treatment and conditions of people detained in prisons, community correction centres, work camps, youth detention centres and police watch houses.

This bill establishes the Inspector of Detention Services in Queensland, with the position to be held by the Queensland Ombudsman, and support for the inspector's functions to be provided by staff from the office of the Ombudsman. It will help advance the improvement of detention services and places of detention, including the conditions of detainees' detention, and preventing detainees being subjected to harm, including torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment. This will be achieved by providing a framework for the review of detention services and inspection of places of detention and independent and transparent reporting.

The bill will also address recommendations stemming from a number of reviews into the Queensland criminal justice system since 2016 which have recommended the establishment of an independent inspector over adult correctional services, youth detention centres and police watch houses. We committed to introducing this role in response to recommendations from a range of independent reviews into Queensland's criminal justice system including the Sofronoff review, the Taskforce Flaxton report and the Independent Review of Youth Detention. While many of the places of detention have existing accountability and oversight frameworks, there is no one body responsible for the independent oversight of these facilities' operations through a system of regular inspections.

International and Australian law recognise that all people in detention or imprisonment should be treated in a humane way. Due to the closed nature of custodial institutions and the power imbalance inherent in the custodial environment, the potential for abuse and ill-treatment is unfortunately always present. It is generally recognised that observance of human rights is the most effective and safe way to manage custodial environments. Independent inspectors seek to mitigate the potential for ill-treatment and abuse through the review and inspection of detention environments. They also help ensure transparency and accountability in the way that places of detention, and the people detained within them, are managed by providing the community with insight into detention environments.

In Queensland, there are multiple layers of accountability relating to the operation of places of detention provided by Queensland Corrective Services, the Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs and the Queensland Police Service. However, as I mentioned before, there is currently no single body with the primary function of independent oversight of these places of detention through a system of regular inspections that seek to scrutinise the operations of the environment with a view to promoting and upholding the humane treatment and conditions of the people detained.

The inspectorate model established by this bill is based on comparable, independent inspectorate models—in particular, that which is operating currently in Western Australia. It is also influenced by the current New South Wales, Tasmanian and Australian Capital Territory models.

The inspector will have a broad power to do all things necessary or convenient for, or in connection with, the performance of the inspector's functions and to fulfil its preventive, proactive and independent mandate. The inspector will also have a preventive, proactive and independent mandate to carry out reviews of detention services provided at places of detention and inspections of places of detention with a view to promoting the improvement of detention services and places of detention by upholding the humane treatment, management and conditions of people contained.

The inspector's focus will be on the prevention of harm and improvement of the custodial environment in Queensland through examining the places of detention within its scope, the detention services provided to detainees and the lived experiences of people who are deprived of their liberty. It is intended the inspector will consider the operation and management of facilities, as well as the treatment and conditions of people detained in accordance with national and international materials that establish best practice.

Places of detention within the scope of the inspector are defined in the bill as community corrections centres, prisons, work camps, watch houses and youth detention centres. The bill defines detention services as the operation, management, direction, control or security of a place of detention, as well as the security, management, control, safety, care or wellbeing—including health care and education—of a detainee at a place of detention.

The inspector's oversight also extends to the transportation of detainees, while in the custody of a relevant custodial entity, from any place of detention or to a place of detention other than a watch house or to a watch house from a court in which the person has appeared or another watch house or place of detention. The bill also enables the inspector to provide advice or to make recommendations about a detention service or place of detention that the inspector considers appropriate.

While I am on my feet, I would like to make some remarks about when the LNP were last in government and our hardworking corrective services staff found themselves subjected to the vicious cutting, sacking and selling agenda of that government. There were cuts at our correctional centres like in Maryborough—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr McCALLUM: I want to acknowledge the presence of the member for Maryborough in the House because he will remember that very well as the correctional centre is one of the town's largest employers.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Order! Members, that was completely unacceptable. Member for Bundamba, you have the call but I urge you to please remain relevant to the bill.

Mr McCALLUM: The member for Maryborough will remember that the LNP sacked 15 staff from the Maryborough prison. It still does not make any sense why those jobs would be cut from such an important regional employer. The Darling Downs Correctional Centre was closed down under that regime. The 2012 ministerial media release from the responsible minister at the time states—

More than 40 full-time staff employed at the centre and its associated dairy would be relocated or offered redundancy.

“We have to rein-in the spending and waste which was out of control under Labor,”

“The cost to upgrade this facility—estimated to be \$20 million—is more than the people of Queensland can currently afford.”

It continues—

Corrective Services officials would consult with the centre’s staff to try to find employment opportunities elsewhere within the prison system.

“I regret the job losses but in the current difficult financial situation they are unavoidable,”

During the hearings conducted by the committee into this bill, Mr Michael Thomas from the Together union appeared and gave evidence. I will quote from a 2012 article in relation to the closing down of the Darling Downs correctional centre in which Mr Thomas said that they were contacted by a delegate about the claim that the prison was going to close down but were ‘yet to have any confirmation or denial from the department’. Mr Thomas said he received a call from the department’s office attempting to cancel the prearranged meeting with the union because there were ‘no agenda items’ that needed to be discussed, and then they heard about the prison closing down.

In conclusion, this bill delivers on the government’s commitment to establish an independent inspectorate over adult correctional facilities, youth detention centres and police watch houses. The inspector will report transparently and independently on the conditions and places of detention and have a preventive and proactive mandate with a focus on improving places of detention. It is another demonstration of our commitment to improving human rights, and I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (4.50 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Inspector of Detention Services Bill 2021. I thank the committee for their work on this bill, particularly the chair, the member for Toohey, and the member for Caloundra, who incorporated his expert knowledge and insight into detention services in Queensland. I also want to acknowledge and thank the member for Cooper for her commitment to social justice in Queensland and the expert work and years of service she has dedicated over time. I also acknowledge all of the submitters to the committee inquiry including the Together union, which represents over 2,600 custodial corrections officers across Queensland, including several hundred around my home in Central Queensland.

While I am on my feet, I acknowledge all of the custodial corrections officers at the Capricornia Correctional Centre and thank them for their work on the front line keeping our community safe and helping to rehabilitate prisoners at Capricornia. The officers at Capricornia recently endured a terrible riot at the centre. It was one of the worst in Queensland’s history; 45 prisoners have now been charged. The officers did an amazing job responding to that incident. It was also a great honour and privilege to attend the recent graduation of the latest cohort of custodial corrections officers who have now started work at Capricornia.

The Inspector of Detention Services Bill delivers on the Palaszczuk government’s commitment to establish an independent inspectorate over adult correctional facilities, youth detention centres and police watch houses. It creates further oversight into our state’s detention facilities to prevent harm and improve detention services. The Inspector of Detention Services will have broad powers to inspect all of these facilities as well as review detention services that are provided at a place of detention. We committed to introduce this role in response to recommendations from a range of independent reviews into the Queensland criminal justice system, including the Sofronoff review, the Taskforce Flaxton report and the independent review of youth detention.

While many of the places of detention have existing accountability and oversight frameworks, there is no one body responsible for the independent oversight of these facilities’ operations through a system of regular inspections. The inspector will have the power to conduct both pre-arranged and random inspections of a place of detention and can also review or monitor a detention service at any time. The inspector will also conduct mandatory annual inspections of youth detention centres and undertake inspections of high-security sections of prisons and major watch houses at least once every five years.

Responsibilities of the role also include: preparing and publishing standards in relation to the conduct of inspections; reporting to the Legislative Assembly on inspection outcomes; and recommendations to promote and uphold the humane treatment and conditions of people detained. The position of inspector will be held by the Queensland Ombudsman, who will be supported in the role by the office of the Ombudsman. The inspector's functions do not include investigating incidents such as riots, deaths or escapes or investigating individual complaints. These investigative functions will remain the responsibility of other bodies such as Queensland Corrective Services, the Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs, the Queensland Police Service, the Crime and Corruption Commission and the coroner. This bill is yet another demonstration of our commitment to promoting human rights and the safety of corrections officers and prisoners right across the state.

Sadly, a large proportion of prisoners return to prison. Around half of the people who serve a prison sentence will return to prison at least once in their life and many will return several times. In fact, about 50 per cent of all prisoners will return to prison within two years of release. The pattern of repeat offending and growth in prisoner numbers in Queensland have major social and economic implications for everyone, including prisoners, corrections officers, government and the wider community. The cost of recidivism is significant in both the social and financial sense. Of course community safety is paramount and detention is necessary in our society. It is a sad fact of life that we will never completely eradicate crime in our communities, but it is our responsibility as a government to try to reduce and prevent crime in our community. It is better for individuals, families and, importantly, taxpayers.

If you do the crime you do the time, but when you get out we do not want you to go back. Change is necessary to reduce recidivism; however, the problem is complex. Prisoner numbers reflect underlying forces, including long-term social and economic factors and community views about criminal justice. They also reflect the daily activities and decisions at key points within the criminal justice system, sentencing and legislative frameworks, police resourcing and decisions, sentencing practices, court workloads and access to support services, including Legal Aid. We know from all of the international evidence that the quality of the prison environment is a significant determinant of prisons' impact on reoffending.

The reasons prisoners return to jail are complex but they may include things such as: the prison experience not providing a deterrent effect to future offending; difficulty finding employment—in fact, less than 16 per cent of prisoners have organised paid employment two weeks after release—a lack of financial resources; an untreated or ongoing drug problem or mental health issue; homelessness—in Queensland, sadly around 39 per cent of prison entrants in 2015 were homeless in the four weeks prior to imprisonment, and 47 per cent of dischargees either did not know where they would stay or were expecting to stay in short-term or emergency accommodation on release—a lack of family support on release; and inadequate personal identification, resulting in delays accessing welfare benefits and other services. All of the evidence shows that by providing safe prisons with a focus on quality rehabilitation and reintegration we can reduce recidivism and in turn reduce the impact of crime on our communities and the cost to taxpayers.

The Palaszczuk Labor government is committed to the public operation of prisons in Queensland. This is in stark contrast to those opposite, who wanted to privatise Queensland's prisons when they were in government. They sacked 15 staff from the Maryborough centre; Darling Downs was closed and more than 40 full-time staff were sacked. I am proud that this Palaszczuk Labor government is committed to public prisons. I am proud that in 2019 we committed to take back control of Queensland's two privately operated prisons following the CCC's Taskforce Flaxton report from 2018. The report found that at Queensland's two privately operated prisons there was evidence prisoners were not treated humanely due to overcrowding, which was causing an increase in prisoners assaulting corrections staff.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Order, members on my left! I cannot hear the member for Keppel. If you had a point of order I would not be able to rule on it, so please afford the member the courtesy that you would expect if you were on your feet.

Ms LAUGA: We know that publicly operated correctional facilities have a far superior staff-to-prisoner ratio. This means not only elevated safety levels for staff and prisoners; it also greatly enhances the capacity to provide the appropriate rehabilitation programs to support breaking the cycle of offending.

I am proud that the Palaszczuk government is delivering a record corrections budget which includes measures to support community safety outcomes across Queensland as well as a number of important additions to enhance the outstanding work of custodial officers, Community Corrections

officers and QCS staff more broadly. The investments in safety and security by the Palaszczuk government in this budget are another way we are delivering better services to make the Queensland community, our officers and staff safer.

The security and safety of correctional centres and custodial officers will be improved across Queensland, with a collective investment of more than \$230 million over four years to improve electronic security systems and for maintenance and minor works. This includes funding to further boost custodial officer safety through the installation of safety hatches in older style cell doors and the purchase of additional body worn cameras for staff. This bill delivers on the Palaszczuk government's commitment to establish an independent inspectorate that will provide further oversight into our state's detention facilities to prevent harm and improve detention services. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (4.59 pm): I rise to address the Inspector of Detention Services Bill. It is so nice to have so many of my colleagues here to listen to my contribution on this bill. It takes me back to a previous parliament, when it was the zenith of the opposition at the time. I want to thank the committee for its report.

The bill aims to achieve its policy objectives by giving effect to the government's commitment to establish an independent inspectorate that will promote and uphold the humane treatment and conditions of detainees. The overarching objective of preventing incarcerated people from being subject to harm must remain central to the bill. In my role as the LNP shadow minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partnerships, I say that the over-representation of Indigenous people in our criminal justice system is a concern for all in our community. Governments working in genuine partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples must continue to research the factors that lead to the issue of their high incarceration rates.

Debate, on motion of Mr Langbroek, adjourned.

MOTION

Youth Crime

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (5.00 pm): I move—

That this House—

1. notes:
 - (a) the widespread community concern at the extent of juvenile criminal activity,
 - (b) the failure of existing laws to act as a deterrent to such activity, and
 - (c) over 53,400 petitioners, including the member for Capalaba acting in solidarity with his community, called for the reform of juvenile justice laws including breach of bail;
2. agrees to the introduction of reforms including an offence of breach of bail.

On Australia Day 2021, Kate Leadbetter, Matthew Field and their unborn child were killed by a juvenile offender in a stolen vehicle at Alexandra Hills. That incident was to become the lightning bolt for this state when we talk about juvenile crime. It also led to a petition—which as of today has been signed by no fewer than 53,400 petitioners—calling for the Attorney-General to appeal against the sentence imposed on the offender and to enact legislative change to curb juvenile crime, including reinstating breach of bail as an offence.

Juvenile crime continues to rage across this state. It continues to tear the heart out of our communities from the southern border to Cape York. This government might like to talk a big game when it comes to addressing juvenile crime, but those of us on this side know different. The statistics do not lie. In the 2020-21 year, 53 per cent of offenders for unlawful use of a motor vehicle were youth offenders aged 10 to 17. If we turn to the north of the state, in the year to May 2022, unlawful entry offences against juveniles in the Cairns local government area had more than doubled, and in four years unlawful use of a motor vehicle offences against juveniles in Cairns had more than doubled. Up the road in Mareeba, unlawful entry charges against juveniles are up 348 per cent over the last four years, property offences are up 282 per cent, and, wait for it, unlawful use of motor vehicle charges against juveniles have climbed a staggering 1,567 per cent.

The last 12 months have seen these juvenile offenders rampaging through Townsville yet again. Police statistics show robbery charges have almost doubled, property offence charges are up 184 per cent, unlawful use of motor vehicle charges are up 51 per cent and unlawful entry offences are up 57 per cent, yet those opposite would have us believe that it is all under control.

