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FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

Wednesday, 17 August 2022

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WEDNESDAY, 17 AUGUST 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

Heartstrings in the Upper House, Small Steps 4 Hannah



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, next week the Queensland Former Parliamentary Members Association will host Heartstrings in the Upper House. Members and guests are invited to join artists from Voxalis for an intimate evening of music in the stunning Legislative Council chamber featuring songs by Schumann, Brahms and Strauss.

The event is being held in support of the Small Steps 4 Hannah Foundation. In their quest to honour Hannah, Aaliyah, Laianah and Trey and ensure that no family should endure this pain again, the Clarke family started a movement for change. The Small Steps 4 Hannah Foundation exists to HALT the cycle of domestic violence so that everyone can feel respected, informed, confident to act and safe. Heartstrings in the Upper House will be held on 25 and 26 August. Admission tickets and dinner packages can be purchased online. I hope that all members can give consideration to supporting this very important endeavour.

School Group Tours



Mr SPEAKER: I wish to advise members that we will be visited in the gallery this morning by students and teachers from Woolloowin State School in the electorate of Clayfield and Carmichael College in the electorate of Morayfield.

PETITION

The following lodged e-petition, sponsored by the Clerk is now closed and presented—

Coronavirus

358 petitioners, requesting the House to restore whatever practices and rules that were in place for the first two years of COVID [\[1152\]](#).

Petition received.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Cross River Rail



Hon. A PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympics) (9.33 am): Cross River Rail is Queensland's biggest infrastructure project, creating 7,700 jobs. This \$5.4 billion investment by our government is pumping more than \$3 million into the economy every day, creating good jobs and better services to support our great lifestyle. The 10.2-kilometre railway line includes 5.9 kilometres of twin tunnels underground. There are four new underground stations, two upgraded stations, six rebuilt southside stations and three new Gold Coast stations at Pimpama, Hope Island and Merrimac.

Cross River Rail will completely transform the way Queenslanders and visitors will travel. It will mean a quicker and more convenient commute, with the new Albert Street station in the heart of the city—the first new CBD station in more than 120 years—and the new station at the Gabba, which was a critical part of our Olympics bid, securing the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

We are now in the third year of construction and our stations are starting to take shape. There are currently 15 work sites keeping around 2,600 Queenslanders employed. Importantly, I am advised that 328 apprentices and trainees have been registered to date, with over 1.3 million training hours completed, which is great news. This means more local capacity to help deliver our record infrastructure pipeline. The project remains on track to be completed in 2024, ahead of extensive safety testing and commissioning, with services expected to commence in 2025.

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Deputy Leader of the Opposition, cease your interjections. Otherwise you will be asked to leave the chamber.

Ms PALASZCZUK: At lunch today, I will be joined by the Prime Minister, the Deputy Premier, our transport minister and the federal infrastructure minister at the Woolloongabba site to inspect progress.

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

Ms Grace interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition and the member for McConnel will cease their interjections. These are ministerial statements and I do not believe there is anything provocative being said as I can hear it.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I am proud of this project that is completely funded by our government. We are delivering jobs and this will be absolutely critical for our Olympic Games.

Today we will be looking at a method of construction which has never been seen before anywhere in the world; it is a Queensland first. Massive concrete beams are being installed with millimetre accuracy to create the future station's mezzanine level which is 20 metres below ground. This is the journey sports fans will make in the future to get to and from the Gabba on game days or to the main stadium for the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games. The minister can go into more detail, but it is the equivalent of a surgeon doing keyhole surgery on a much larger scale. Mezzanine beams are also due to start being installed at Boggo Road, Roma Street and Albert Street later this year. Only Labor governments backed Cross River Rail that will transform travel across South-East Queensland.

NRL, Grand Final



Hon. A PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympics) (9.37 am): We all know that Queensland is the place to be—for good jobs, better services and a great lifestyle. If that includes hosting this year's NRL grand final, then I say you beauty! It is no secret that the NRL is considering a new home for this year's grand final. Why not Brisbane for the second year in a row? Big events fill hotels, cafes and restaurants and put a big smile on cabbies' faces. The economic boost from Magic Round—another Queensland innovation—has made it one of the most valuable properties in Australian sport, with benefits that flow throughout the economy.

The NRL knows Queensland is a safe pair of hands and there are no greater fans of Rugby League than the current State of Origin champions—Queensland. Andrew Johns was right: we are going to talk about the Origin win for at least the next 12 months. What I remember from that night, apart from the Maroons' courageous win, were the streets and businesses filled with fans and hospitality and other workers earning a living. This has been Queensland's story since COVID—a strong health response that has paved the way for the strongest economic recovery in the nation. Events like Origin, including in Townsville, have all played their part.

The decision about where this year's grand final should be is for Rugby League to make and Rugby League alone. Peter V'Landys is a friend to Queensland. He is a fan of Queensland. He is a man of his word. I have always found him very good to deal with and I know that respect is returned. My government is always open to opportunities that will help us provide those good jobs, better services and a great Queensland lifestyle. For now the scoreboard reads 'decision pending'. Let us hope the bunker makes the call we are hoping for—for Queensland, the heartland of Rugby League.

Birmingham Commonwealth Games



Hon. A PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympics) (9.39 am): One of the objectives of hosting the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games is to increase participation in sport. Sport is good for our physical and mental health, not to mention vital to developing teamwork, respect and healthy relationships. It was pleasing to see so many visitors to the government stand at the Ekka trying out for the Youfor2032 test, helping us to find the Olympians and Paralympians of the future. This drive to encourage more participation in sport is the reason this year's budget includes our \$100 million Go for Gold Fund. This money will be spent improving the sporting facilities at schools throughout the state. It will be especially useful in smaller regional and remote communities, where the opportunities to fundraise are limited by smaller populations.

There is something about Queensland's regions that seems to create more of our most successful athletes. Just look at the recent Commonwealth Games in Birmingham: Sarah Cochrane from Townsville won silver in weightlifting; Taliqua Clancy from Kingaroy won silver in the beach volleyball; Rockhampton local Ella Connolly came fourth in the 200-metre freestyle; and our medal-winning Hockeyroos and Kookaburras featured athletes from Mackay and Townsville, just to name a few.

Overall, Queensland athletes won 87 out of Australia's total of 178 medals. A remarkable 33 of Australia's 67 gold medals were won by Queenslanders. Queenslanders won a total of 87 medals—33 gold, 29 silver and 25 bronze. They were shared amongst a total of 128 athletes from the oldest, 63-year-old Cheryl Lindfield in lawn bowls, to the youngest, 17-year-old Flynn Southam in swimming. Women won 55 of our medals. In fact, if Queensland was a country instead of a state, we would have come third in the medal tally overall. Also, our para-athletes finished with 12 gold, 13 silver and 10 bronze, including a new world record in the women's 50-metre freestyle.

On behalf of this House, I would like to congratulate everyone who trained for and competed in this year's Commonwealth Games. Stay tuned as we plan a special reception to honour them later this year. My office is in talks with the Lord Mayor's office to see if we can do something special for them when they all return. I encourage every Queenslanders to follow their lead and have a go at participating in sport.