When we go through that petition, there is one particular name that stands out. I can tell the chamber here today what that name is: it is Don Brown, the member for Capalaba.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Please use correct titles.

Mr LAST: It is the member for Capalaba. Why did the member for Capalaba sign that petition? He wanted to show that he was acting in solidarity with his community, and I can appreciate that. However, that puts the member for Capalaba in somewhat of a predicament here tonight, because by signing that petition he is now at odds with his own party. When it comes to reinstating breach of bail, he is now obviously supporting this side of the House.

The member for Capalaba has a decision to make tonight. He has talked the talk, but can he walk the walk across and vote with this side of the House when this motion is put at the end of this debate? Does the member for Capalaba have the integrity, does he have the ticker, to come across here and vote to show his solidarity for his community? We will wait and see, because it is easy to tell your community one thing but it is completely different to do something else in here. I suspect the member for Capalaba knows that, when it comes to addressing juvenile crime in this state, reinstating breach of bail would be a good start. He is now at odds with those on that side of the House.

If members want to know what this juvenile crime epidemic is doing, I will quote from an email I received today from a lady in Townsville who has had her car stolen twice in the last week. This is what she said—

We've experienced house break-ins by armed criminals while our family slept, business vandalism and property damage at the hands of these criminals, all while the system that is meant to ensure public safety, enables criminal behaviour instead.

The costs involved in re-keying our homes and business overnight, the costs of accessing our insurance and the ongoing costs of higher premiums all land with us.

...

Good, decent, hardworking people should not be held to ransom by a system that protects the criminals, not the public.

I could not agree more with that. It is time this government stepped up to the plate and addressed this issue and held these thugs to account for what they are doing in Queensland.

 **Hon. LM LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (5.05 pm): I move the following amendment—

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

'the Palaszczuk government is ensuring Queenslanders feel safe in their homes and community by:

- (a) providing increased funding through the Palaszczuk government's 2022 budget of \$78.8 million over four years which will be invested in reforms under the youth justice strategy to continue to reduce youth offending and keep the community safe;
 - (b) the Palaszczuk government's 2022 budget which will invest more than \$3 billion to support better policing services in Queensland to keep communities safe from juvenile and adult criminal activity;
 - (c) the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice appealing on 16 June 2022 the sentence of a teenager who tragically killed two people on Australia Day in 2021; and
2. acknowledges the strong legislative amendments introduced and moved by the Palaszczuk government to strengthen community safety laws in Queensland were supported by the LNP.'

Youth offending, like crime generally, is a deeply complex issue with no quick or easy fixes, as those opposite discovered when in government. However, while the LNP travels the state politicising this issue, our government is resolutely focused on investing in the programs that divert young people from offending and in the facilities required to detain repeat offenders and hold them to account—to keep the community safe. Since being elected, we have invested more than half a billion dollars in new detention centre beds and early intervention programs and put hundreds of police on the ground.

In this year's budget alone, we will invest over \$300 million in evidence based interventions and youth justice reforms to address serious repeat offending across Queensland. We know this investment is having results, with ABS data released this year showing the number of youth offenders across Queensland is at its lowest level in a decade. The same ABS data shows that young people make up a decreasing percentage of all offenders—down from 17 per cent to 12 per cent this year.

We know our investment is working to divert a majority of the one to two per cent of Queensland young people who come into contact with the youth justice system away from offending, but I know that this is cold comfort to any Queenslanders who has experienced youth crime. We want every

Queenslander to know that our government is focused on the small number of young offenders who commit a large number of overall offences and cause the community concern. We know we have more work to do to address and reduce their behaviour and the risks they take with their safety and the safety of others.

After last year's tragedy at Alexandra Hills, our government made amendments to the Youth Justice Act which introduced the toughest bail legislation in the country. These amendments include a presumption against bail for serious repeat offenders and codifying the common-law principle that offending while on bail is an aggravating factor when sentencing. The legislation is clear and the message to the courts is clear: if a young person is a risk to community safety, they should be remanded in custody—that is, detention. These changes have seen up to 100 additional young people in detention and in detention for longer. Our youth justice response to those who would put community safety at risk is the strongest in the nation.

While we take the tough decisions and we make the investment into evidence based interventions to stop the cycle of offending and get these young people back into education and a job, those opposite play politics, which brings me to breach of bail. Right now, police can arrest a young person on the spot without a warrant if that young person has not complied with their bail conditions. Under the LNP, there has never been a breach of bail offence. Their claims are misleading, deceitful and disingenuous. What the LNP introduced was a finding of guilt while on bail offence, or FOGWOB. Over the more than two years it was on the books, their FOGWOB offence resulted in 185 offenders being found guilty, 94 per cent of whom reoffended, and the court finding that detention could not be imposed. It was a complete failure—no further penalty! Those opposite know this, but they continue to mislead Queenslanders for political gain.

It is time for the LNP to come clean and be honest with Queenslanders. While we are taking serious and considered steps to intervene early, break the cycle of reoffending and target repeat youth offenders to keep the community safe, the LNP is putting forward proposals that have clearly failed in the past. A backward step to the LNP's failed FOGWOB offence represents a softer approach to youth justice and community safety in Queensland. That is not what the community want. They do not want a soft response.

 **Dr ROBINSON** (Oodgeroo—LNP) (5.10 pm): I rise to support the motion moved by the LNP shadow police minister and member for Burdekin. The motion notes widespread concern about youth crime, the failure of current laws in Queensland and that over 53,000 Queenslanders signed a petition to change the laws by reinstating breach of bail as an offence. The motion specifically calls on this parliament to strengthen Queensland's watered down youth justice laws, laws that are clearly failing to protect Queenslanders from the rising tide of juvenile criminal activity.

From early in this speech, I wish to again express my condolences to the families of Matthew Field and Kate Leadbetter. The tragic event that took place at Alexandra Hills on Australia Day 2021 has forever altered the course of their lives and will remain in the minds of Redlanders for a long time. Matt and Kate and their unborn baby, Miles, were killed when they were struck by a recklessly driven four-wheel drive at a busy Redlands intersection only minutes from their home. A 17-year-old repeat offender, said to be under the influence of an intoxicating substance, was at the wheel of the Toyota LandCruiser. The vehicle had been stolen earlier from a home in nearby Cleveland.

Redlanders and others were shocked and responded with floral tributes, baby items, cards and notes in an area on a footpath alongside the road and outside the former Red shop. I have stood at that site and paid my respects. It was a very emotional experience. I cannot imagine what the families have gone through—the loss of their children; the loss of an unborn grandchild. Being a father and a grandfather of two, with two more grandchildren coming, I cannot imagine a loss such as they experienced. I grieve with the family members, particularly the parents and grandparents.

Fast-forward to June 2022, and the perpetrator was successfully prosecuted for his crime but given what the family and community consider a light sentence. The community was outraged that this could be allowed to occur under the current watered down laws for a near-adult aged repeat offender. The LNP reflected the family and community outrage and demanded the government appeal the sentence—something the Attorney-General has now done, and we await the outcome. However, it begs the question: if Labor had not watered down the LNP's strong laws for 17-year-old serial offenders, would there have been scope for a stronger and more appropriate sentence to be handed down in the first place?

In the light of these events, the deaths of Matt Field, Kate Leadbetter and little baby Miles, and considering the anguish caused to the Field and Leadbetter families by the soft sentence handed down to the perpetrator, today I call on all MPs in this House to support the motion, starting with the member

for Capalaba, who signed the petition. I can only assume that the member for Capalaba knows what he is doing and responsibly informs himself of things that he signs, so I would expect that he knew what he signed and is prepared to follow through with the commitment he made to the families. But if he signs things flippantly or purely emotionally then surely the Premier must consider his positions of responsibility.

Also, I call on the two other state members from Redlands coast—the members for Redlands and Springwood—to support this motion and, in so doing, show that they, too, are putting first the Redlands community that they represent. By supporting this motion today, all MPs are saying that they will support changing the law to restore breach of bail as an offence. Supporting this motion sends a clear message to bereaved and suffering families that we care about their pain, their grief and their loss. Further, it sends a clear message to the community that we will do more to protect them from young repeat offenders. It also sends a clear warning to young offenders that if they ignore our laws and commit grievous offences, particularly while already on bail, the full weight of the law will come down on them. I support the motion and call on all members to do likewise.

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (5.15 pm): I rise to support the amendment moved by the Minister for Youth Justice. The Palaszczuk government is absolutely committed to keeping the community safe and ensuring that young offenders are held to account. That is why I recently signed a notice of appeal regarding the sentence handed down to the young offender who killed Kate Leadbetter, Matthew Field and their unborn son.

Unlike those opposite, we on this side of the House take an evidence based approach to addressing youth justice and we take advice from the experts. The government, since this case, has taken swift action to strengthen youth justice bail laws, including a presumption against bail for youth offenders charged with certain additional offences in specified circumstances, ensuring the court takes into account the commission of further offences while on bail as an aggravating factor during sentencing which will lead to tougher sentences than the breach of bail offence that those opposite have been advocating for. Amending the principles of the Youth Justice Act will make it clear that the community needs to be protected from recidivist offenders. We have made these changes because we understand that the community wants to feel safe. We have listened and we are acting.

It is the height of hypocrisy for the LNP to come into this place and talk about failures when it comes to youth justice. Let's for a moment remember their record on youth justice. What did the member for Kawana, Queensland's worst attorney-general, introduce? He introduced the boot camps.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Your comments will come through the chair, please, Attorney.

Ms FENTIMAN: Not only did the boot camps do nothing to reduce crime; they were an enormous waste of taxpayer money.

Mr Boothman interjected.

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

Ms FENTIMAN: The final cost for these boot camps, in fact, was eight times more than what the then attorney-general promised. Then there was the Auditor-General, who criticised the cost blowout and determined that there was no documentation to support why these contracts were awarded to certain providers. I think I might know the answer: the contract was awarded to a known LNP donor, awarded against the advice of a panel even after the panel made it clear that this provider was not up to scratch. The member for Kawana's response was, 'Oh, in my view they were suitable.' I do not know how much boot camp experience you get as a Sunny Coast conveyancer, but I certainly was not aware that the member was an expert. If the millions in wasted money going to LNP mates was not bad enough, how much taxpayer money did he spend on the helicopter ride to get to the boot camps? He is like Bronwyn Bishop but with more hair gel!

It would be one thing if they had only forgotten about the boot camps and what a failure they were, but, as we have heard from the Minister for Youth Justice, they continue to refuse to learn the lessons of their past policy failures. Breach of bail did nothing to reduce crime. Only 185 juvenile offenders were convicted of the offence. Of these, 90 per cent reoffended within 12 months and 94 per cent reoffended within two years.

Mr Lister interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Southern Downs, you are warned.

Ms FENTIMAN: What is even more embarrassing is that the Childrens Court of Queensland held that the offence of committing an offence whilst on bail was flawed: it did not enable a juvenile to be punished because, if the young person had already been convicted of an offence, it breached section 16 of the Criminal Code, double punishment. What did the breach of bail offence do, guys, the one you keep saying we need to do? It did not enable them to be punished—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Comments will come through the chair, Attorney.

Ms FENTIMAN:—and they all reoffended. Oh my God! Seriously, even the Childrens Court has said this was the most flawed offence they have seen. These young offenders could not be punished, but do you know what we have done? We have stopped them getting bail. We have reversed the presumption of bail. Do you know what else we have done? We have made a breach of bail an aggravating factor on sentencing. That leads to tougher sentences. Under your breach of bail they all reoffended. They did not get any extra penalties. That is what you are advocating for. As the youth justice minister said—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Attorney, your comments will come through the chair, please.

Ms FENTIMAN:—you are soft. You are completely soft.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Attorney, your comments will come through the chair.

Ms FENTIMAN: Those opposite in the LNP cannot lecture this government about youth justice. Dodgy boot camps, helicopter rides, an offence that absolutely did not work—the track record of the LNP is a disgrace.

 **Mr PURDIE** (Ninderry—LNP) (5.19 pm): I also rise to support the motion moved by the member for Burdekin. Late last year on the Sunshine Coast three young recidivist offenders from Caboolture who were well known to police stole a BMW from Shelly Beach. They drove around town creating mayhem for a little while and then they started heading back down the highway to Caboolture when the car ran out of petrol on the side of the road. Do you know what they did?

Mrs Gerber: What? They torched the car?

Mr PURDIE: No. Some people might think it is a good suggestion.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Your comments will come through the chair.

Mr PURDIE: Some people might think that they panicked, they tried to hide the evidence, they tried to torch the car or they tried to wipe their fingerprints. Did they try to hitchhike home? Did they run and hide? Do honourable members know what they did? They rang triple 0 and they said, 'The stolen car we're in has just run out of petrol and we need a lift home.' This Attorney-General and this police minister might love coming in here and doing a 'tough on crime' pantomime like we just saw, but that says everything we need to know about what recidivist juvenile offenders think about the laws in this state, how weak they are and how they have absolutely no respect for them and no respect for our police who every night are chasing the same kids over and over again. That is the respect they show. That is what these juvenile offenders think about the laws of this state.

We heard the minister who spoke previously talk about it being a complex issue and we heard the Attorney-General talk about figures from 10 years ago. I can tell honourable members that 10 years ago crime was going down—from 2012 to 2015. In January 2020, just before COVID, before most of our police were redeployed to borders and quarantine checkpoints, there were more crimes committed in Queensland than ever before, than ever in the history of this state. That is the legacy of this police minister, who likes to talk tough on crime. However, it is not a complex issue because history has the answers. We know that in 2015 the top priority of the Palaszczuk government when they won office was to water down the Youth Justice Act and water down the laws available to our police. They implemented their soft on crime regime. What we have seen since then is that crime has spiralled out of control, and we heard some of the stats earlier this afternoon.

Our police know the current laws do not work. Victims know they do not work. Communities across Queensland who are in the grip of a youth crime crisis know they do not work. The families of victims who had their lives destroyed know they do not work. Over 53,000 people who signed our petition calling for tougher laws know they do not work. Do honourable members know who else knows they do not work? The member for Capalaba, the Chief Government Whip; he knows his job is to take the temperature of the backbench and support his leadership team. He has taken the temperature not only of the backbench but also of his community. I applaud him for showing the courage to join in our campaign, to join our local police and those on this side of the House in calling for tougher laws.

We know this government is all talk and no action. After that tragedy, which we have heard about tonight, at Alexandra Hills on Australia Day last year we saw the lightning bolt, the heat in the community over that when a juvenile recidivist violent offender killed Matty, Kate and their unborn son, Miles. As a circuit-breaker this government also announced a 'tough on crime' youth crime crackdown to pretend they were tough on crime. At the time we called it window-dressing. The headline to that policy was GPS trackers—

Mrs Gerber: What a joke.

Mr PURDIE:—and what a joke that was. How has that gone? At the time those of us on this side pointed out it would not work. Our police knew it would not work. At the moment in Queensland not one juvenile offender is wearing a GPS device because they need to consent to wearing it, they need to consent to recharging it every eight hours and the police actually need to give them a free phone to link with the GPS tracking device. It was never going to work. This government is totally inept when it comes to crime.

It is not just the community and the victims who need to be protected because this government are letting down these vulnerable youth who end up in the system committing crime. Only on Monday a 13-year-old child died in a stolen car at Oakey and four vulnerable young juvenile offenders, who should have been in protection or in the care of the state, were injured. I understand at the time the driver still had his leg in plaster from a chase the week before during which he had rolled a car. He got out on bail again and took three of his mates for a drive and one died. It is not just communities and victims who need protection from these juvenile offenders; they need protection from themselves.

I call on every member of the government to support their Chief Government Whip and support our campaign for tougher laws.

 **Mr RUSSO** (Toohey—ALP) (5.25 pm): I rise to support the amended motion and specifically the proposition of breach of bail. It might be an uncomfortable truth, but Queenslanders never had an offence of breach of bail for young people. Not under the LNP, not under the National Party, not under the Country Party, not under the Independents and not even under the squatter conservatives has there been a breach of bail offence for young people.

I can tell honourable members that there are several ways that a young person may breach their bail including failure to comply with a curfew and failure to reside at an approved address. Today police can arrest a young person on the spot without a warrant if that young person has not complied with their bail conditions. They can even be arrested if police reasonably suspect they are likely to breach a bail condition before the breach has happened.

The LNP created an offence for committing an offence while on bail for an offence called finding of guilt while on bail, as the youth justice minister has already explained this. It was an absolute nonsense and it is time for the LNP to come clean and be honest with Queenslanders. The LNP's law did nothing to deter or reduce crime while it was on the statute books between March 2014 and June 2016 and the courts were left to process the charges in circumstances where no punishment could be imposed. As has already been mentioned, only 185 juvenile offenders were convicted of the offence under the LNP. Of these, more than 90 per cent reoffended within 12 months and 94 per cent within two years. This law meant the offender could receive a lesser penalty because the court could not treat an offence committed while on bail as a circumstance of aggravation.

While we are making a concerted effort to target repeat youth offenders, the LNP is putting forward proposals that have failed in the past or, in the case of breach of bail, have never existed. I am proud to be part of a government that is investing in programs clearly aimed at ensuring Queenslanders are safe in their homes and communities. In and around my electorate of Toohey, government funded programs aimed at preventing offending behaviour or reoffending include Transition 2 Success, which is designed for young people involved in, or at risk of contact with, the youth justice system, helping to re-engage them with education and training. Participants complete nationally recognised certificates to develop positive behaviour and life skills. This assists them to find and keep employment, re-engage with the community and work towards a positive future.

Family-led decision-making gives Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families whose children are in contact with the youth justice system a stronger voice in decisions about their children. It involves the young person, their family, community organisations and youth justice staff working together to reduce offending. Community Youth Response and Diversion provides alternative pathways to support young people. It places an emphasis on after-hours support, cultural mentoring, bridging to flexi school

and family-focused intensive case management for young people at risk of reoffending. This side of the House is committed to creating a safe place for all Queenslanders. Those opposite are simply committed to misleading the people of Queensland, playing politics with our most vulnerable residents.

 **Ms CAMM** (Whitsunday—LNP) (5.30 pm): I start by commending the member for Capalaba for his conviction to stand in solidarity with his community and I would encourage and call on the member for Cairns, the member for Townsville, the member for Thuringowa and the member for Mundingburra to also stand with their colleague. When I and many members on this side of the House travel to North Queensland we hear the public sentiment, hear from victims of crime, hear about the cohort of youth recidivism across this state and hear about the vast number of crimes exploding across this state, across Townsville and across Cairns, which has seen a peak of car thefts like we have never seen before.

I also draw the attention of the House to some statistics—and I think it is important that we reflect that it is in fact those opposite who have been in power for seven years, funnily enough: 2018, two teenagers killed in a stolen car on the Gore Highway north of Goondiwindi; June 2020, four teenagers killed in Townsville in a stolen vehicle; June 2021, a 13-year-old boy killed in a stolen car of a residential care worker—the coronial inquiry is underway and I think the findings of that will be quite tragic; February 2022, three teenagers taken to hospital after the crash of a stolen car south of Bowen; February 2022, a 14-year-old died in an allegedly stolen car in Cairns, with five other teenagers also injured; and June 2022, a 13-year-old boy died on Monday morning in Toowoomba in a stolen car and charges have been laid against a 14-year-old boy. Then there are the tragic victims that this motion speaks to as well, and I place on the record my condolences and extend those condolences to the victim in North Queensland, Jennifer Board, who lost her life.

Queenslanders are fed up with the failings of those opposite, and this stems back seven years. This stems back to the previous child safety ministers. This stems back to the youth justice ministers.

Mr Last interjected.

Ms CAMM: Failed child safety ministers; I take that interjection from my colleague. This points directly to a broken system that is not just failing public safety across our state but also failing the youth and failing the children who entered the care of this state. What we ask for is quite simply a reform that will empower police to not just protect their communities but to protect these young people from themselves. I will take the advice from three police officers who served this great state—the member for Burdekin, the member for Ninderry and the member for Lockyer—over any of those opposite. I will take the insights of those who know the law. I will take the insights of those who have dealt with the system for many years—multiple decades—over those across the chamber.

We continue to hear that the issue is complex. We know that the issue is complex, but introducing breach of bail is not a complex law reform. In fact, we have seen petitions not just from almost 55,000 Queenslanders. There are also petitions in Far North Queensland from those in Cairns, those in Townsville, those who continuously contact my office and contact the member for Burdekin and many others on this side because their own elected members do not stand with them and do not speak out on behalf of those victims of crime.

Mr Minnikin: Don does!

Ms CAMM: I take that interjection, and we once again congratulate the member for Capalaba for doing so. Last week I travelled to Toowoomba and met with a mother who is very fearful that her son will end up in a stolen car and will kill an innocent family. Do members know what? She expressed to me how the child protection system has failed her, has failed her son and has failed other parents. When they seek intervention and they seek support, they are only left with the options that a broken system provides, and it is not good enough.

 **Mr MADDEN** (Ipswich West—ALP) (5.35 pm): I am pleased to rise to speak against the opposition's motion and in support of the proposed amendment moved by the member for Nudgee. As you would be aware, Mr Deputy Speaker Kelly, I practised for about 25 years as a solicitor admitted to the Supreme Court of Queensland and I spent a good deal of that time and the previous five years as an articled clerk dealing with matters in the Magistrates Court, and that included matters in the Childrens Court when it was dealing in its criminal jurisdiction.

I am pleased to say that during that time in the Childrens Court I was surrounded by people who constantly demonstrated compassion towards the children who appeared before the court, and that included the magistrates, the police officers, the social workers and even the security staff. We all wanted what was best for the children who appeared before the court and we knew that the bulk of

those children came from disadvantaged backgrounds and broken homes and were often illiterate. Experts tell us that if a child cannot read by the end of fifth grade they lose self-confidence and self-esteem, making it more likely to enter the juvenile justice system.

It disappoints me greatly to constantly hear the criticism from the opposition of the state's juvenile justice system and the motion that we are debating tonight. It is not just the motion; it is the brevity of the motion. It is the few words we see in the motion and it does not have the compassion that is necessary when matters are being dealt with by the Childrens Court. The motion displays a complete lack of knowledge of how the Childrens Court works and what it is trying to achieve. The priority of the Childrens Court should always be rehabilitation and punishment should be a last resort, not the first resort as suggested in the opposition's motion.

Everyone in Queensland has a right to feel safe in their homes and in their workplaces—I think we all agree on that—and that is why Queensland has the strongest, toughest and most comprehensive youth justice laws in the nation. We are making sure that the young people who break the laws are accountable for their actions. The police themselves tell us that they are seeing the impact of the expanded youth justice reforms since they took effect last year in that the number of youth offenders is the lowest it has been for a decade and there has been a six per cent decrease in the number of unique youth offenders in Queensland in 2020-21 compared to the previous year. Also, since 2011-12 the number of unique children offenders has decreased by 27 per cent—27 per cent.

There have been more than 100 young people in custody under our tougher laws and they are staying in youth detention for longer periods. This is because of the show cause legislation the Palaszczuk government introduced which is the toughest in the nation. These laws require repeat offenders to show why they should remain in the community as opposed to being in custody, which brings me to the breach of bail. The opposition is careless in the truth on its breach of bail. It made it an offence to be found guilty of an offence committed while on bail for a previous offence. Under the Newman-Nicholls government, 185 young people were convicted, with over 90 per cent reoffending within 12 months and 94 per cent reoffending within two years. Under the Newman-Nicholls government, just 10 per cent of applications of bail in the Childrens Court were refused.

Since the introduction in early 2021 of tougher new laws by the Palaszczuk government, 20 per cent of applications for bail have been refused. That is double the proportion that was refused under the Newman-Nicholls government's laws. Bail for young people who commit serious offences is being refused at double the rate it was under the laws of those opposite. As Assistant Commissioner Scanlon has stated, a substantial proportion of high-risk youth offenders are being kept in detention to protect the community because of the new show cause bail provisions. She went on to say that this is exactly what the amended legislation was designed to do.

The Palaszczuk government is investing in youth justice programs. I have seen it in my electorate of Ipswich West. We are investing in the programs, services and infrastructure needed to reduce offending and reoffending to keep our communities safe. This includes restorative justice conferencing where the offender sits down with the person against whom the offence was committed. The participants discuss the impact of the crime and what can be done to start making things right. The program has proven to reduce—

(Time expired)

 **Mrs GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (5.40 pm): 27,432—that is the number of offences committed by juveniles on the watch of this state Labor government. Recent figures from the Government Statistician's Office show the alarming extent of juvenile crime on the Gold Coast, with minors making up more than half of all offenders responsible for house break-ins and stolen cars. In the last financial year 52 per cent of all offenders across the south-east responsible for house break-ins were juvenile offenders; 54 per cent of offenders involved in motor vehicle offences were juveniles—that is juveniles aged between 10 and 17. Those figures are up from last year. Just last week two teenagers aged 15 and 16 terrorised our community, taking police on a wild car chase across the Gold Coast in a stolen car. They hit several cars. They trashed police cars. This chaos is happening every week in our communities. Youth crime is out of control and the government is doing nothing to address it. This is not just happening on the Gold Coast. It is happening right across Queensland.

On Australia Day last year there was the tragedy that rocked the entire state: Matthew, Kate and baby Miles were heinously killed by a repeat juvenile offender. He was in a stolen car, he was drunk, he was high and he had a criminal history more than 12 pages long. Guess what? He was out on bail. Time and time again in this chamber we have heard stories of locals' lives being torn apart by juvenile offenders. It is the revolving door on crime that this state Labor government has created and the only

thing that changes is the family whose life is torn apart by the juvenile offender. The youth justice system is broken. As the shadow assistant minister for justice, as a former prosecutor and as a mum I know it. The police, trying to save these juveniles from committing more crimes, know it. Crime is running rampant throughout Queensland. The system is broken because there are no consequences for actions. At the heart of any good judicial system is consequences for action. Our laws must provide a deterrent for future offenders.

Twelve days ago a petition was launched calling on the Attorney-General to enact legislative change to curb juvenile crime, including breach of bail as an offence. Over 53,400 people have signed this petition. Instead of listening to the staggering 53,000 people who have signed the petition, including one of their own team, the Chief Government Whip, the member for Capalaba, who to his credit signed the petition calling for breach of bail as an offence—and if he truly meant what he signed he would stand with the LNP in supporting this motion—and doing what needs to be done and introducing breach of bail as an offence, this government has introduced failed policies like GPS trackers.

The GPS tracker policy measure has been running for almost a year now and guess how many juvenile offenders have been given a GPS tracker on the Gold Coast—take a guess, take a stab in the dark—a GPS tracker designed to prevent them from committing further crimes while out on bail? The number is zero. There are zero juvenile offenders with a GPS tracker. The key reason is that the juveniles do not want to wear it. A 16-year-old boy on the Gold Coast who a couple of months ago was accused of stealing a luxury Range Rover, which was later crashed by a 13-year-old, was out on bail but not subject to a GPS tracker despite being eligible. I assume it is because he did not want to wear it. These kids know the system and they are simply telling the magistrate that they do not want to wear it.

We have recidivist juvenile offenders out on bail because of the revolving door that Labor has created. Their solution is ankle bracelets that no Gold Coast juvenile offenders wear. Labor has failed to get youth crime under control, Labor has failed to protect our community and Labor has failed to do the right thing by our children. We know it, the 54,000 people who signed the petition know it and the member for Capalaba knows it. Labor has watered down the Youth Justice Act to the point where it allows the same repeat offenders to commit crimes over and over again. Having breach of bail as an offence is just one step towards fixing the broken system. It will allow police to enforce bail conditions so that, if the teenager out on bail does not comply with his bail condition to be home by a certain time, police can intercept him, pick him up and prevent further crimes in the community, but they can also save that child. We need breach of bail introduced as an offence in the Youth Justice Act.

 **Mr BROWN** (Capalaba—ALP) (5.45 pm): Those opposite cannot help but play politics on this issue. After a tragic incident in my local community they take the first opportunity after the sentence to come in here and use cheap wedge politics. When the opposition leader said he was going to be different I believed him.

A government member interjected.

Mr BROWN: I take the interjection. This motion is cheap wedge politics on a tragic issue in my community.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr BROWN: Those opposite have been laughing and giggling all the way through this debate. Three people in my community lost their lives—a bloke I went to school with—and the Leader of the Opposition comes in here at the first opportunity and employs cheap wedge politics. That is the lowest level one can go to.