Flood Recovery



Hon. SJ MILES (Murrumba—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics Infrastructure) (9.41 am): Queenslanders are facing a monumental recovery from the 2021-22 disaster season. Across nine significant weather events, 66 of Queensland's 77 local government areas have been activated for joint state-federal disaster assistance. Thirty-nine of these councils have been impacted by two events; 14 councils were hit by three successive floods; while Bundaberg, Gympie and North and South Burnett all suffered through four major floods since the start of the year. Thousands of individuals, families, small businesses, primary producers and sporting organisations have felt the full impact of the floods that caused even more devastation than in 2011.

The QRA has recently completed Queensland's largest reconstruction monitoring assessment since the 2011 floods, checking on almost 9,000 homes and businesses across 16 flood-impacted local government areas through June and July. Almost 5,200 properties have been assessed with damage, with repairs started on nearly 1,700 properties—almost one-third—and more than 3,400 properties, or 40 per cent, no longer showing signs of damage. These are encouraging signs of recovery, but we know there is still much more to be done.

To date, more than \$33.4 million in emergency hardship payments have been provided to Queenslanders, benefiting more than 106,400 people. So far, 4,852 extraordinary assistance grants, valued at more than \$73.5 million, have been approved for primary producers, small businesses and not-for-profits and sporting and community clubs to help flood-affected communities get back on their feet. We raised the Structural Assistance Grant from \$15,000 to \$50,000 to assist home owners if they are uninsured or unable to access insurance. More than \$6.3 million in these grants have been approved, assisting more than 600 people.

All of that is on top of the \$741 million Resilient Homes Fund, which, as I said yesterday, has approved 90 home owners to take part in the voluntary buyback scheme across five local government areas so far. Both Suncorp and RACQ Insurance have praised the Resilient Homes Fund. Along with other insurers, they are working with the government on including the Resilient Homes Fund into their

claims process. Over 70 per cent of people registered for the program have comprehensive home insurance that includes flood cover. Home owners can access funds in addition to their insurance, making it even easier for Queenslanders to build back better.

Finally, I would like to thank state recovery coordinators Major General Jake Ellwood and his predecessor, former governor of Queensland, Hon. Paul de Jersey, for their efforts supporting our flood-affected communities. Major General Ellwood has carried out more than 270 community visits, meeting with impacted Queenslanders, businesses, councils and charity organisations.

Mr Bailey: He has done a great job.

Dr MILES: He has done a great job. I will take that interjection. Recently he provided the State Recovery and Resilience Plan 2022-24 to the Premier as a blueprint to work together to recover and make our state safer, stronger and more resilient in the face of future floods. As the State Recovery Coordinator has said many times, recovery from a disaster is more like a marathon than a sprint, and I can assure Queenslanders that we stand with them on the long road to recovery.

Coal Industry



Hon. CR DICK (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (9.45 am): The ongoing strength of Queensland's resource sector has again been underlined by strong financial results recently reported by big mining companies.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DICK: I take the interjections from the members of the opposition. I thank them for voting for progressive bipartisan coal royalties twice. In this House, that is a national—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Members to my left, this is the appropriate time for ministerial statements.

Mr DICK: We look forward to building that hospital in Moranbah. I would particularly like to congratulate the workers of BHP on the company's impressive results released yesterday. Thanks to the hard work of BHP's workers, excluding Woodside, the company posted a record \$30.4 billion underlying profit for the financial year. It is the second biggest profit ever achieved by BHP. Today it makes the case it is the miner's high point, given its asset portfolio is smaller today than it was in 2011. BHP shareholders will receive \$23.2 billion in dividends for the year to June. A substantial proportion of those dividends can be attributed to the tripling of BHP's coal revenues, which have risen from \$7.3 billion to \$22.1 billion. It just goes to show how much coal is delivering to BHP and its shareholders.

I also note the public commentary about BHP's Blackwater South proposal. It is important to note that BHP's own documentation demonstrates the Blackwater South mine would not commence until 2029 at the earliest, so a financial investment decision is many years away. I can also confirm for the House that the Office of Queensland's Coordinator-General has confirmed with BHP that they are proceeding with regulatory approvals for that mine at pace.

Whatever decision BHP makes in relation to that project, it must be viewed in the context of BHP's 20-year process of withdrawing from coal. Independent analysis released by Bank of America prior to the introduction of new bipartisan progressive coal royalties confirms that 'BHP has no plans to invest in new met. coalmines or growth projects to increase production'. Only last year, well before the introduction of new bipartisan progressive coal royalties, BHP put two new mines on hold, at Saraji East and Red Hill. Just a few weeks back, BHP announced an early closure of the Mount Arthur coalmine in New South Wales.

When it comes to companies that have been increasing their investment in coal, Queenslanders can be confident that bipartisan progressive coal royalties are no obstacle. Since the new royalty regime was introduced, Whitehaven Coal has confirmed that their new mine at Winchester South is unaffected. Peabody Energy has confirmed that their proposed North Goonyella mine is very financially attractive. The share price of companies like Bowen Coking Coal have traded higher than in May 2022, before new royalties were announced.

Stanmore Coal has just stumped up over \$400 million in cash to acquire the last 20 per cent of BHP's former joint venture with BHP Mitsui Coal. They are not alone. Last month Whitehaven Coal told the ASX it was expecting a profit for last financial year in the order of \$3 billion. The investment community describes Whitehaven Coal as 'printing cash', calling the company's earnings 'staggering'.

Queensland's coal industry is in good health, with strong profits being made, and I do not begrudge these companies their windfall profits. They are entitled to reap their fair share, just as the people of Queensland are entitled to reap their fair share as well.

Education Infrastructure



Hon. G GRACE (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (9.50 am): The Palaszczuk government is proud of the education infrastructure we are delivering right across this great state. This year alone we are investing around \$2 billion to maintain, renew and build new schools and facilities, supporting 4,200 jobs. It is part of the Palaszczuk government's plan to create good jobs, deliver better services and enhance our great Queensland lifestyle. These projects range from brand new schools in our fastest growing communities to major specialist classrooms and to paint makeovers for our smaller schools. These buildings would mean nothing to our students without our exceptional teachers and school staff. They truly are the foundation of the world-class education system we have here in Queensland, setting up our kids for a great future.

At the last election we made a commitment to employ 6,190 new teachers and 1,139 new teacher aides over the next four years. We are definitely on track to meet that commitment in spite of national and worldwide teacher shortages. Our innovative \$20 million Turn to Teaching initiative will employ and support 300 aspiring teachers to complete a teaching qualification and undertake paid internship employment with a guaranteed permanent position in a great Queensland state school thereafter. We are continuing to invest in our teachers. Our current enterprise bargaining offer for Queensland state schoolteachers includes some of the highest pay increases and best working conditions for teachers in the country including regional and remote incentives. This is all about making the Department of Education the employer of choice for teachers in Australia.

We know there are workforce challenges in attracting and retaining our teachers in the classroom. These are not unique to Queensland; they require a national response. That is why I was delighted to attend the education ministers' round table and meeting in Canberra last Friday. I want to especially thank Rebecca West, the new deputy principal at the new state school in Yarrabilba, and Dale Morrow, the principal at St Rita's College, for joining us and sharing with us their stories. The three areas I wanted to focus on were attraction, retention and advancement, and I am pleased to report that is exactly what we did.

Ministers met with teachers, school leaders, unions and other education experts at Parliament House to address how we attract teachers in the first place, how we give them the best initial teacher education and training, and how we support them once they enter the classroom. Everything was on the table: workload, career paths and progression, mentoring and professional development. What a breath of fresh air it was. From this discussion ministers agreed to develop a national teacher workforce action plan that will be presented at the December meeting.