Australia Day 2021 will be a sad day in my local community for many years to come. Less than two months after that incident the police minister, the Attorney-General and the Minister for Children and Youth Justice came in with a sweeping reform package and introduced it into parliament. By September that year we had changed the laws. Since then 223 youth offenders have been refused bail. That is more than the 185 breach of bail offences. They are tougher laws. You cannot breach bail if you are not getting bail. Do those opposite not understand that. It is a simple concept. If you are in jail you cannot breach bail.

Once the sentence came down I did not wait for a petition. I was the first person to call for the appeal. I wrote to the Attorney-General and the Premier calling for the appeal. That is the main reason that the petition started for the appeal. I signed it the next day—a whole day after I had called for it. It was already in train. The Attorney-General was already getting advice before the petition was even

printed. Immediately after signing it I said I was signing it in solidarity with Russell and Ann who I spoke to for an hour. I will not go into the details of that conversation, but not once did they mention breach of bail to me in that hour-long conversation.

We have implemented tougher laws than breach of bail. Immediately after that, in an interview with Channel 9, I said that I and the Labor Party did not support breach of bail because it is weaker. The laws we have brought in, as I have shown with stats, are tougher. Refusing bail means you cannot breach bail. It is a simple concept that those opposite do not understand.

Here we go again: at the first opportunity they get, they come in here and play cheap wedge politics against me. They do not care about the family. They do not care about the victims. They just come in here and play cheap politics. They think they have me: 'Oh, he signed a petition!' I picked up the phone and we got on and introduced tougher laws in refusing bail. That was last September. We did not wait for the sentence. We did it straightaway—less than two months afterwards. This just sickens me.

In Queensland these laws are working. We have three times the number of youth offenders in jail than New South Wales, despite their greater population. That is proof that our laws are working. As I said before, since September 223 people have been refused bail. I will not play cheap wedge politics on this issue. I will continue to stand up for the community. I will not worry about petitions. I will not worry about press conferences. I will get on and do the right thing by the community.

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (5.50 pm): When I came into this place I signed an oath. It said—

I will well and truly serve the people of Queensland and faithfully perform the duties and responsibilities of a member of the Legislative Assembly to the best of my ability and according to law.

Trust my word on something that is important and if I make a mistake I take responsibility for it. For the community, trust in every member in this House is very important. But what do we see from the other side? We see that they will tell a story not only potentially in the lead-up to an election, like 'no new taxes', but also potentially in the lead-up to a piece of legislation. We have a police minister in this place who was busy telling the Pullen family about a piece of legislation, how it was going to change things and how they had fought for it, but they were used for a political stunt. He destroyed the trust they had placed in him by his actions. Trust and integrity are things that should mean something to every member of this House. If you sign a petition then you should stand by your word. If your word cannot be trusted and your signature cannot be trusted, what can the people of Queensland find in the members of the Labor Party that they can trust?

Let me refer to a couple of things that are included in the motion moved by the member for Burdekin, which I support. In my electorate, a 17-year-old boy was placed before the court. He was arrested in connection with the attempted armed robbery of an 89-year-old man from Middle Ridge. What happened? Shortly after, he was out on bail and he committed another string of offences. That 89-year-old man is not safe in his own home because of a 17-year-old at his door. What would have happened to that 17-year-old before the legislation was changed and 17-year-olds were incarcerated in a different facility to the one they go to now?

This government has a history of no plan, no organisation and no care. We have had 10-year-olds put in police watch houses and flown from Mount Isa, via Townsville, to Brisbane. People forget. They did not have any education. They did not have any proper food. They were eating takeaway. It was a nightmare. Why did that happen? It was because they took 17-year-olds out of the system that they were in and put them into another system, without building any facilities and with absolutely no plan. It was based just on an idea.

What has happened since 2016 when they got rid of breach of bail? In my own community, just on year-on-year statistics, unlawful use of a motor car offences are up by 84 per cent. Anybody who does not think that is a lot should look at their superannuation fund this year. Eighty-four per cent is a lot on any kind of increase. Unlawful entry offences—that is in your own home; your personal space is being invaded—are up by 74 per cent in my community. In my community, a 76-year-old woman was shopping in broad daylight. As she was in the car park she was attacked by two juveniles who dragged her out of her car and then drove off in it. Just this week juveniles were roaming around the community in a stolen car that they crashed, tragically killing one of their own.

We need to change the legislation. Breach of bail should be brought back. The government know it. They know that is what is lacking from the law but they cannot admit it because they have never been wrong in their lives! The statistics tell us that they are wrong, the petition tells us that they are wrong

and the community of Queensland tells us that they are wrong. The member for Capalaba stood with his community and said that we need to make a change. We all know we need to make a change; just ask anybody. I challenge any of the ministers to come to Toowoomba and talk to the old people about crime. They are not just afraid of crime; they are terrified. They are spending thousands of dollars on insurance, CCTV and security screens. There are pitched battles being fought at people's front doors at three o'clock in the morning as 14-year-olds with weapons try to steal the keys to Mercedes Benz cars. This stuff is so confronting that it is like some kind of horror movie, yet we hear, 'If they agree, we'll put a tracker on them—but only if they agree.'

It is time that they are held accountable for their actions. It is time that we have fewer victims. One way to have fewer victims is to not let someone who has committed a crime straight back out to commit another crime. They talk about fewer offenders and that number going down, but I want to see fewer victims.

(Time expired)

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (5.55 pm): I rise to oppose the opposition motion and support the minister's amended motion. I start by acknowledging the people who have been impacted by crime, some of them very tragically and some of whom are particularly connected to the debate tonight. Obviously, the impact of crime will have lifelong and tragic consequences for those people and I acknowledge that. I give them an assurance that this government will continue to do whatever it can to address criminal offending and to enhance community safety. That is a genuine assurance from the government. We will continue to take action. Wherever there is an evidence base and wherever the research supports it, we will continue to strengthen laws and invest in programs, initiatives and resources that enhance community safety. We do that genuinely, unlike those opposite who wish to play politics rather than genuinely contributing to the debate.

It has been 530 days or 17 months and 14 days or one year, five months and 14 days since the member for Burdekin said that the opposition would have a crime plan. I repeat: 530 days or 17 months and 14 days or one year, five months and 14 days since the member for Burdekin said that—

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, do not use that as a prop.

Mr RYAN:—the LNP would have a crime plan. On 8 January last year, he said that the community could expect a crime plan from the LNP in the next six months, saying that it could not come any sooner and they were workshopping it and meeting with the community and had to get it right. We need to contribute genuinely to the work that is being done to enhance community safety rather than play politics on the issue. However, from those opposite we do not see a genuine contribution; they are just playing politics.

If it were true that the breach of bail offence that the LNP talks about is the silver bullet to community safety, when they had it why did 94 per cent of the young people caught by that offence reoffend? It was a 94 per cent failure rate. If it were the silver bullet, why did it fail 94 per cent of the time? I can put it this way: if it were the silver bullet, when they had that offence why did young people breach their bail? Or I can put it this way: if it were the silver bullet to community safety, why were there more unique youth offenders then than now—if it were the silver bullet? The fact of the matter is that it was a failed policy that did not work and the Childrens Court said it did not actually provide any added punishment to young people who were breaching bail.

Let us also dispel this nonsense that the Queensland Police Service has no powers when it comes to a young person breaching their bail conditions. The Queensland Police Service has a very important power when it comes to a young person breaching their bail conditions: to arrest them. The Queensland Police Service can arrest a young person breaching their bail conditions. What do they do then? They can bring them back before the courts. Then what do they do? They put an argument to the courts to say, 'Actually, Your Honour, this young person has breached their bail. Under the government's tough new laws, which say that those young people have a presumption against bail now, can you please remand them in custody?' Guess what is happening? Because we have the toughest youth justice bail laws in the nation, those young people are being remanded in custody. Better than any breach of bail offence, those young people are being remanded in custody. While they are in custody, their offending is disrupted.

This government has acted and will continue to act when it comes to community safety. We have the toughest youth bail laws in the nation. We have strong Police Service resourcing and good interventions from the youth justice department. We will continue to do everything in our power to protect the community from crime.

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

AYES, 48:

ALP, 48—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, Kelly, A. King, S. King, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Madden, Martin, McCallum, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Walker, Whiting.

NOES, 34:

LNP, 30—Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Camm, Crisafulli, Gerber, Hart, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister, Mander, McDonald, Mickelberg, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, O'Connor, Perrett, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Stevens, Watts, Weir.

KAP, 3—Dametto, Katter, Knuth.

PHON, 1—Andrew.

Pairs: McMahon, Frecklington; Pease, Crandon; Tantari, Nicholls.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Division: Question put—That the motion, as amended, be agreed to.

Mr SPEAKER: Ring the bells for one minute.

AYES, 48:

ALP, 48—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, Kelly, A. King, S. King, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Madden, Martin, McCallum, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Walker, Whiting.

NOES, 34:

LNP, 30—Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Camm, Crisafulli, Gerber, Hart, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister, Mander, McDonald, Mickelberg, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, O'Connor, Perrett, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Stevens, Watts, Weir.

KAP, 3—Dametto, Katter, Knuth.

PHON, 1—Andrew.

Pairs: McMahon, Frecklington; Pease, Crandon; Tantari, Nicholls.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Motion, as agreed—

That this House—

1. notes the Palaszczuk government is ensuring Queenslanders feel safe in their homes and community by:
 - (a) providing increased funding through the Palaszczuk government's 2022 budget of \$78.8 million over four years which will be invested in reforms under the youth justice strategy to continue to reduce youth offending and keep the community safe;
 - (b) the Palaszczuk government's 2022 budget which will invest more than \$3 billion to support better policing services in Queensland to keep communities safe from juvenile and adult criminal activity;
 - (c) the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice appealing on 16 June 2022 the sentence of a teenager who tragically killed two people on Australia Day in 2021; and
2. acknowledges the strong legislative amendments introduced and moved by the Palaszczuk government to strengthen community safety laws in Queensland were supported by the LNP.

INSPECTOR OF DETENTION SERVICES BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from p. 1614, on motion of Ms Linard —

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mr LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (6.08 pm), continuing: There was a lot of discussion in the committee report about the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, OPCAT, and whether the bill sufficiently supports this convention. Whilst the bill closely aligns to the wording of OPCAT, it is not identical and a number of submitters have raised concern. There is also a lack of acknowledgement of OPCAT at all. The

committee responded to these concerns by acknowledging that a decision about OPCAT's implementation in Queensland is yet to be made. The Attorney-General, on introduction of the bill, stated that the bill continues to demonstrate the government's commitment to human rights; however, she failed to mention the convention in her introduction.

Another concern that the opposition shares is that, whilst Queensland has a chief inspector with QCS, it is not independent and reports directly to the Queensland Corrective Services Commissioner. This was reviewed within the Queensland Parole System Review and it was recommended to have an independent inspectorate to oversee and critically examine the operations of the correctional system. That report said the inspector should work collaboratively with the Ombudsman; however, there was no recommendation for the role being carried out by the Ombudsman.

The explanatory notes to the bill provide that the inspector will have its own resourcing dedicated to the performance of its functions. There is no detail as to what level of resourcing this will be, the amount of funding to be provided or the staff to support the inspector. The Department of Justice and Attorney-General has stated that the finances will be reported as part of the Queensland Ombudsman's annual report.

The Inspector of Detention Services Bill is a two-way street. To gain respect, you have to give it. For the bill to fulfil its objectives, detainees must reciprocate the respect given to them by guards and police officers. Whilst this bill focuses on the rights of prisoners, we have many hardworking Queensland Corrective Services staff being put in danger each day. We have heard from a number of these staff about the assaults they have survived, the serious injuries that have been caused and the subsequent trauma. We know that employees deserve to be provided with systems and processes that allow them to attend to their jobs to the best of their abilities. We know that work needs to be put in immediately to do just that.

The LNP welcomes any bill that will provide a framework for the independent and transparent reporting of inspections and reviews of detention services. The opposition agrees that we do not need another level of bureaucracy that achieves nothing. If the government wants to stick by its commitment to bring in an independent inspector, they need do it correctly. If the government continues to cut corners, we will keep going in circles.

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (6.11 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Inspector of Detention Services Bill. The Inspector of Detention Services Bill delivers on the Palaszczuk government's commitment to establish an independent inspectorate with oversight over Queensland's detention services. The principle around this is very simple, but one that will deliver better outcomes in custodial settings. The theory is that if we enhance oversight then we enhance the operating environment which then enhances safety—safety for staff, safety for visitors and safety for those who are in the care of the agencies that are responsible for detaining people from time to time; those agencies being the Queensland Corrective Services, the Department of Youth Justice and the Queensland Police Service.

I have heard a number of members talk about the connection to OPCAT, the optional protocol against cruelty and torture, and the way that is being operationalised through the national preventive mechanism. There is a very interesting history to that. That was actually an action taken by the former coalition government without consultation with the states around how that protocol would work. It essentially authorised, without consultation, an international organisation to come into Australia to inspect state and territory custodial facilities. That aside, the government has made a commitment around the independent inspectorate. We look forward to the principle of enhancing oversight to enhance operations to enhance safety, delivering better outcomes here in Queensland. We look forward to the new federal government working collaboratively with the states in terms of how they are going to operationalise OPCAT through the national preventive mechanism.

We have heard some of those opposite use quite insulting terms for our professional custodial officers, calling them guards. That is quite an insulting term. I have heard members use that term for custodial officers. These are highly trained, professional, dedicated public servants. All of them are public servants because of this government's action to get rid of private prisons here in Queensland. We are very proud of that. For those opposite to call custodial officers guards is insulting. I encourage all other members to refrain from using that term.

To enhance the professionalism and also safety of our custodial officers in Queensland, we have had an ongoing program of investing in them—investing in their training, investing in the facilities and investing in the resources available to them. We have one of the biggest custodial expansion programs

happening right now. A new 1,500-bed—I see the member for Caloundra is very excited about this—facility is being built at Gatton. It will bring the total number of extra beds that this government has brought online to over 4,000 extra beds. This is a huge expansion of our custodial capacity.

We have also been investing in staff training and staff resourcing. Queensland custodial officers are now the most highly trained custodial officers in Australasia. They are also the most equipped custodial officers in Australasia. We continue to roll out the new leading tactical options and skills training module to our custodial officers. It is an excellent program which focuses on de-escalation and communication as well as the skills that go along with that. We are also continuing with the training and deployment of OC spray for custodial officers in male high-security correctional centres. That is an Australian first that was well received by the workforce and has gone on to assist our custodial officers with enhancing security. We also continue to resource them with load-bearing vests and body worn cameras.