There is no better investment in our future than investment in education. I look forward to keeping the House informed of progress on these critical matters because every student in Queensland deserves it.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, it was not the only thing that happened on Friday. Happy birthday for last Friday.

Mental Health Services



Hon. YM D'ATH (Redcliffe—ALP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (9.53 am): Every year hundreds of Queenslanders and their families are touched by tragedies associated with mental illness. According to Beyond Blue, more than 3,000 people die by suicide in Australia each year with three times as many men as women taking their own lives. Suicide affects even the most prominent people in our society, and with the sad passing of Paul Green from suicide we are reminded of the devastating impacts for individuals, families and sometimes entire communities. I pass on my condolences to Paul Green's family and friends.


Mental health does not discriminate. Anyone can find themselves needing support. This is one of the many reasons mental health is a major priority for the Palaszczuk government. Our latest state budget includes a \$1.6 billion boost for mental health services, the biggest increase to mental health funding in Queensland's history. It will be guided by people with lived experience of mental illness.

We are determined to tackle mental ill health and suicide through our whole-of-government *Every life: the Queensland suicide prevention plan*. Based on the best evidence, our plan details the critical shifts needed to reduce suicide in Queensland through partnerships with government and non-government agencies as well as community and private sectors and those with lived experience. It includes 60 cross-agency actions recognising that effective suicide prevention occurs far beyond the health system and is supported by funding of \$80.1 million over four years from 2019-20 and beyond.

Earlier this year on behalf of the government I signed a new bilateral agreement with the Commonwealth government to co-fund \$260 million in new mental health and suicide prevention services for Queensland over the next four years. We will continue to work with the Commonwealth and other stakeholders to tackle the scourge of suicide. We are also investing in new facilities across Queensland which provide dedicated mental health services such as Jacaranda Place at the Prince Charles Hospital, the Crisis Stabilisation Unit at the Robina Hospital and the Cairns mental health unit now under construction.

I want all Queenslanders experiencing mental health issues to know that they are not alone; help is available. Queensland Health provides funding to a range of NGOs for mental health crisis support including Head to Health services and crisis support spaces. Anyone experiencing a crisis should seek help via Lifeline, Beyond Blue or MensLine. As we progress our \$1.6 billion mental health package we are determined to seize the historic opportunity we have to shape mental health outcomes for the better.

Cross River Rail

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (9.56 am): The earth beneath our feet has been shifted and removed. Right now less than two kilometres from here the Cross River Rail's future underground Woolloongabba station is taking shape. When footy fans are heading to the Gabba on Friday to see the Lions take out the Demons they will be able to see the future emerging. They will see part of the Gabba station now rising out of the site, paving the way for easy arrival and departure from the Gabba via heavy rail for cricket, the footy and also concerts. However, it is what is happening underground that is even more exciting.


I can report that the massive concrete segments forming the future Gabba station's mezzanine level have been put in place as we speak. Fifty workers like engineers David Leitner, Aisling McKenna and Jade Furness are using a world-first construction method to do so. Lifting beams with a mobile gantry from inside a cavern this way is a world first.

The Gabba station will play a key role in our future SEQ train network, a plan we put out earlier this month. The SEQ Rail Connect lays the platform for the future of rail with a whole new rail line being added by the Palaszczuk Labor government. We will have direct links from the south to the north and from the east to the west and we will see commuters getting out in the heart of Brisbane's CBD. Rail advocate Robert Dow described the plan as 'like raining gold'.

Cross River Rail is delivering 15 fully accessible new or upgraded train stations. Today I am pleased to announce the next station to be upgraded with a full accessibility upgrade will be Rocklea, which I know the member for Toohey is very excited to hear. Rocklea will close from mid-September until late next year as it undergoes that major accessibility upgrade. Yeronga station is open and close to full completion and the Fairfield station accessibility upgrade is progressing well.

With four new underground stations, a full-time upgraded Ekka station, upgraded suburban stations, 5.9 kilometres of fast twin rail tunnels, more trains and better services, it is clear that the Cross River Rail project and line is a transformational project. Do not take my word for it. I was very heartened to hear an endorsement of the project on 2 August after the transport estimates hearing. It was on ABC Radio and I quote, 'There is no disagreement that the project will be a transformational infrastructure project.' Who was it who said that? It was the member for Chatsworth. After bagging it for four hours, he endorsed it. I am pleased to report to the chamber that the project is now so far advanced that even the LNP cannot cut it a third time. What an awesome project.

Training and Skills, Infrastructure

 **Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development) (9.59 am): The Palaszczuk government is committed to providing the world-class training facilities that Queenslanders need, and we are doing this by investing in infrastructure that will meet the workforce demands of the future. Investments such as our \$100 million Equipping TAFE for our Future program; our \$112 million Advancing Our Training Infrastructure program, which is jointly funded with the Commonwealth; and the \$10.6 million Revitalising TAFE Campuses program ensure that campuses, from Pimlico in North Queensland to Ashmore on the Gold Coast, have the latest training facilities. I have already opened 13 of these new and/or upgraded facilities in the last 12 months alone, with more to come.

Aside from being so proud of what is being achieved for Queenslanders, to be honest, I have had the loveliest time. Whether it is climbing through the new plumbing tower at Ashmore TAFE, talking to budding fashion designers at the new Fashion Centre of Excellence at Mount Gravatt, or the member

for Hervey Bay and I having our blood pressure taken by student nurse Bernadette Mabeza at the upgraded nursing and allied health facilities in Hervey Bay—members will be pleased to know that we are both healthy—you name it, it is happening at a TAFE facility near you.


Our Equipping TAFE for our Future initiative alone is funding 19 projects at 15 campuses across the state. Just last month I opened the new, global award-winning sustainable Robina TAFE campus. We provided \$10 million to fit out the campus so that more than 2,000 students can study hospitality, beauty and more—exactly the skills that are in demand on the Gold Coast. We have contributed over \$8 million to kickstart the consolidation of the CQU Rockhampton campus which includes building a new trades training centre of excellence. I know that the member for Rockhampton is very excited about that. The Townsville members are very excited about the \$14.2 million for further upgrades to the state-of-the-art Bohle TAFE in Townsville, where over 2,000 apprentices train every year, creating a \$3.6 million manufacturing skills lab that will have a production line facility, an augmented reality activation space and a robotics lab. We have invested \$28.9 million building a new robotics and advanced manufacturing centre at the Eagle Farm TAFE campus.

The federal Department of Education, Skills and Employment has projected demand for skilled ICT security specialists to grow by 20 per cent between 2020 and 2025. This is why the Palaszczuk government is investing \$6 million statewide to set up three new cybersecurity training operations centres to train students in monitoring, hacking and triaging web data, testing cyber attack and defence scenarios, and establishing new data centres and IT infrastructure. Mooloolaba is the first to be completed and South Bank and Cairns are next. I was so excited to tour the recently refurbished Mooloolaba campus earlier this year, whose new IT lab has those new attack and defence environments.

With our future focus, we are investing more than \$50 million in training infrastructure in the exciting new hydrogen sector, including \$20 million for a new hydrogen training centre of excellence at Beenleigh; \$17 million to build the Pinkenba renewable energy training facility; \$10.6 million to build a hydrogen and renewable energy facility for training in hydrogen, solar and wind at the Bohle trade training TAFE in Townsville; and \$2 million to upgrade facilities at Gladstone State High School.

The Palaszczuk government is committed to providing good jobs, better services and a great lifestyle for Queenslanders. Our investment in skills and training helps ensure we fulfil that commitment.

Rural Fire Service

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (10.03 am): Notwithstanding Queensland being the state most impacted by natural disasters each year, the Palaszczuk government's commitment to good jobs and better services is enhancing our great lifestyle. We have to be prepared for natural disasters. Notwithstanding the significant rainfall and flooding that has affected most of our state in the first half of this year, the Bureau of Meteorology has indicated that the seasonal outlook still indicates there is a level of bushfire risk in Queensland. The bureau has advised that the probability of above-median rainfall across the state will likely result in the continuation of favourable conditions for new grass growth, which may mean a higher than normal grassfire season across parts of Central, Northern and Western Queensland this bushfire season.

The Palaszczuk government has yet again demonstrated our determination to ensure better services and a great lifestyle for the people of Queensland to ensure we are best placed for this bushfire season. We have committed to keeping communities safe in times of fire, flood and natural disasters, and we are yet again living up to this commitment with an over \$900 million investment in Queensland Fire and Emergency Services. Not only does this investment keep our emergency services workers safe, providing them up-to-date equipment and new and improved facilities; it also keeps our community safe.

Only a fortnight ago, during Rural Fire Service Week, many members of this House recognised the brave and demanding work of our Rural Fire Service volunteers. I was very pleased to launch Rural Fire Service Week with the member for Pine Rivers at the Dayboro Rural Fire Brigade. Queensland's Rural Fire Service volunteers were honoured during that week across the state, whether it was through awards ceremonies or through gestures such as lighting landmarks including the Story Bridge, the Kurilpa Bridge and Brisbane Square in yellow. This was just a small sign of our thanks and appreciation to the Rural Fire Service.

Not to be understated is our record Rural Fire Service budget of \$72.4 million this year. This includes a \$10 million budget boost for new and upgraded facilities and equipment, including a new facility in Maryborough and up to 200 deluge safety systems installed on appliances across the state. I

acknowledge the member for Maryborough's advocacy on behalf of Rural Fire Service volunteers in the Fraser Coast area. That facility will be well received and will highlight the excellence of training and service delivery by Rural Fire Service volunteers. The budget also includes a substantial commitment for new Rural Fire Service vehicles and a new \$1 million Rural Fire Service facilities program. This is the first time a program of this nature for Rural Fire Service facilities has had a dedicated line item in the budget papers.

When disaster strikes, I do not doubt that the brave men and women of the Rural Fire Service would rather be with their loved ones. Instead, they are out fighting bushfires or sandbagging homes. That is because those yellow trucks and men and women in yellow signify calm amongst the chaos; they signify help; and they signify protection of community. That is why the Palaszczuk government will always back Queensland's emergency services volunteers and our frontline officers—every time.

DestinationQ



Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Tourism, Innovation and Sport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics and Paralympics Sport and Engagement) (10.07 am): 'Journey to 2032—building on our strengths' is this year's call to action at Queensland tourism's annual industry event. The DestinationQ Forum will bring together tourism industry leaders and operators from around the state on 3 November at the Gold Coast convention centre. With around 800 industry professionals attending, DestinationQ will be a significant contributor to the Gold Coast visitor economy in its own right. Many of DestinationQ's delegates will support Gold Coast accommodation providers during their stay. They will need transport, they will eat in local cafes and restaurants, and many—because they are so committed to the industry—will book a visitor experience with Gold Coast tourism operators.

DestinationQ's panel of experts bring a wealth of know-how and insight to the forum, including global influences on Queensland's visitor economy, changing visitor expectations, skills development, creating the tourism experiences of the future and building an inclusive, adaptable industry for holidaymakers with a disability.

Queensland's tourism green shoots of recovery are blooming into a forest and breaking pre-COVID records for school holiday and short break bookings. Forward bookings for the September school holidays in the Whitsundays, for instance, are already at 70 per cent and climbing. Domestic aviation is currently at 93 per cent of 2019 levels, and inbound international seats are now nudging 50 per cent of pre-pandemic capacity. Armed with our \$200 million international aviation war chest, in partnership with the state's four international airports and industry, we expect to announce more direct inbound overseas flights in coming weeks.

No other destination on earth has the advantage of two golden decades of tourism opportunity before and after the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games. DestinationQ on the Gold Coast provides an opportunity for tourism operators to work together and with government to build our strengths and coordinate Queensland's evolution as the world's favourite visitor destination.

Agriculture Industry




Hon. ML FURNER (Ferry Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities) (10.09 am): Queensland farmers have always been early adopters and beneficiaries of technology. Whether it is advances in growing techniques, new varieties of crops or new methods of animal husbandry, our primary producers have always been ahead of the curve. That is why we have an agriculture sector that not only weathered the COVID-19 storm but also has come out stronger than ever—an industry that has risen in value every year of the pandemic to now be worth more than \$23 billion of GDP.

The Palaszczuk government is committed to delivering better services to farmers. That is why we are investing \$140 million in research development and extension. Farmers are also asking for help in harnessing new technologies to make them more agile and resilient as we continue our economic recovery from COVID-19. That is why the Palaszczuk government is developing a network of smart farms to help drive research, innovation and demonstrate agtech solutions to the sector.

The Gatton Smart Farm precinct is a \$9 million partnership with Hort Innovation that will see new infrastructure on site such as climate controlled glasshouses, retractable roof protected cropping structures and coldrooms with the latest controlled atmosphere technology. Producers and agribusinesses will be able to take part in trials demonstrating the newest forms of agtech. Work is similarly underway on the Smart Cropping Centre at Emerald.

My department has also been meeting with businesses across the agriculture supply chain throughout Queensland over the last few months and is now compiling an agtech road map. Some of the work that DAF is doing in this new field is already bearing fruit. Staff in Toowoomba have developed a robot that is helping them understand how to use fertilisers better. The robot takes 3D scans of plants, allowing researchers to identify which type of fertiliser formulations supply just the right amount of nutrients and when the crops need it. The end result is less environmental contamination and better yields. The Palaszczuk government is committed to delivering better services to our farmers. Helping farmers embrace the agtech future will drive the growth of good jobs in farming and enhance the great lifestyles of regional Queenslanders.

Water Infrastructure

 **Hon. GJ BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water) (10.12 am): The past six weeks have served as a reminder of just why we do this job—to make Queenslanders' lives better. The year's budget has taken this government's investment in water infrastructure to more than \$3.4 billion since 2015—good jobs, better services and a great lifestyle. I am proud to sit in this chamber and hear all of the ways that the Palaszczuk government is delivering on that, but it was even better to get out into the regions and announce all of our fantastic projects after the budget.


Standing at Number 7 Dam in Mount Morgan with the member for Rockhampton, Mayor Tony Williams and his councillors was a day that I certainly will not forget too soon. Mayor Williams said that \$40.4 million is a game changer for his region and guaranteed water supply—or, as he calls it, liquid gold to Mount Morgan. It means that people can not only think seriously about advancing industry and tourism but also not have to worry about the tap at home running dry.