An initiative that the member for Caloundra's former colleagues will be very excited to see is that in the budget there is additional funding for safety security hatches to be installed in correctional centres as well as additional funding for body worn cameras. The money we are going to spend on that is quite enormous. There is \$2.5 million for extra body worn cameras for custodial officers as well as \$6.7 million to install security safety hatches. That is a significant investment.

It would be remiss of any member in this House to neglect the professionalism and investment in custodial officers who go about their work not only ensuring that the centres are secure and safe and their colleagues are safe but also that the people in the care of Queensland Corrective Services are kept safe and provided with the opportunity to rehabilitate so that when the time comes for those people in custody to be released they are released as better people than when they entered custody.

This bill will implement the government's response to the Queensland parole system review recommendation No. 88 and Taskforce Flaxton recommendation No. 33 to establish an independent inspectorate over corrective services facilities. It also implements the Queensland Parole System Review recommendation No. 90, that the inspectorate's scope include youth detention centres and police watch houses.

In line with the recommendations made by these reviews, the bill ensures the inspector is an officer of the parliament appointed by the Governor in Council; is not subject to the direction of a minister or member of parliament in the performance of their functions, but is able to review a matter regarding a place of detention at the request of a responsible minister; is able to examine all operations of Queensland Corrective Services' facilities; submits an annual report to the parliament on the inspectorate's operations, to be tabled in the Legislative Assembly by the Speaker; reports to the parliament via to the Speaker on each review of detention service undertaken, including places subject to mandatory inspections and any recommendations made; and works collaboratively with existing oversight entities in Queensland.

The Inspector of Detention Services will support Queensland Corrective Services in their objective to ensure community safety and crime prevention through the humane containment, supervision and rehabilitation of prisoners. That is an important thing to highlight because that is the statutory obligation of Queensland Corrective Services. That is in the act. The act requires the department to do its job around the humane containment, supervision and rehabilitation of prisoners. Queensland Corrective Services manages approximately 9,000 prisons across 11 high-security prisons, seven low-security facilities and 13 work camps. The work corrective services workers undertake day to day is complex and challenging. This has been felt more so recently with the additional challenges of the COVID-19 outbreak and recent flooding events across the state.

I would certainly like to take this opportunity to commend those officers for the outstanding work they do. The motto of Queensland Corrective Services which is worn on the sleeve of every single custodial officer is 'Protecting the community'. These often unsung heroes of the community safety spectrum here in Queensland do that job very well. They keep the community safe by ensuring that those people who are held in custody stay in custody and are held in custody in a safe way. Then they also go about their work of trying to rehabilitate those offenders. I think we owe it to all our custodial officers to take this opportunity to acknowledge their outstanding contribution to protecting the community and also their contribution to the people of Queensland through that work.

The establishment of the Inspector of Detention Services will support transparency and accountability in how these types of facilities operate. This, in turn, contributes to public confidence in the delivery of detention services in Queensland and helps promote the obligations of the department under the Human Rights Act. Once established, the inspector may at any time inspect a place of

detention which, within my portfolio area, includes a prison, a community corrections centre—like the Helana Jones Centre—a work camp and a watch house. The inspector will be required to conduct a minimum of five-yearly inspections at each of the 11 high-security prisons in Queensland. While there will be no mandated inspections for the low-security prisons and 13 work camps, the bill allows the inspector to have oversight of those facilities.

This is an important bill around enhancing oversight, enhancing safety and delivering better custodial outcomes. I commend the bill to the House and I encourage all members to support it.

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (6.21 pm): I too rise to address the Inspector of Detention Services Bill 2021. I do so as the representative of an electorate that has one of Queensland's largest correctional centres—Woodford Correctional Centre—but also as a former member of the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee.

I want to pick up on comments made by the Minister for Police and Corrective Services. I do acknowledge the custodial officers across Queensland and commend them for the fantastic work they do. As I said, Glass House is home to one of Queensland's largest correctional centres—Woodford. Many of the custodial officers who work there reside in the electorate of Glass House. Indeed, I have a number of those custodial officers whom I count as good friends. I know the trials and tribulations they face each day in the workplace. I know what they have to confront each day they go into that environment. I know what they have to confront each day when they come up against some of our state's most vile criminals, to be blunt. Yes, we do need to look at rehabilitation, but sometimes it is actually about ensuring public safety first and foremost, and those custodial officers are very much on the front line when it comes to that.

This afternoon throughout this debate those opposite have been giving history lessons on correctional services and detention services throughout Queensland. I thought I would give a similar history lesson. Let me focus on some of the history of the Palaszczuk Labor government when it comes to detention services. It was the Palaszczuk Labor government that scrapped expansion plans for our correctional centres. We heard the minister just talking about the expansion that is occurring as we speak. That was actually slated to start seven years ago. It was the Palaszczuk Labor government that scrapped it. Had they not, we would not have had the overcrowding issues that we have.

It was the Palaszczuk Labor government that took back into public hands, at the cost of more than \$100 million, privately operated jails in this state. Before those opposite ask who privatised those jails, let me tell the House that it was a former Labor government—it was the Goss Labor government. They took back into public hands privatised jails at an extraordinary cost to taxpayers. Then we saw knee-jerk responses to young people in watch houses. The fact that they were in the watch house in the first place was appalling.

We saw them shift 17-year-olds to youth detention centres without making sure that there were enough beds to house those 17-year-olds and, in some cases, putting some very hardened criminals into contact with some very young children who should never have been exposed to that. It was the same Palaszczuk Labor government that oversaw riots in our youth detention centres and riots in our correctional centres. It was the same Palaszczuk Labor government that has double parked and overcrowded our prisons. It is the same Palaszczuk Labor government that has created a backlog of parole hearings—again, exacerbating that overcrowding. It is the same Palaszczuk Labor government that, because of all that ineptness, is seeing custodial officers being injured. Before those opposite want to give history lessons on detention services in this state, they need to look at their own track record over the last seven years.

This bill does enact a number of expectations, particularly from the Sofronoff review, of an inspecting service of detention services across the state. As those of us on the committee heard, it probably falls short on some of the expectations. The Queensland Council for Civil Liberties picked up on the role of inspector to be performed by the Ombudsman as enacted by this bill. They said—

Mr Sofronoff clearly intended that the Inspectorate would be separate from the Ombudsman. We suspect this a cost reducing measure and the Committee should seek an assurance that the Ombudsman will be adequately funded to carry out these additional tasks.

Similarly, the Queensland Law Society said—

We consider that the introduction of an Inspector of Detention Services must be accompanied by adequate and ongoing resourcing. To be able to discharge the obligations of the Bill and achieve the policy intent, the inspector will need to be provided sufficient financial resources and staffing.

We heard a number of submitters talk about other models, particularly the Tasmanian model. As a committee, we gave consideration around this aspect of the true independence of the inspector and their resourcing. We took some assurances from the department that the inspector could fulfil the

functions set out in the bill, that they would be given the appropriate funds to do so, that they are being established as a separate and functionally independent statutory appointment with distinct functions and powers, and that they will report separately to parliament on their operations and following inspections and reviews.

We felt that it is important that the Ombudsman is adequately resourced to ensure that the role of the independent inspector can be fulfilled effectively by the Ombudsman as contemplated by the bill. We in the opposition will certainly be monitoring this aspect of the operation of this legislation.

There are a number of other key issues raised by submitters. They are contained in report No. 21 of the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee. I encourage anyone who has concerns about the implementation or enactment of this legislation to have a read of that report, but we will be allowing the passing of this legislation. We will be monitoring how it is implemented. We look forward to seeing improvements in our detention services.

I raised concerns initially that any issue of injury of custodial officers was not going to be able to be referred to the inspectorate. I do hope that that aspect will be considered in future, that someone independent of the department can consider each of those matters. As we heard from the minister, they are on the front line. They deserve our support. We should be looking at ways that we can protect them better, if not through this bill then through some other means.

Debate, on motion of Mr Powell, adjourned.

COMMITTEES

Estimates Hearings



Hon. YM D'ATH (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (6.28 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—

1. That for the consideration of the annual appropriation bills for 2022-2023, so much of standing orders be suspended to enable:
 - (a) the portfolio committees to only hold hearings and take evidence within the timeframes provided in Table 1, circulated in my name;
 - (b) the Leader of the House after consultation with the Speaker, if necessary, to issue a memorandum changing the days and times for each hearing in Table 1; and
 - (c) where a minister administers a number of distinct portfolio matters, matters relating to each portfolio area can only be raised during the period specified for that area in Table 1.
2. That, in accordance with standing order 177(5), each portfolio committee report to the in on the annual appropriation bills by 12 August 2022.

TABLE 1—ESTIMATES HEARINGS 2022

Area of Responsibility	Ministers	Hearing Times
ECONOMIC AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE—26 July 2022		
Queensland Parliament		Speaker of the Legislative Assembly: 9am—9:45am BREAK: 9:45am—10am
Premier and Cabinet, Olympics and Paralympic Games	Premier and Minister for Olympics	Premier and Minister for the Olympics: 10am—11:45am BREAK: 11:45am—12pm Premier and Minister for the Olympics: 12pm—1:30pm BREAK: 1:30pm—2pm
Treasury, Trade and Investment	Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment	Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment: 2pm—4pm BREAK: 4pm—4:15pm Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment: 4:15pm—6pm BREAK: 6pm—6:30pm
Tourism, Innovation and Sport	Minister for Tourism, Innovation and Sport and Minister Assisting the	Minister for Tourism, Innovation and Sport and Minister Assisting the Premier on the Olympics and Paralympics Sport and Engagement: 6:30pm—9pm

Area of Responsibility	Ministers	Hearing Times
	Premier on the Olympics and Paralympics Sport and Engagement	
STATE DEVELOPMENT AND REGIONAL INDUSTRIES COMMITTEE—27 July 2022		
<p>State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning</p> <p>Agricultural Industry Development, Fisheries and Rural Communities</p> <p>Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water</p>	<p>Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics Infrastructure</p> <p>Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities</p> <p>Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water</p>	<p>Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics Infrastructure (State Development): 9am—10am</p> <p>Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics Infrastructure (Infrastructure and Planning, Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics Infrastructure): 10am—11:15am</p> <p>BREAK: 11:15am—11:30am</p> <p>Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics Infrastructure (Local Government): 11:30am—12:30pm</p> <p>BREAK: 12:30pm—1:30pm</p> <p>Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities (Agricultural Industry Development and Rural Communities): 1:30pm—3pm</p> <p>BREAK: 3pm—3:15pm</p> <p>Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities (Fisheries and Forestry): 3:15pm—4:45pm</p> <p>BREAK: 4:45pm—5pm</p> <p>Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water (Water): 5pm—6:30pm</p> <p>BREAK: 6:30pm—6:45pm</p> <p>Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water (Regional Development and Manufacturing): 6:45pm—7:45pm</p>
EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING COMMITTEE—28 July 2022		
<p>Education, Industrial Relations and Racing</p> <p>Employment, Small Business, Training and</p>	<p>Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing</p> <p>Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development</p>	<p>Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing (Education and Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority): 9am—10:30am</p> <p>BREAK: 10:30am—10:45am</p> <p>Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing (Education and Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority): 10:45am—11:45am</p> <p>BREAK: 11:45am—12:30pm</p> <p>Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing (Racing): 12:30pm—1pm</p> <p>Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing (Industrial Relations): 1pm—2pm</p> <p>BREAK: 2pm—2:30pm</p> <p>Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development (Training and Skills Development): 2:30pm—4pm</p> <p>BREAK: 4pm—4:15pm</p>

Area of Responsibility	Ministers	Hearing Times
Skills Development		Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development (Employment and Small Business): 4:15pm—5:15pm
HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE—29 July 2022		
Health and Ambulance Services Environment, Great Barrier Reef, Science and Youth Affairs	Minister for Health and Ambulance Services Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Youth Affairs	Minister for Health and Ambulance Services (Department of Health, Hospital and Health Services, Health Ombudsman): 9am—10:30am BREAK: 10:30am—10:45am Minister for Health and Ambulance Services (Department of Health, Hospital and Health Services, Queensland Institute of Medical Research, Queensland Mental Health Commission, Health and Wellbeing Queensland): 10:45am—12:15pm BREAK: 12:15pm—12:30pm Minister for Health and Ambulance Services (Queensland Ambulance Services): 12:30pm—1:30pm BREAK: 1:30pm—2:30pm Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Youth Affairs (Environment and the Great Barrier Reef): 2:30pm—4:15pm BREAK: 4:15pm—4:30pm Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Youth Affairs (Science and Youth Affairs): 4:30pm—5:15pm
TRANSPORT AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE—2 August 2022		
Transport and Main Roads Energy, Renewables, Hydrogen, Public Works and Procurement Resources	Minister for Transport and Main Roads Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement Minister for Resources	Minister for Transport and Main Roads: 9am—11am BREAK: 11am—11:15am Minister for Transport and Main Roads: 11:15am—1pm BREAK: 1pm—2pm Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement (Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen): 2pm—3:30pm BREAK: 3:30pm—3:45pm Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement (Public Works and Procurement): 3:45pm—5:15pm BREAK: 5:15pm—5:30pm Minister for Resources: 5:30pm—7pm BREAK: 7pm—7:15pm Minister for Resources: 7:15pm—8:15pm
LEGAL AFFAIRS AND SAFETY COMMITTEE—3 August 2022		
Justice and Attorney-General, Women and Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence Prevention	Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence	Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence (Department of Justice and Attorney-General and Associated Statutory Bodies): 9am—10:30am BREAK: 10:30am—10:45am Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence (Department of Justice and Attorney-General): 10:45am—12:45pm

Area of Responsibility	Ministers	Hearing Times
Police, Corrective Services, Fire and Emergency Services	Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services	BREAK: 12:45pm—1:30pm Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services (Police): 1:30pm—2:45pm BREAK: 2:45pm—3pm Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services (Corrective Services): 3pm—4pm BREAK: 4pm—4:15pm Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services (Fire and Emergency Services): 4:15pm—5:15pm
COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND SERVICES COMMITTEE—4 August 2022		
Communities, Housing, Digital Economy and the Arts Seniors, Disability Services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs	Minister for Communities and Housing, Minister for Digital Economy and Minister for the Arts Minister for Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs	Minister for Communities and Housing, Minister for Digital Economy and Minister for the Arts (Communities, Housing and Digital Economy): 9am—10:45am BREAK: 10:45am—11am Minister for Communities and Housing, Minister for Digital Economy and Minister for the Arts (Arts): 11am—11:45am BREAK: 11:45am—12:30pm Minister for Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships (Seniors and Disability Services): 12:30pm—1:45pm BREAK: 1:45pm—2pm Minister for Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Family Responsibilities Commission): 2pm—3:15pm BREAK: 3:15pm—3:30pm Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs (Children and Youth Justice): 3:30pm—5:15pm BREAK: 5:15pm—5:30pm Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs (Multicultural Affairs): 5:30pm—6:15pm

Here we are again. Another year has flown by. Many weeks of hard work has been undertaken to craft and design a budget to deliver positive outcomes for all Queenslanders. On Tuesday afternoon the Treasurer and Minister for Trade stood in this chamber and delivered the Palaszczuk Labor government's budget—a budget which will deliver for all Queenslanders and will see a record health budget investing in the health care Queenslanders need. After this week's sitting, the Queensland parliament is about to embark on the highlight event of the democratic calendar—budget estimates.