The construction of the Toowoomba to Warwick pipeline, which we have committed more than \$300 million to, will deliver approximately 420 local jobs as well as long-term water security which is critical to good jobs, economic growth and livability in regional Queensland. Seqwater has delivered detailed designs for the pipeline and we will continue to work with the stakeholders as we move into the delivery phase of this pipeline. I am in regular contact with Mayor Pennisi and Mayor Antonio and look forward to seeing this happen shortly. Mr Speaker, it was fantastic to get up to your patch in Cairns with the Treasurer to announce our commitment to water security up there. We are also progressing on other important projects such as Rookwood Weir, and I will be going up to that site in the very near future. We are restoring Paradise Dam, we are finishing the South West Pipeline and we are investigating the raising of Burdekin Falls Dam.

Last week I was back in the Far North to catch up with the Mareeba and Tablelands mayors to talk about their grants from round 6 of Building our Regions funding. This round of the program is funding water and sewerage improvements right across regional Queensland—critical services that communities cannot survive without thanks to the \$70 million from this government and this Treasurer. Every dollar spent on these projects underpins creating more jobs and better services in this great state. I look forward to getting back out to the regions to see more of these projects that we have invested in underway and delivering for all Queensland communities.

NOTICE OF MOTION

Hervey Bay, Youth Crime

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (10.15 am): I give notice that I will move—

That this House recognises the devastating impacts of youth crime on the people of Hervey Bay and notes:

1. the terrible toll on business owners and their staff under siege from this crime wave;
2. the state government's failure to increase police numbers in the face of increasing crime and population growth;
3. the added burden on the community from the failing health system which has seen police across Queensland drafted in because of record ambulance ramping; and
4. money wasted on the Palaszczuk government's Wellcamp fiasco could have been better invested combating serious issues facing regional Queenslanders

And calls on the member for Hervey Bay to admit he has got it wrong on breach of bail, police numbers and ambulance ramping.


Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Members to my right, the motion will be debated later today, not now.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Mr SPEAKER: Question time will conclude today at 11.16 am.

Caboolture Hospital

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (10.16 am): My question is to the Premier. Can the Premier tell Queenslanders what are the 12 investigations underway at the Caboolture Hospital?

Ms PALASZCZUK: The health minister will be able to provide more details in relation to that, but let me say this to the Leader of the Opposition: it is only this side of politics and this government that is adding the extra investment that is needed to our health services across this state—

Mr Dick: Record.

Ms PALASZCZUK:—record investment of over \$9.6 billion. I know those opposite do not like it, but \$9.6 billion, three new hospitals and a brand new cancer hospital as well. Just recently I was at the Sony Foundation which is doing a great job there partnering with Sony to provide a specialised service for young adults who are going through cancer. It is a bit like dealing with young people in aged care separately to make sure that it is relevant.

Opposition members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I am sorry, members opposite, but cancer is relevant to a lot of Queenslanders and it is only this government that is putting the investment—

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Great, and the member for Nanango is interrupting again. Yes, thank you for Kingaroy Hospital, the expansion in Caboolture Hospital—delivering once again for Queenslanders.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Nanango!

Ms PALASZCZUK: Yes, and the member was delighted when I opened the hospital. Is she not happy with it now? We on this side actually value our doctors and our nurses and our health professionals. We do not sack them.

A government member interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right: the member for Nanango was part of the government that did the massive sackings.

Government members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right: the Leader of the Opposition sat around the cabinet table and made those decisions. We are coming up to 10 years of that famous budget when the member for Clayfield—

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

Mr POWELL: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order under 118(b)—relevance. The question was very specific about the 12 investigations at the Caboolture Hospital.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, Manager of Opposition Business. The member for Nanango has also been consistently interjecting and the Premier is responding to interjections which are unseemly in the House, so the Premier is relevant to the question.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I have been out and visited Caboolture Hospital and the staff there work incredibly hard. There is no greater example than through COVID and influenza that our staff have done exceptional work. Now that we are coming off the wave and the numbers of hospitalisations are decreasing, it is alleviating the pressures that our staff have been put under dealing with the double whammy of COVID and also influenza.

On this side of the House we should be thanking the doctors and the nurses, as we do, but not on that side where those opposite are always critical of our health system. I have never heard the Leader of the Opposition say anything positive about the health system in this House—not one thing. No ‘thank you’ at all.

(Time expired)

Caboolture Hospital

Mr CRISAFULLI: My question is to the Minister for Health. Has a mother or baby died as a result of malpractice at the Caboolture Hospital?

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members to my right, we do not require commentary. The minister will answer very capably.

Mrs D'ATH: I assume the Leader of the Opposition is referring to a particular investigation or matter, but I believe that was taken on notice and information has been provided in relation to that. On the issue of investigations with Caboolture Hospital and the question just put to the Premier and to myself around those reviews and what they relate to, the Leader of the Opposition would be well and truly aware that we launched an independent review last year into the surgical services at Caboolture Hospital. That concluded on 25 October last year. Metro North Hospital and Health Service has accepted the recommendations as outlined in that action plan resulting from that review. To date, 18 of the 19 recommendations in the review report have been implemented, with the remaining recommendation due to be implemented later this month.

There were no findings against hospital staff of malpractice at the Caboolture Hospital relating to deaths. I think that is really important when the Leader of the Opposition continually asks this line of questioning in estimates and again today. There have been no findings against staff of malpractice relating to any deaths at Caboolture Hospital. In relation to the 12 reviews currently going on, I will not talk about active investigations but I can say this: I am advised these investigations relate to staff performance and conduct, they do not relate to any patient death or harm. The Leader of the Opposition has recklessly and incorrectly claimed the government has confirmed a death occurred at the Caboolture Hospital due to malpractice. I cannot be clearer: the current reviews go to staff performance and do not relate to patient death or harm. There have been no findings as far as malpractice against staff in relation to a death at Caboolture Hospital and the Leader of the Opposition should stand up and set the record straight and stop making these allegations.

North Queensland

Mr HARPER: My question is to the Premier. Can the Premier update the House on her recent trip to North Queensland?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Thuringowa very much for that question. The best way to listen to Queenslanders is to get out and about and hear what they have to say. I was very pleased that I was able to be joined by the member for Thuringowa, the member for Mundingburra and the Minister for Resources as we had the absolute pleasure in opening the new Haughton River floodplain construction, which is a fantastic example of building back better. With the monsoonal flooding, that part of the Bruce Highway was out for around six days, from memory. We worked very closely with the federal government to make sure that we were able to raise the height of that bridge and also put in some extra overpasses for the cane trains.

When we talk about the resilience of Queenslanders and North Queensland, this investment was the largest infrastructure project for some time in North Queensland following on from the Townsville stadium. It is obviously needed and I thank the local community for their patience because it did take some time with road diversions and road upgrades. It took 2.5 years to complete and it is the largest project delivered by Transport and Main Roads Northern District to date. A lot of those workers will now move on to the Townsville Ring Road. That is also very good.

Whilst I am on my feet, I will mention that yesterday I had the opportunity to meet with canegrowers. Can I say what a dynamic group they are. The way they spoke to me about what is happening in the Burdekin and Mackay, the canegrowers very much realise that sustainability is the way to go for the future. I am very pleased that they are taking this approach. Sugar prices are very high at the moment and our exports are going very well. This is very good news for North Queensland. I look forward to going for a tour of a property that the canegrowers have asked me to go out to. I am sure that the member for Mackay will want to come along.