As members should know, the estimates process aids the Queensland parliament in its scrutiny of the government's proposed expenditure. It is an opportunity for ministers and officials to front their relevant portfolio committee and answer questions about the proposed expenditure. I am advised that since 1994 committees of the Queensland parliament have undertaken the estimates process by examining and reporting on the proposed expenditures contained in the Appropriation Bill and the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill. At each hearing the chairperson of the committee puts the question 'That the proposed expenditure be agreed to', and questions then flow from there.

Members may be wondering why I am providing an overview of how estimates should run. I do so because it is apparent that many in this chamber have forgotten or do not know what the estimates hearings are for. They are an opportunity to ask questions relating to the expenditure of public funds, but what we have seen from those opposite in recent years are stunts, theatrics and farce. We have

seen members scream and yell over other members, including the chairperson of the committee—who I might add, is basically the speaker of the committee and should be treated with the same respect afforded to the Speaker or any member who occupies the Speaker's chair of the Legislative Assembly. We have seen members throw their hands around, argue with witnesses and even storm out in a huff. Those opposite have stamped their feet and want more time for the estimates hearings, but all they really need to do is get their own house in order. The estimates process is about asking questions about the expenditure of public funds: it is not to grandstand, it is not there for 'gotcha' questions and it is not there to carry on in such a manner just to get your face on the nightly news, a social media clip or TikTok. Only time will tell what will occur this year.

The motion before the House sets out the dates of each hearing. Members will see that it is set down for a two-week period, with each of the portfolio committees meeting each day. They are not all rammed through in a matter of days like those opposite did. We all know the failed experiment of the Newman LNP government, led by the then manager of government business, the member for Mermaid Beach. Those opposite want to talk about openness and transparency, but when they had the largest majority Queensland has seen they constrained estimates over a matter of a few days to restrict the handful of opposition members and non-government members'—and the media's—ability to attend each portfolio committee.

This was an utterly shameful approach to the estimates hearings, but there were many shameful things the Newman LNP government did, such as when the then treasurer and current member for Clayfield came in during the debate of the appropriation bills and started his reply speech, thus denying members of the opposition—remembering there were seven, then eight and then nine—the right to address the appropriation bills as he closed down the debate. That is the LNP's legacy to openness and transparency. The motion before the House also establishes the times for each of the minister's portfolio sections within each day. This was the same as last year and allocated adequate time for each minister to appear and be asked questions.

After each estimates an analysis is undertaken. I have been advised that, of the total time questions were asked during last year's hearing, approximately 61 per cent of the time was utilised by non-government members and approximately 39 per cent of the time was utilised by government members. I am further advised that, of the total questions asked, approximately 71 per cent were asked by non-government members and approximately 29 per cent were asked by government members. The statistics show that the system is working. The statistics show that there is more than 50 per cent of the time being utilised by non-government members. In fact, around 60 per cent of the time was utilised by non-government members asking members of the executive government questions about their portfolio responsibilities.

I wish to touch on schedule 7 of the standing rules and orders of the Legislative Assembly. As members would know, schedule 7 lists entities to which direct questioning of chief executives can occur during the estimates process. This schedule is reviewed on a yearly basis by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet against set criteria which I have been advised have not changed for some time. I am advised that, upon their review of the current entities in existence in Queensland, there does not need to be a change to schedule 7 this year. This means that the chief executives of the entities which are currently listed in schedule 7 will be in attendance at the estimates hearings and can be asked questions about the proposed expenditure directly. As such, as Leader of the House I will not be moving any amendment to schedule 7 for this year's hearing.

It should also be noted that heads of departments, directors-general and the Under Treasurer will be in attendance at the hearings and can be asked questions directly in addition to the minister. Other witnesses may be called at the discretion of the minister, directors-general, Under Treasurer or chief executive if they deem it appropriate. This is the same process which has occurred for many, many years, including under the Newman LNP government.

The motion also allows for the Leader of the House, after consultation with the Speaker, to issue a memorandum changing the days and times for each hearing if necessary. This is a contingency plan only if something occurs such as a COVID-19, flu outbreak or other natural disaster, for example, which would prohibit the hearing going ahead. This was utilised last year due to the unfolding COVID-19 situation in Queensland—in particular, in South-East Queensland—which limited the ability of people to travel. I state this because last year those opposite claimed that the government or I could potentially abuse this power granted by the parliament by just changing the days of the estimates hearings for political convenience. I advised the House last year that this contingency provision would only be used in limited circumstances such as COVID-19 and it would only be used in limited circumstances this year, if at all. The history of last year supports this argument.

Estimates is a time for departments to prepare briefing materials for their ministers. We all know that this is an extensive process and I thank all departmental officers in advance—in particular, those in the Department of Health—for their support in preparing for this important democratic process. I also thank Parliamentary Services in advance for their support in ensuring a smooth and seamless estimates process. I thank all of our hardworking and experienced chairs of committees—the member for Logan, the member for Bancroft, the member for Redlands, the member for Thuringowa, the member for Kurwongbah, the member for Toohey and the member for Mansfield—for the work they do in preparing and undertaking estimates, and indeed all members of committees. They are long, but important, days in our democratic calendar. With those words, I commend the motion to the House.

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (6.35 pm): I rise to speak to the motion. I note that the LNP opposition will be opposing this motion. I start with the comments made by the Leader of the House that we should take some comfort from the fact that the same process is being applied this year that was applied last year. We all know how the estimates process went last year. Do not just take our word for it: many external commentators reflected on the appalling behaviour of committee chairs in particular by protecting ministers from being asked meaningful questions and ministers in particular filibustering, obfuscating, not answering questions. It was a debacle. Therefore, we do take very cold comfort in the fact that what we are being presented with tonight is exactly the same as last year.

We heard the Leader of the House talk about some statistics—for example, that 60 per cent of the time was spent by members of the opposition or crossbench asking questions. Actually, 60 per cent of the time was spent by members of the opposition and crossbench asking questions but also by ministers answering questions. Many of those answers were unnecessarily wrong, they did not even answer the question and further questioning was often not allowed because that also included the protection rackets being run by the various committee chairs. If we looked at the number of questions, the amount of time those questions were asked and how many of those were answered, I suspect you would find that it was far less than the 60 per cent of the time the Leader of the House mentioned.

Ms Bates: Frivolous points of order.

Mr POWELL: There were frivolous points of order taken by committee chairs—I take that interjection by the member for Mudgeeraba—from the Labor members of the committees. They have literally become an absolute and utter farce, so let's drill down a little bit more into what we are being presented with. For example, let's look at the first day of sittings with the Premier and Minister for the Olympics. This is the first officer of this state. This is the person elected to run the state of Queensland. How many minutes, how many hours, are we going to have to question the Premier? We have a total of three hours and 15 minutes to question the Premier of this state not only about the broader operations of the state but particularly about the Olympics. Even if we take the 60 per cent proposed by the Leader of the House, that equates to less than an hour and 45 minutes of opposition and crossbench questioning of the Premier of the state of Queensland. That is simply appalling.

Let's move to the Treasurer, the individual actually responsible for the overall budget. How long will we have to question the Treasurer? All up there are three hours and 45 minutes. Again, if we use 50 or 60 per cent of the time, that is less than two hours of questioning by opposition and crossbench members of the Treasurer, the individual responsible for handing down the budget.

Mrs Gerber: They don't like scrutiny though.

Mr POWELL: I take that interjection from the member for Currumbin. It is clear that the Palaszczuk Labor government do not like scrutiny. For the Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics Infrastructure, there are three hours and 15 minutes. The three most senior ministers of the Palaszczuk Labor government will have a total of just over 10 hours of questioning, of which the opposition and crossbench will be lucky to get 50 to 60 per cent. That is less than six hours to question the three most senior ministers of the Palaszczuk Labor government.

If we look at the issues that are confronting Queenslanders at the moment, we have in particular the health crisis. The health minister and member for Redcliffe has actually duded herself a bit because she has four hours, which is longer than the Premier, longer than the Treasurer and longer than the Deputy Premier but still not anywhere long enough for members of the opposition and the crossbench to ask meaningful questions about the health budget—a health budget that they themselves again say is a record health budget. Mind you, every year is a record health budget. That is four hours, which is at best two hours or two hours and 15 minutes of questioning from the opposition of the health

minister around the health crisis. Then if we look at one of the larger infrastructure portfolios, there is a total of three hours and 45 minutes worth of questioning of the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. That is something like two hours for the opposition and crossbench.

The government clearly do not like any form of scrutiny. There is no way humanly possible for the opposition and crossbench to be able to ask all of the questions we want to ask about the budget in those kinds of time frames—let alone if we see a repeat of the protection rackets that were run by the various committee chairs last year. External commentators noted that, and they have said how much of a sham this estimates process has become. Therefore, we in the opposition cannot and will not support this motion. There is much more I could say, but I know that other members on our side want to have a chop at this. We again have a guillotined debate on this motion. These kinds of things need to be debated in full, but because we only have half an hour I will leave my contribution there. It is not good enough and the LNP will not support this motion.

 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (6.41 pm): When I was growing up, I used to see the duo of Senator Faulkner and Senator Ray carefully ask questions during their budget estimates in the federal government. They would carefully examine the budget piece by piece and drill into the detail. They did not have a big show to put on. They were not pontificating or trying to get a grab for the camera, but they got details for the Australian people. I thought that is what it would be like here.

I have probably spent more time in estimates than anyone else in this House since the Palaszczuk government has been in place, because I have actually stood in on quite a lot of other committees. I keep seeing that it is all about being a performer and excited for the cameras. For them, it is not about finding facts for Queenslanders and it is not about examining the details. In my time as chair, I have found that independent members ask far better questions. I also think it is important that the government gets to tell its story. I am not someone who wants to tear down good government. I do not want to be part of an estimates process when it is all attack and never about building our state, but that is what I seem to do.

I noticed that the member for Broadwater failed badly at the last estimates. We could feel the pressure. He had built himself up so big to go to estimates. However, he fell down so badly that he needed to justify himself so he immediately put an attack out saying it was not his failure but it was the system's failure. I read that with interest. He felt there should be probing questions asked of the ministers, and I wondered why he did not deliver them when he had the chance. He also felt there should be less time for government members to ask questions, so I looked up how much time there was for those questions. In my own committee, there were wasteful, performative and theatrical questions totalling 317 minutes for non-government members, but there were only 245 minutes for government members. I wish to apologise to those government members and some of the Independent members in this place who want to build and who want to find out things constructively. I want to apologise for cutting them off and giving opposition members so much time that was then wasted and not used for the construction of Queensland.

That is what the member for Broadwater said—that he wanted to give more time to non-government members. However, we should not look at what the member for Broadwater says; we should look at what he does. He wanted more time for non-government members, so let us look back to the 2014 Newman LNP government and compare that to what we did last time. At the last estimates, 61 per cent was given to non-government questions. Let us look at what the member for Broadwater did. When he was in government for the 2014 estimates, 51 per cent of the time—the majority—was used by the government.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr POWER: That is right. Members are reminding the House that they ran them all simultaneously, with only seven members against them. They were so afraid of scrutiny that they ran them all simultaneously.

Mr Powell interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Lui): Member for Glass House, cease your interjections.

Mr POWER: They were so afraid of media examination of what they were doing that they ran them all simultaneously. It was quite gross and disgusting. When it came to questioning in the then Finance and Administration Committee and now Economics and Governance Committee, there were 326 minutes for government questions and 303 minutes for non-government questions. The overwhelming majority went to the government. Let us not look at what the member for Broadwater says in his little op-eds when he fails; let us look at what he did in government.

As chair of a committee, I am charged with enforcing the rules for questions, and those rules are quite easy to follow. Faulkner and Ray could follow them. The rules for questions state that questions shall be brief and relate to one issue and that questions shall not contain lengthy or subjective preambles, arguments, inferences or imputations. Almost every single question they put—

Mr Powell interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Glass House, I have asked you multiple times to come to order. You will be warned.

Mr POWER: Almost every question they put broke one of those rules. It was so bad that I had given up. I simply counselled them and then put the question to the Premier or the Treasurer because every single question—

Ms Bates: You just rule them out of order.

Mr POWER: I do not rule them out of order. Look at the transcript. To make it work, I have to allow these people to break the rules of the parliament because they are so bad at doing their jobs that they cannot find a way to examine the budget within the rules of the parliament, and I give them the majority of time to do it. We know that estimates is something like Christmas for budget nerds, but unfortunately it is like Halloween for the member for Broadwater. He is so bad at it that the rumbling will start again and the pressure will be so bad for him. Once again, the clock will come around and there will be a calendar item reminding him to complain about the process when we know that he did completely the opposite in government. That is what disappoints me.

The other point is the number of questions they asked. In my own committee, there were 66 government questions directed to a minister. How many do members think the opposition had? They had 157 questions—more than twice as many. We give the opposition the opportunity but the member for Broadwater fails at the opportunity. The member for Broadwater cannot follow through and actually ask questions that mean something to Queenslanders. Why does he fail? He fails because we have a good story to tell about a hardworking government that is focused on the challenges we have, and we will continue to do that because we know that is our job. We listen to ordinary Queenslanders—not those preening and performing before the cameras—and we get a budget that is right for them. I, for one, will be putting questions to ministers about Logan—

Mr Stevens interjected.