Whilst I was in North Queensland we announced that the \$9 million demolition contract has been awarded to FK Gardner and Sons for the 1300SMILES stadium. That was the former headquarters of the Cowboys and is going to be transformed into a \$30 million brand new, state-of-the-art police facility at the site.

(Time expired)

Caboolture Hospital

Ms BATES: My question is to the Minister for Health. Whistleblowers have told the opposition one of the reviews involve surgeries performed without the appropriate staff in theatre. Can the minister confirm no patients were put at risk due to failed staffing practices at Caboolture Hospital?

Ms Palaszcuk: Stop talking down the hospitals!

Mrs D'ATH: I thank the member for her question. I do want to take the interjection from the Premier. I really do wish the opposition would stop talking down our hospitals and our staff at the hospitals. They claim that they do not. I can assure the opposition that when you go out and talk to the staff at these hospitals after these allegations are spread throughout the community and the media that they are devastated. They see it as a personal attack on their performance and their ability to do their job. Having said that, if there are allegations they should be properly reported and should be investigated.

If the member is referring to an anonymous letter, which I believe she is, the anonymous letter has been referred to an external investigator. However, I have been advised none of the complaints in that letter have been able to be substantiated. They have been investigated. Allegations are taken seriously. They are properly considered. As I have said, there is no finding from these reviews of malpractice causing harm or death at Caboolture Hospital.

Bundaberg Hospital

Mr SMITH: My question is to the Premier and Minister for the Olympics. Will the Premier please update the House on planning for the new Bundaberg Hospital?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Bundaberg for the question. Our government has released our Queensland Health and Hospitals Plan. I am very proud of this plan and will be talking about it across the length and breadth of Queensland. I was absolutely delighted to join the member for Bundaberg when we went to the Bundaberg Hospital to meet with staff and thank them for their hard work—something that members of government do on a regular basis, unlike those opposite scaremongering and not getting the facts right. We saw the scaremongering—three or four months—on the laptops. There is still no apology. They make stuff up, but there is still no apology from the Leader of the Opposition—no backbone, no spine, not able to stand up in this House and apologise.

Mr SPEAKER: Premier, that language is considered unparliamentary.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I withdraw. The member for Bundaberg has been a very big advocate for the new Bundaberg Hospital that our government will deliver to the people of Bundaberg.

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: If the Leader of the Opposition would kindly listen, I will advise the Leader of the Opposition about the hospital. The \$1.2 billion new hospital will include an additional 128 beds. Construction will also provide a big boost for the local economy with over 2,000 jobs.

Today I can announce that the updated concept plans for the new hospital have been released for community feedback. People have the next two weeks to provide feedback. The new hospital will include additional beds across medical, surgical, intensive care, coronary care, paediatric and mental health wards; additional operating theatres; additional emergency department treatment spaces; additional outpatient consult areas; the expansion of medical imaging, pharmacy and pathology; and the expansion of education and training areas and facility support services.

On this side of the House we deliver for health. On this side of the House we were the ones who kept Queenslanders safe for two years of the pandemic until people could get vaccinated. On this side of the House we value the workers in our hospital and health system and that is why we have increased the numbers; on that side of the House they sacked them.

Caboolture Hospital

Mr BLEIJIE: My question is to the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services. After the opposition spoke to many staff at the Caboolture Hospital and noting that it has been nine months since the minister was warned by whistleblower doctors that even after the services review into the Caboolture Hospital surgeries were conducted with staff ill-equipped to perform operations in theatre, what action has this minister taken to ensure patients' lives have not been put at risk by these failings?

Mrs D'ATH: I thank the member for his question. I know that those on the other side are not very good on strategy and thinking on their feet. I have answered this question in my previous two answers.

Ms Bates: Nine months.

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

Renewable Energy, Jobs

Ms BOYD: My question is to the Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics Infrastructure. Can the Deputy Premier outline how the Palaszczuk government is supporting battery manufacturing in Queensland to create more good, secure jobs for Queenslanders?

Dr MILES: I thank the member for Pine Rivers for the question and for her support for creating the jobs of the future right around Queensland, including in her own neck of the woods, Pine Rivers. In fact, just recently I was in Pine Rivers at Brendale, where we turned the sod on the new supernode centre, leveraging off the junction point of the high transmission lines to draw secure green energy from throughout our grid, reinforced with a massive battery to deliver a 24/7 green data centre connected to the world via the Palaszczuk government supported submarine internet cable at the Sunshine Coast.

It is just one of the many initiatives that we are supporting to ensure that Queenslanders get the jobs of the future. In fact, in our recent budget we allocated \$2 billion for storage, transmission and renewables—investments that will create good, secure jobs for the future. Thirteen large-scale batteries will allow us to install even more rooftop solar panels. There is \$15 million for a national battery testing centre in Banyo. Recently, I was in Maryborough with the member for Maryborough to turn the sod on a new battery manufacturing facility there. In fact, in every part of the state we are creating new jobs in the industries of the future.

On this side of the House we work to secure good Queensland jobs while all the LNP know how to do is to cut. I saw the Leader of the Opposition outline his plans for the Public Service last week. He thinks the only thing that the Newman government did wrong was that they went a bit too fast; they did all the right things, they just did them too quickly. This time public servants would have nothing to fear fast because they are going to do them slowly. They are going to sack them slowly. They are still going to sell all the assets, they will just take a little bit longer. The problem was not the pace of your ideas; it was your ideas. That is what Queenslanders rejected.

The Leader of the Opposition looks at the Public Service in the same way that Peter Dutton looks at a dagwood dog and thinks, 'I'm going to do you slowly.' On this side of the House we will continue to create good jobs here for Queenslanders and we will continue to fend off your efforts, whether that is to cut, sack and sell fast or slow, because Queenslanders will reject it either way.

Mr SPEAKER: I remind all ministers that comments will be directed through the chair. The member for Toowoomba South is cautioned as is the Treasurer for arguing across the chamber.

Caboolture Hospital

Dr ROWAN: My question is to the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services. Of the current ongoing investigations underway into the Caboolture Hospital, how many cases have been referred to the Queensland Audit of Surgical Mortality?

Mrs D'ATH: I thank the member for his question. As I have said, the current reviews that are going on do not relate to clinical practice; they relate to staff performance and conduct. I am happy to follow up with Metro North HHS and the reviewers as to whether those sorts of reviews require that sort of referral. However, I make it clear that they are around staff performance and they are not around harm to or death of any patients.

Economic Reform

Mr McCALLUM: My question is of the Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment. Will the Treasurer inform the House of the importance of prudent reform and is the Treasurer aware of any alternative approaches?

Mr DICK: I thank the member for Bundamba for his question. Yesterday's moving Path to Treaty ceremony highlighted the importance of innovative reform. I thank Mick Gooda for his kind words about our government's \$300 million Path to Treaty Fund. Mr Gooda said that the fund has enabled Path to Treaty to become a tangible reality. I know that this whole process is something that the member for Bundamba embraces. He embraces it as a member of parliament, he embraces it given his personal history and he embraces it as a Queenslanders.

The importance of sustained and certain funding for something as important as treaty cannot be overstated. The same goes for the other innovative funds that we announced in last year's budget: the Housing Investment Fund, the Land Restoration Fund and the Debt Retirement Fund. They are examples of innovative Labor economic reform—reform that helps Queenslanders and helps strengthen Queensland.

Then there is the reform that the Leader of the Opposition talks about. Last Friday, the Leader of the Opposition went on Ray Hadley's show at the Ekka and said, 'We will reform but it will be done at a pace that people will expect and deserve.' When the LNP says to Queenslanders that they are going to do something to them that they 'deserve', you know what is coming.

Mr Crisafulli: Less ambulance ramping.

Mr DICK: There is more for you, Leader of the Opposition.

Mr SPEAKER: Through the chair, Treasurer.

Mr DICK: The Leader of the Opposition does not like hearing his own words quoted back to him. The Leader of the Opposition said, 'There will be changes made but people will be treated with respect and decency.' I thought, where have I heard those words before? I have heard something similar.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DICK: The Leader of the Opposition does not like the truth.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Members to my right, regardless of the interjections there is an inference in reflecting on a member's absence from the chamber, for which there is a convention in this House.

Mr DICK: That sounded similar to something I have heard before: 'At the end of the day, in every single case, we tried to deal with people decently, carefully and responsibly.'

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. I am sorry to interrupt, Treasurer. Leader of the Opposition, you are warned under the standing orders. You cannot interject whilst walking around the chamber. Treasurer, you have 40 seconds remaining.

Mr DICK: It was similar to something I had heard previously: 'At the end of the day, in every single case, we tried to deal with people decently, carefully and responsibly.' That was the Leader of the Opposition's mentor and idol, Campbell Newman, in 2014. That is when Campbell Newman was explaining why he sacked 14,000 people. When you say you are going to treat people decently, Leader of the Opposition, we know what is coming. It is exactly what Campbell Newman said—14,000 jobs. That is what he said—cuts, just not savage ones. He is doing it deliberately to set up Queensland.

Mr SPEAKER: A final reminder to ministers to please put their comments through the chair and not direct them at individual members.

Caboolture Hospital

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: My question is to the Minister for Health. I refer to the minister's previous answer. The independent governance review into Caboolture Hospital identified one preventable clinical management issue—decision to operate—that caused the death of a patient who otherwise would have been expected to survive. Who should Queenslanders believe: the minister or the independent governance review?

Mrs D'ATH: I am happy to look at what the member is referring to. As I advise, there have been no findings of malpractice against any staff in relation to the reviews that have occurred at Caboolture Hospital.

Mr Bleijie interjected.

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

Mrs D'ATH: Those opposite continue to talk down our health system, criticise the staff and in fact scare the community. Their town hall meetings, as they run around talking about the health system and talking down the health system, say to the people, 'You shouldn't go to our health system; you can't trust that you'll get the care you need'—

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

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

Mrs D'ATH: In fact, our health workers are providing extraordinary care each and every day under extraordinary pressure. Members should look at what is happening around the world and in this nation. Our health system has been able to continue to function. We have not had to make some of the decisions that other countries had to make—choosing who goes on ventilators and everything else to deal with a global health pandemic—while still doing planned care and elective surgeries and dealing with those emergencies coming in the door, making sure that everyone who needs care gets care.

It is this Labor government that recognises the need to continue to invest in the health system. That is why we handed down not only a record budget but also an historic budget when it comes to investment in the health system in this state—not just our operational budget this year, which saw a significant increase across all of the hospital and health services, but also a major capital investment, knowing the beds that we need to build over the next few years. In fact, we are building more beds than some of the stakeholders have said we need.

That is what good government does. Good government does not criticise the health system but then in government actually sack people, close down the Barrett centre and take funding away from NGOs that deal with prevention and early intervention. It is only Labor governments that will invest in health, that will work with our stakeholders, that will not talk down or run down the health system. It will actually lift them up, build them up and support the health service and the health workforce because they deserve it. They do not need to be accused of malpractice. If allegations are properly investigated and findings are made, those opposite should not continue to attack our health workers each and every day. They should be ashamed of that.

Education

Mr MELLISH: My question is of the Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing. Can the minister update the House on her attendance at the recent meeting of education ministers in Canberra, the outcomes of the meeting and if she is aware of any alternative approaches?

Ms GRACE: I thank the member for the question. I know that he is very proud of the schools in his electorate. They have been transformed. We have been to some of those schools and seen some of the remarkable buildings we have provided. I know that the teachers and staff there are very happy. That is exactly what we want to provide for every student in every school in Queensland. The Palaszczuk Labor government will always support and value our hardworking teachers.

I was delighted to be in Canberra last Friday to start to talk about the real challenges we are currently facing. Representatives of every state and territory were there. We all talked about the five things we want to prioritise and work towards. I congratulate federal education minister Jason Clare on bringing together, in a collaborative way, all of the education ministers from around the country in a round table with teachers, principals, unions and universities to talk about issues and not to run down the education system in this state. Members opposite here today are talking down our health system, telling Queenslanders that they will get what they deserve. We know what they deserved under the previous government!

The Leader of the Opposition, the previous leader of the opposition and the previous education minister were around the cabinet table when we needed extra teachers. When they were in government, they failed to employ the more than 500 teachers we needed just to keep pace. We are meeting our commitment to do that. We see those opposite running down our health system and our education system. Chicken Little, the member for Moggill, runs around saying, 'The education system is in ruins.' There is not one parent or school in Queensland that believes the member for Moggill. I suggest that he gets off the bandwagon of running down the profession of teaching. Over the time I have been education minister there have been four federal education ministers.

Dr Miles: Does that include the Prime Minister?

Ms GRACE: That is what I know about. I honestly do not know whether or not ScoMo was education minister! Not one of them spoke about the profession in a positive way. They denigrated. We are now facing up to the challenges of teacher numbers, because those opposite do not know how to deliver an effective education system or health system. We will not be lectured to by them because we know that, deep in their DNA, there is not a public servant that they do not want to sack. They even sacked one from their side—the member for Mundingburra, the first nurse sacked.

(Time expired)

Caboolture Hospital

Mr POWELL: My question is to the Minister for Health. I refer to the minister's previous answers and to question on notice No. 2 from the Health and Environment Committee 2022 estimates, which states—

There was one death included in the Caboolture Surgical Services Review that occurred prior to 2020.

Is the minister not across her brief and not capable of healing the health crisis?

Mrs D'ATH: I thank the member for his question. Asking whether there is a death under review and claiming that death is due to malpractice are two very different things. I can make it clear that I have been advised—

Ms Bates interjected.

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

Whereupon the honourable member for Mudgeeraba withdrew from the chamber at 10.48 am.

Mrs D'ATH: When these incidents occur—any death in our health system is tragic—they are properly reviewed. If opposition members are going to make references to deaths that are reviewed, they should also make references to findings and recommendations that come out of that. It is important to note that there have not been any findings against staff in relation to malpractice, because people should have confidence to go to our public hospital system and not be scared by the allegations that members opposite put.

The answer to the member's question is that I have provided accurate information both in estimates and in relation to—

Ms Grace: It is called integrity.

Mrs D'ATH: I take the interjection. There is a governance review. The findings are what they are. I have stated that there have been no findings around malpractice of a staff member. Those on the opposite side have been running around claiming there have been and they should correct the record.

Mr Powell interjected.

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

Mrs D'ATH: They should make that clear to the public so the public can have confidence in our public health system. The opposition should not run down the Caboolture Hospital as it has done for a considerable period of time.