Mr POWER: I hear an interjection from the deputy chair, the member for Mermaid Beach. The member for Mermaid Beach would make an excellent Manager of Opposition Business—we know that.

An honourable member: Bring back Ray!

Mr POWER: Bring back Ray! #bringbackray, as the member for Kawana would say. The other thing is that he would put more incisive questions, possibly about Mermaid Beach and the Gold Coast, but it is the member for Broadwater whose very questions get him undone. Yes, we have given them over 60 per cent of the time. We will probably do that again. We will give them the overwhelming majority of questions, but they will not actually be able to do anything with it.

We on this side of the House do not look to the 60-odd per cent of the time the opposition have for questions. We should not look to the fact that they can ask twice as many questions of ministers. We need to look to the member for Broadwater and his failure to engage with this process. When we get the story that he gets an op-ed, we need to say that there is a broken system. The broken system is the broken opposition, who fail to engage with the facts we have in Queensland.

This is an exciting time. It is an exciting budget. We are living in untested times where much of the world will go into recession because of supply problems. Usually it is about demand: people have a lack of confidence to spend. Now we have an unusual challenge in that supply will be constrained across the world. This is something that a real opposition would collaboratively and interestingly engage with in terms of the challenges we have in Queensland. However, that will not happen because the member for Broadwater will once again fail and once again blame the system, the empire, the Premier, the Treasurer—everyone around him will be blamed. Let's have the member for Mermaid Beach ask the questions because he would be far better at it.

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (6.51 pm): Well, the member for Mermaid Beach is on his feet. I have seen a few things in this House in my 15 years here and this is the height of arrogance and hubris by the government and the Leader of the House in terms of pushing this matter through in a late motion when normally these matters, as we all know, go through the committee system for acceptance and recommendation to the parliament to adopt. That collaborative approach has worked admirably

over many years, and I do not see any problem with that being continued. All of a sudden we have this new, arrogant third-term government more interested in being on the red carpet than in the efficient and effective operation of the parliamentary process with the portfolio committee system.

In terms of the portfolio committee system, unfortunately this government seeks to hide and cover up and make the members of the opposition rubberstamp its deceit and dishonesty through the numbers of government members on those committees. As members would be aware, the voting numbers on portfolio committees are 4-3, so any attempt we make to keep the public informed through the media and other processes is downgraded and stamped on, with the chairman's casting vote in the portfolio committee. Is it any wonder that the estimates process is being subjugated here by this government to make sure it is in line with its own agenda and hiding as much as it can from the public of Queensland?

I would like to remind members of the estimates process being very successful, despite what the chairman of the Economics and Governance Committee said, in establishing the almost corrupt behaviour of former chief of staff David Barbagallo through the estimates system. Basically, it came through the estimates. He quickly got shunted off to a job somewhere else and they moved on. By the way, that other wonderful icon of the Labor Party, Gordon Nuttall, was discovered in the estimates process, and those opposite brought back the parliament to cover up the lies that he made in those estimates committees.

This is absolutely horrendous to me. This Leader of the House was one of the squawkers—I do not think that is unparliamentary—about Jeff Seeney's approach to the estimates when he compressed the estimates process into two days. What he did in those two days was ensure that everyone got more questioning time. Then premier Newman was questioned many more times than this Premier will be questioned. Then treasurer Nicholls—

Mr Powell interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Lui): Member for Glass House, you are warned.

Mr STEVENS:—was questioned a lot more than this Treasurer will man up to, and I can assure you that this time at estimates there will be a lot of questions about this budget bill and how he will dodgy up all of these different movements to get a profit at the end of the year.

We will be looking forward to the estimates process. It should go through the committee system. Those opposite just ignore the committee system, and they treat it with disdain. It is in effect the upper house of the unicameral Queensland parliament. Unfortunately, the government members want to use their numbers to shut down portfolio committees. If we have issues in relation to the estimates or any other issue, they shut them down in the interests of secrecy and hiding matters so that the truth cannot get out to the public by them blocking these matters in the portfolio committees. We are not going to be a rubber stamp in portfolio committees for any deceit or dishonesty or any hiding of facts that committee members may want to highlight. We will always pursue the fact that we want those portfolio committees to act in a proportionate and appropriate way and in the interests of the Queensland public.

The Leader of the House comes in here and moves this motion without any notice of note to give us the time to work out why she is doing this in this manner. It should have gone, as it normally does, through the portfolio committee system, which had worked fine. I looked at the program on our agenda that the deputy chairman had done, consulting with the Parliamentary Service, and we had no problems with what we were going to do. There would have been some argy-bargy about the matter, but it did reflect other issues from years gone by, and we would have liked the opportunity at that portfolio committee to discuss those matters in a reasonable manner. It has not gone there. It has gone straight to the House for decision on these matters. That is absolute arrogance from a third-term government which treats all of the traditions and the parliamentary operations with disdain.

I concur with the Manager of Opposition Business. This is a totally inappropriate motion to be putting through this parliament in the final hours of this parliamentary budget week. We move quite clearly into matters of the opposition leader's reply tomorrow. In the opposition leader's reply there will be many matters in terms of health and financing issues which he will be raising to answer all those broken promises, extra taxes, extra debt—all those things that are going to help ruin Queensland's economy, and you can guarantee—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Mermaid Beach, I ask you to take your seat. Under the provisions of the business program agreed to by the House, the time allocated for debate of the motion has expired. I will now put the question.

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

AYES, 48:

ALP, 48—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, Kelly, A. King, S. King, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Madden, Martin, McCallum, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Walker, Whiting.

NOES, 32:

LNP, 30—Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Camm, Crisafulli, Gerber, Hart, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister, Mander, McDonald, Mickelberg, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, O'Connor, Perrett, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Stevens, Watts, Weir.

Grn, 1—MacMahon.

Ind, 1—Bolton.

Pairs: MacMahon, Frecklington; Pease, Crandon; Tantari, Nicholls.

Resolved in the affirmative.

ADJOURNMENT

Road Safety

 **Mr PURDIE** (Ninderry—LNP) (7.03 pm): Any life lost on our roads is one life too many. Sadly, however, the road toll across our state is rising and is tipped this year to be the worst in a decade. Unfortunately, in my electorate we are not immune from the devastating consequences of these fatalities. Tonight I am tabling a petition launched by the Coolum State School P&C, Coolum Business and Tourism, other community groups and I and signed by more than 2,000 local residents calling on the state government to fast-track funding to upgrade our roads and to help stop the carnage.

Tabled paper: Nonconforming petition regarding fast-tracking funding to improve road safety and bust congestion in Coolum [\[908\]](#).

Since 2008, when the Beattie-Bligh government first announced works to duplicate the Sunshine Motorway, 25 lives have been lost on this stretch alone. These are not just figures; they are families whose lives have been ripped apart and destroyed. It was the most recent death of a three-year-old toddler only two weeks ago that became the catalyst for my community to collectively say enough is enough. This is yet another broken promise of this third-term Labor government. For 14 years Labor have been sitting on plans to duplicate the motorway and upgrade the interchange at Coolum.

At the last state election Labor committed to duplicating the motorway and allocated some initial funding to start work all over again on the upgrade plans. While the community and I welcome the funding and I appreciate the minister personally inspecting the site at my invitation, we wanted to see funding allocated in this budget to get shovels in the ground. This budget was an opportunity to fast-track the works that have been earmarked for more than a decade, an opportunity to improve safety for the thousands of motorists who get stuck in the gridlock on the motorway every single day, an opportunity to tackle the rising road toll and an opportunity to deliver on the plans for my community which were first promised in 2008. What did we get? We got another broken promise! There was no extra or fast-tracked funding to address this major safety and congestion issue that has been exacerbated by the region's exponential population growth and no immediate solution to addressing the rising road toll.

The state Labor government have had more than a decade to fund the long overdue duplication of the motorway and the Coolum roundabout. Their failure to listen and plan for the ongoing growth of our region is nothing more than a slap in the face for every single person who lives on the Sunshine Coast and regularly uses this dangerous stretch of road. The president of the Coolum State School P&C, who stood beside me to launch the petition, made it very clear that the safety of the more than 1,000 students and the wider school community was being impacted by the government's failure to deliver on its promise.

As we have learnt, this budget is full of broken promises, more taxes, no extra cost-of-living relief, no extra funding for social housing and nothing to help bust congestion and improve safety on one of our major road networks on the Sunshine Coast.

Woodridge Electorate, Budget

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (7.06 pm): The 2022-23 Queensland budget is all about good jobs, better services and sustaining and enhancing the great lifestyle Queenslanders love. It is a strong Labor budget that puts people first and it is a budget

that holds plenty of good news for the Woodridge electorate and the City of Logan. From education and health care to transport infrastructure and employment, it invests in our needs right now and for the future.

I am pleased to say this year's budget will allocate funds so design work can begin on a brand new hall for Browns Plains State High School. In the school's 50th anniversary year, I am also proud to have delivered more than \$8 million to expand and refurbish Woodridge State High School's hall. Doing this will unlock a range of opportunities for sports, performance, events and fundraising for some of the most talented students in Queensland. We are building a new family link centre at Kingston State School, refurbishing facilities and classrooms at Burrowes State School and Woodridge State School, and supporting the ongoing delivery of additional classrooms at Marsden State School. These projects and so many others form part of a \$183.9 million investment in new and improved school infrastructure right across the Woodridge electorate and the City of Logan.

Our government is also pleased to be putting \$3 billion into our local Metro South Hospital and Health Service for our growing community, and as part of our Queensland Health and Hospitals Plan we will invest \$530 million in a further expansion of the Logan Hospital, delivering around 112 additional beds. Since being elected, we have added 524 extra teachers and 509 extra nurses in Logan and we will keep working to build those numbers further. We will see our road and transportation network strengthened with wide-reaching improvements as part of a \$815 million infrastructure package. This includes ongoing funding for the expansion of the Pacific Motorway.

Our champion local netballers at the Logan City Netball Association will be excited to hear we are upgrading their courts with \$638,000 to be spent this coming financial year. We are keeping our successful job-creating programs going like Skilling Queenslanders for Work, which will get more local people into employment. An amount of \$45.7 million will go towards increasing and improving our social housing supply and we are also putting tens of millions of dollars into ongoing flood recovery.

As I mentioned, this budget is squarely focused on three key pillars for Queensland: jobs, services and protecting and sustaining our amazing lifestyle. It heartens me greatly to know just how many Queenslanders this budget will help. It is a budget that puts us back on track to take advantage of the golden decade that is ahead of us. It is a budget that invests in the electorate of Woodridge and the great people of the City of Logan.

Burdekin Electorate, Health Services

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (7.10 pm): Just over two weeks ago I and the member for Mudgeeraba, the shadow health minister, toured a large portion of the Burdekin electorate to talk about health services. As part of that tour, we visited hospitals at Bowen, Collinsville, Dysart, Moranbah and Clermont to take on board people's concerns when it comes to health services in their respective communities. In Bowen we talked about the need for maternity services and an increase in allied health services and in Moranbah clearly the need for a new and upgraded hospital in that community.

The budget handed down yesterday spoke about a record investment in health and revealed increases in coal royalties. I am sure that the people of Clermont took an interest in that comment. Why? It is because Clermont is in coal country. Despite the so-called record investment in health, that town still does not have a permanent doctor at the hospital after four long years of lobbying this government. The town could have had two doctors thanks to the work of Clermont4Doctors but both have walked away, and what is the key reason for that? It is the budget—well, at least according to the Mackay Hospital and Health Service. According to that service, \$1.5 million for a four-person team of health professionals is unjustifiable. What is unjustifiable is that this government refuses to step in and help my rural communities. After all, yesterday we were told that the budget put health care first and that to pay tribute to our health workers we needed to make sure that our health system has the infrastructure, technology and resources it needs.

What the people of Clermont know is that their health care has not been put first and that their town does not have the health resources they deserve. All of this is happening while it is their region carrying the lion's share of the increase in coal royalties. It is time for that health hypocrisy to end. It is time for 90-year-old women who are forced onto the highway to have to travel to Emerald to see a doctor to end. I was contacted by a public servant in Clermont last week who has to undertake a 400-kilometre round trip for a blood test. The crisis that is the rural doctor crisis in communities like Clermont and Dysart is real. It is impacting on those communities.

We talk about attracting people back to the bush. We talk about attracting families back to those communities and the very first question they ask of course is, 'What are the health services like and what is the education system like?' In both cases there are issues in those respective portfolios. There

is a shortage of teachers throughout those rural areas and, more importantly, there is a chronic shortage of medical practitioners and it seems to be beyond the capability of this government to solve that issue. I will continue raising that issue in this place until such time as we get a permanent doctor in the Clermont community.

Ipswich Electorate, Floods

 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (7.13 pm): I, along with Ipswich City Council Division 3 Councillor Marnie Doyle, was pleased to host State Recovery Coordinator Major General Jake Ellwood on his visit to Ipswich on 7 June. The February-March flood and rainfall event severely impacted parts of Ipswich, with over 500 homes sustaining considerable structural damage. As State Recovery Coordinator, Major General Ellwood is tasked with leading Queensland's flood recovery, working closely with the Queensland Reconstruction Authority and touring parts of the state that were devastated by the recent floods.

The major general was generous with his time, visiting some of the worst hit areas of the Ipswich electorate, including North Booval and Bundamba. North Booval was hit particularly hard. Some residents in this suburb have faced their third flood event in 11 years. They and other flood victims across Ipswich have been under enormous pressure in the last couple of months cleaning up, doing repair works to make their homes habitable again and going through the process of applying for grant funding or, if they can afford it, insurance. Many of these people did not have insurance. In North Booval the major general was able to see for himself the type of housing that has been allowed to be built in this flood-prone area and what sort of support will be needed for residents to mitigate future flood events. The major general also dropped by local Ipswich Knights Soccer Club, which also sustained flood damage.

The flood victims I spoke to have had to endure much personal and financial hardship over the last few months and I am proud to be a part of a government that does not abandon these people. When the floods hit, we had the Community Recovery Hotline up and running immediately and we set up our community recovery hubs across the state, including one in Ipswich. The Palaszczuk government also provided immediate financial support for flood affected residents with the emergency hardship grant and the essential services hardship assistance grant. There were also grants for those without insurance to replace household contents, have repairs done or to reconnect to essential services like power and sewerage, and these grants have been an absolute lifesaver to many. I want to commend Minister Leeanne Enoch for coming out to the community recovery hub and visiting people and listening to them. I think her listening to them meant so much.

Floods impose a significant cost on our economy as well. Billions of dollars have already been spent on this year's flood recovery and then there is the lost productivity, supply chain disruptions and loss of assets. These costs will grow each year. In fact, by 2060 it is expected that flooding will cost the national economy \$40 billion a year. To reduce these costs, we have to redesign and rebuild resilient cities, and the Palaszczuk government is doing that with the \$741 million Resilient Homes Fund. With changes to our climate, we should be preparing for more severe rainfall and flood events as well as more unpredictability in the way the events behave. Giving flood victims the opportunity to rebuild their homes and design them to be more flood resilient or offering them a voluntary buyback of their homes will ensure that they do not have to bear the high personal costs of flooding ever again. I am extremely grateful to the major general and I thank him for his time.

Youth Crime

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (7.16 pm): This government is failing to protect Queensland from recidivist juvenile offenders. These kids—yes, most of them are kids, some as young as eight and nine—are wreaking havoc all over Queensland no matter the postcode. They think it is their God given right to steal cars, break and enter, assault people and destroy property, and this government thinks it is okay for that behaviour to continue without any repercussions. The Condamine office does not go one day without a phone call, an email or a letter stating people's disgust at the lack of punishment for these young criminal offenders. There are no consequences, there is no responsibility taken, there is no second thought given by these kids for the offences that they commit.

The police are at their wits' end. They catch the perpetrators only to watch them being released, some without any detention at all and no consequences for the crimes they have committed. I fully support the work of the police force, especially those officers in the Condamine electorate who are struggling with limited staff and resources and a lack of support to do their jobs. One constituent recently

commented that he had three groups of police officers attend his residence after a home was broken into and the vehicle stolen. The initial officers in attendance, the forensic officers and the detectives all said that morale was at its lowest ebb and to please contact your local member of parliament.

Our judicial system is not working. The punishment is nothing and these young—some now hardened—criminals know the current laws cannot touch them. They know it is a catch-and-release program—the police catch them and the judge releases them—and then they go back out and about their primary business of ruining people's lives. The actions of these kids are causing great financial hardship and making residents feel unsafe in their own homes. It creates an uneasiness in communities and is making people very angry.

The accident near Oakey on Monday this week is a prime example of the sad end to a crime spree with four teenagers aboard. This could have been even worse if the driver had hit another vehicle and killed or maimed innocent occupants. At 8.30 on a Monday morning most of us would have expected these kids to be at school, but they were not. It is about time the government made these repeat offenders face adequate consequences for their actions. It is a small number of these offenders who are doing the crimes over and over and over again. We had a recent incident where one of these offenders was captured and released without bail with a history of 28 previous convictions. The law is failing innocent Queenslanders. It is time for the government to stand up and return breach of bail.

Mermaid Beach Electorate, Youth Crime

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (7.19 pm): Again I rise in this House to highlight the problem of young juvenile offenders attacking law-abiding community members in my electorate of Mermaid Beach by wantonly and brazenly stealing cars and breaking and entering homes to steal car keys to take high-value cars for a joyride. The Palaszczuk Labor government is fairly and squarely to blame for weak and crime-encouraging laws around these juvie offenders, with its left-wing, ideologist powerbrokers providing no deterrent for these recidivist offenders. One does not have to be Einstein to work out that if there is no penalty for this serious misbehaviour these recidivist juvie offenders will keep doing the same crime over and over.

How would Premier Palaszczuk feel if someone in her family was run down and killed by a career criminal kid, like the Field and Leadbetter families? That family has a lifetime sentence while the career criminal kid is back on the streets in five years. I do not care if this criminal teen had a difficult upbringing, has a problem with drugs or whatever excuses his lawyer will dig up to mitigate his sentence. These juvenile criminals are criminals and they need to be taken out of society for our community's sake and also for their own sake before they kill themselves or take other innocent victims with them. I have one community in Avanti Street that has repeated and constant attacks on their property, yet the police are no closer to stopping this regular behaviour by juvenile offenders. One juvenile was caught red-handed by residents and I am fearful of a vigilante type outcome if this nonstop invasion of car stealing continues.

The very simple answer is a change in the Labor government's laws on youth justice to remove repeat offenders from our communities. No amount of mollycoddling, sweet talking or ego-stroking solutions will change the repeat behaviours of these bad egg juveniles and it is incumbent on responsible and community serving governments to fix the problem. The longer this obvious community problem of youth offenders goes on, the bigger the problem will get. These hardened, bad attitude young criminals infect other young vulnerable minds with their corrupt and criminal behaviour. I know my Labor members of parliament from Townsville have a large dose of this unacceptable behaviour from youth criminals and I call upon them to make this problem a front-and-centre issue in their Labor caucus and for this Labor government to act in the interests of communities across Queensland.

The police are doing the best they can, given the inappropriate laws for repeat juvenile offenders they have to act under. Give them the relief and capacity they require to address this serious and ongoing problem to stop the greater public blaming the police for inaction on the problem. It is not their fault.

Masters, Senior Constable D

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (7.22 pm): I rise to report back to the House on the fundraising event held for the family of Dave Masters. Dave was a senior constable at Deception Bay Police Station who lived locally and worked locally. A year ago this week he lost his life on the Bruce Highway in the line of duty. His funeral was the biggest we have seen. As members know, last year the police minister

and I organised a fundraiser here in parliament for Dave's family and I want to report back to the House that we raised \$7,052 for Sharon and Jack Masters—and we still have money coming in. I thank all members of parliament who supported our fundraiser. Thank you so much. I thank the members of the local business community who came to parliament for this event. Thank you to the electorate staff in the Bancroft office—Jenelle, Stephanie and Huxley—for doing all the hard work in organising it. Thank you to Minister Ryan who gave so much support for this when I first suggested it and thank you to the shadow minister for police for his support. Thank you to the Queensland Police Union who have been unstinting in their support for the Masters family. Thank you to Commissioner Katarina Carroll and her senior staff.

I arranged for string orchestras from our local high schools—The Lakes College and North Lakes State College—to come and entertain us. They did a tremendous job. We also had the famed drum marching band from Deception Bay State High School perform on the night. I thank those three schools for being a part of this fundraiser. Secondly, I want to report back that on 3 June our local police station members unveiled a memorial rock for Dave outside the Deception Bay Police Station in the presence of the Masters family. I spoke briefly to the family and told them how much we had raised. The police minister was there again, as were many people from the blue family.

The memorial rock was a labour of love for Jason Higgs, the officer in charge of the station and a good mate of Dave. Those at the fundraiser would remember how Jason described how he was the one who packed up Dave's locker a year ago. Jason also cut and fitted the bronze plaque that was donated by the Police Union. Caboolture Land and Gravel donated the sandstone rock. Brett Moore Excavation delivered and placed the rock. Finally, I want to say that what we have heard about Dave at these events shows what a wonderful, warm and treasured man he was. He was exactly the kind of person we want to see in our police force. I hope that he can stand as a role model for all the police recruits who march out of our academies here in Queensland.

Rockhampton, Binbi Yadubay

 **Ms LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (7.25 pm): Too many of us have come to know a friend, a family member, or a member of our community who has irreparably damaged or even lost their life to addiction, which is why I am so proud of the amazing new detox and rehabilitation facility in Rockhampton. It is absolutely transformational for local people, families and our entire community. Back in 2016, I organised a meeting with Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk and the women—like Deb, Daphne and Kay—from Ice Supporting Families Capricorn Coast. They told me about the dire need for a facility like this in Central Queensland. The Premier and I listened and we acted. I am proud that we have now officially opened the new world-class, \$16 million, 42-bed facility which includes an 8-bed withdrawal unit, a 32-bed residential rehab facility and two family units where parents can access treatment with their children onsite. Locals are also able to access high-quality, free, day-program counselling support services for people suffering with drug or alcohol addiction.

The facility is called Binbi Yadubay which, in the language of the traditional landowners, the Darumbal people, means healthy beginnings. Before this was available, the nearest support facility was Mackay or the Sunshine Coast. No Queenslanders should have to battle their addiction alone. They deserve the chance to be free from their addiction and to have a healthy beginning. The 42-bed centre is the first in Queensland to offer withdrawal, rehab and family units and will work alongside 19 other service locations that will be delivered across the state. I implore any Central Queenslanders who are suffering with an addiction or are working to help a loved one through the rehabilitation process to contact the Binbi Yadubay facility and talk to someone about the options available to them. We know that this facility will be an incredible support not only to residents but also to their families. I would especially like to thank Lives Lived Well for their operation of the facility and for their continued dedication to the rehabilitation of Queenslanders.

It was just awful that not only did those opposite not match Labor's commitment for a detox and rehabilitation centre in Rockhampton at the 2017 state election but the member for Capricornia and those opposite tried to stop this centre from being built at all. Only Labor went to the 2017 state election with a plan to build a new detox and rehab centre in Rocky. Those opposite did not; only Labor did. No other party had the vision to commit to building this centre to provide the treatment to people in Central Queensland that they need to get well. The LNP were putting petitions around the community, stirring up people, trying to stop this facility from even happening. They had no vision and they actively tried to stop this amazing facility from being built. I am proud that the Palaszczuk government persisted. We worked hard and now it has been brought to life. Congratulations to everyone involved in bringing this amazing facility to life.

Threlfall, Mr G

 **Mrs GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (7.28 pm): Tonight I put on the record my sincere appreciation of the tireless community advocacy and dedication of passionate Tugun icon Garth Threlfall. Tonight, as a community, we say goodbye. On 17 May this year, at 91 years of age, Garth passed away. Garth was the beloved husband of Glenda; the much loved father of Ian and Peter; the adored grandfather of Cara, Lauren and Erin; and the cherished great grandfather of Carter, Tayla and Goldie.

Garth and his wonderful wife are local champions. They have been pillars in our local Tugun and Currumbin community, dedicating years of service to a number of fantastic local community groups, including the Tugun Progress Association and Friends of Currumbin. Garth will be remembered by our community as an energetic local advocate, an excellent local filmmaker and a quiet and gentle man who never had anything bad to say about others.

Garth loved our Tugun and Currumbin community and had a passion for creating stories. Garth really knew the Gold Coast. He knew its geological history and its environmental history. He witnessed its physical transformation over the years. Garth has left a legacy for the community he loved, documenting its history in his videos.

After making the Gold Coast his home, Garth worked at the Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary, or the Currumbin Bird Sanctuary as it was known back then. He worked in the bird-feeding arena. That and the sanctuary's other attractions provided inspiration for his own film productions and deepened his curiosity for nature and respect for our environment. Garth spent years in conversation with Alex Griffith, the founder of the Currumbin Bird Sanctuary. Those conversations are recorded in his film *Man of Vision*. Remarkably, that film is still used today by the Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary.

Garth's documentary interests are complemented by his wife Glenda's attention to historical detail. They were the perfect couple to research and produce the film and book *The Tugun Story*, which captures the rich history of our community. It brings together footage and reflections from established families such as the Farrells and locals such as Betty Diamond, Eddie Sawden, Wilf Ardill, Ian Hayes, Allan Blenkin, Andy Reynold and his own wife, Glenda. It documents the history of the local Tugun Surf Life Saving Club. The book can be found in the National Library of Australia.

Garth was a true community icon. To Glenda and his family, on behalf of the Currumbin electorate, our sincere condolences. Vale, Garth Threlfall.

Cook Electorate, Mental Health

 **Ms LUI** (Cook—ALP) (7.31 pm): Recently I had the opportunity to visit the Coen community in Cape York with the Treasurer and ministerial champion, the Hon. Cameron Dick. Coen is a small and remote community and is part of the Cook Shire Council. It is situated in central Cape York, in Far North Queensland, 580 kilometres north of Cairns. During our visit to the community, mental health was one topic that kept coming up in discussions, which has prompted me to give a speech to highlight the issue for my communities.

I want to talk about mental health in the context of remoteness. While mental health affects any one at any one time, the issue in relation to communities in areas such as Cape York and the Torres Strait, in my electorate, is further exacerbated by remoteness. The geographical location of those communities means that they are quite isolated. Often times, access to family, friends or specialist mental health services is poor because the very technology we enjoy here in Brisbane does not exist in a Cape York black spot. Everyday things such as picking up the phone, video calling someone or checking your Facebook page, which keep us all connected, becomes limited or sometimes non-existent in parts of my electorate.

While it is important for people living in those parts to feel connected, it is more important that we as individuals and as a collective continue to elevate conversations about mental health with one another to break the stigma that keeps mental health hidden away. We need to talk about mental health and the impact it has on individuals and families so that we can continue to keep the issue relevant in our homes, in our work places and in our communities.

I met a lady by the name of Jackie. Although I have not asked for permission to use her full name and story in my speech, I want to thank Jackie for sharing her story with the Treasurer and me in Coen. Jackie shared her very tragic and personal story of a family impacted by mental health to raise awareness for mental health in Cape York. Jackie started the initiative, 'Talk about it Tuesday'. Every Tuesday, the community is decked out in bright colourful shirts with the aim of getting people to talk about mental health in order to keep the conversation going.

Before I conclude, I want to thank the Treasurer and Premier for their support on the issue of mental health and for the large investment in this budget to address mental health going forward. I am extremely pleased and proud to represent this government, as this is an issue that affects all Queenslanders and it needs the best attention that we can give it. I am extremely pleased for my community that we will be able to benefit from this announcement.

The House adjourned at 7.34 pm.

ATTENDANCE

Andrew, Bailey, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Bolton, Boothman, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Camm, Crandon, Crawford, Crisafulli, D'Ath, Dametto, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Frecklington, Furner, Gerber, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Hart, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, Janetzki, Katter, Kelly, King A, King S, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Lauga, Leahy, Linard, Lister, Lui, MacMahon, Madden, Mander, Martin, McCallum, McDonald, McMillan, Mellish, Mickelberg, Miles, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Mullen, O'Connor, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Perrett, Pitt, Powell, Power, Pugh, Purdie, Richards, Robinson, Rowan, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Simpson, Skelton, Smith, Stevens, Stewart, Sullivan, Walker, Watts, Weir, Whiting