Regional Queensland, Health Infrastructure

Ms LUI: My question is of the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services. Can the minister inform the House how the government is delivering new and improved health infrastructure in the cape and other parts of regional Queensland and is the minister aware of any alternative policies?

Mrs D'ATH: It is wonderful to have a question from the member for Cook—a question that relates to investment in our health system and capital infrastructure. I do not think there was one question—I stand to be corrected—to me in estimates around capital investment and building hospitals or new beds. I am happy to go back and check *Hansard*.

I am very proud to be part of the Palaszczuk government that is investing in our regions. We have had a strong record of investing in particularly the cape. We have invested almost \$50 million in the redevelopment of Thursday Island Hospital, which the Premier and I will visit shortly; \$8.86 for a new CT scanner, birthing unit, primary healthcare clinic and renal unit at Weipa; and \$7 million for the Mer Island Primary Health Care Centre.

More broadly, over the next seven years investment of \$743.5 million in our building rural and remote health program will replace ageing health infrastructure while supporting hundreds of construction jobs right across Queensland. This never happened under the opposition. They never restored and redeveloped these regional facilities. This investment will see the primary health centre redevelopment at Cow Bay in the Daintree, which is also in the electorate of Cook; the Normanton Hospital redevelopment; the Bamaga Hospital redevelopment; the Pormpuraaw health facility redevelopment; the Moranbah Hospital redevelopment; and the Tara Hospital redevelopment. Our plans will be supported by the recruitment of healthcare workers over the decade, with specific emphasis on rural and remote communities.

Healthcare workers choosing to make rural and remote Queensland their home will be supported by a \$115 million injection into delivering staff accommodation. We know that that is critical in attracting staff. This will also support 60 construction jobs. It means staff accommodation at Camooweal, Dajarra, Bamaga and Pormpuraaw. It is fantastic that we are doing that.

This is in stark contrast to the investment or the lack thereof of the opposition when they were in government. They did not build any new health facilities. They certainly did not invest in the regions. We know that they did not put extra staff in the regions because they sacked 4,400 health workers.

Ms Simpson interjected.

Mrs D'ATH: We can only imagine what services would be like today under an LNP government. They would have been starting with 4,400 fewer health workers when the global health pandemic hit. Imagine what our health system would be like if we still had 4,400 fewer staff and an LNP government were in control.

Drugs, Pill Testing

Mr BERKMAN: My question this morning is to the Minister for Health. The Mental Health Commissioner indicated in estimates that progress is being made towards licensed drug checking or pill testing in Queensland and that the adoption of drug checking at festivals and in the community will save lives. Will the health department support and fund a pill testing trial with a view to expanding this at festivals and in the community as the ACT is now doing?

Mrs D'ATH: As the Mental Health Commissioner said in estimates, these issues are being worked through currently and the benefits and risks of doing this are being looked at. Benefits have certainly been identified in some areas. There are small trials going on in other places around the country. We have to work through these issues and what we do very carefully. We will give this proper consideration. It will be based on evidence. We will ensure that we look not just nationally but internationally to determine best practice in relation to this.

I am very proud of our investment in mental health in this year's budget. That includes investment in drug and alcohol services. When I raised with the former Commonwealth government whether there was going to be specific funding for drug and alcohol services as part of our bilateral agreement on mental health, the answer was no. There was going to be no specific carve-out for drug and alcohol services. We cannot talk about mental health without talking about investment in drug and alcohol services. We know they go hand in hand.

Those opposite like to talk crime and youth crime. All of these things are mixed together. Housing, mental health, drug and alcohol support, health, domestic violence, education, training and skills, job opportunities all go hand in hand. I am proud that as a government we recognise that and have done so from day one. It is not one agency that can solve these issues. It has to be multiagency and a whole-of-government strategy. It also involves working with the private sector, NGOs and all three levels of government. We know that many of our facilities, including drug and alcohol facilities, are run by private providers but that we provide capital funding or fund services.

It is an important area. I know that the member for Maiwar is not the only person who is passionate about this issue and understands the importance of getting this right. When looking at drug testing we have to consider whether it is in the best interests of individuals and festival-goers and lead to fewer deaths, fewer injuries and less drug use. These are all the things that we are working through at the moment. As I said, we will do it in a way that is thorough and evidence based so we can get the answer right when it comes to what we do going forward.

Road and Transport Infrastructure

Mr KING: My question is of the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. Can the minister outline the government's road and transport infrastructure jobs plan and is the minister aware of any alternative approaches?

Mr BAILEY: The member has always been a very passionate and strong supporter of road and rail investment in Queensland. At estimates I outlined our seventh record road and rail infrastructure budget of \$29.7 billion. That is nearly 50 per cent more than the last budget of the Newman government. This is \$300 million above our projected expenditure in the previous financial year. We are getting a lot done. More than 25,000 jobs are related to this expenditure. We are seeing huge commitments on the Bruce Highway, the M1 and the second M1 and a rail revolution. There is a \$3.5 billion commitment to rail—and not just the Cross River Rail project but also the Kuraby to Beenleigh and the Sunshine Coast rail line duplication projects. There are huge commitments in rail.

People would recall that at last year's estimates I did not get a single question from the former member for Callide—zero. Incredibly, this year there were no questions whatsoever to the CEO of Queensland Rail. We have a rail revolution going on in Queensland and there was not one question

from those opposite of the Queensland Rail CEO in four hours of questioning. It is extraordinary. There were no questions of the QR CEO from the member for Chatsworth, from the member for Toowoomba North, from the member for Gregory and from the member for Callide. We have to have some sympathy for the new member for Callide; he is finding his feet.

This is even more amazing when we consider that we had just released the South-East Queensland Rail Connect operational plan. There was not a question to QR CEO. The member for Chatsworth bagged Cross River Rail for four hours and then endorsed it that afternoon. If only we had seen that approach from the Leader of the Opposition in terms of the laptop. If only he would come clean and admit that he has been misleading this House and others for five months given the report from the CCC. If only he would come clean on the laptop and start walking the walk instead of just talking the talk on integrity. This is just like the commitment from the opposition in terms of the chair of CCC. They say five years but their committee members only endorse three years.

It is hard to top that. One thing that did top that yesterday was the speech by the new member for Callide bagging the Containers for Change program. He bagged his opposition leader's position in his first speech. The Leader of the Opposition's expression as he listened to the member for Callide's first speech was like an Easter Island statute. It was extraordinary. We know the LNP is not a container for change; they are a container for cuts. They always have and always will be. It is in their DNA. We know that they will do it again if they get another chance.

Spanish Mackerel Fishery

Mr KNUTH: My question without notice is to the Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries. Spanish mackerel annual fishing quotas have never been reached since introduced in 2004. A DAF report in 2018 assessed the fishery as healthy, but the minister is now claiming low stock levels are the result of 'overfishing'. Will the minister accept full responsibility for the 'alleged' low stock levels and compensate the fishing industry if the fishery closes?

Mr FURNER: I thank the member for Hill for his question. No doubt the member for Hill would be fully aware of the Sustainable Fisheries Strategy we implemented in 2019. This particular stock species is well known. It is an iconic species that is definitely relied upon in the staple diet of many Queenslanders. That is why we are taking a detailed assessment in terms of not only the first but also the second consultative process with this fishery sector—whether it be the recreational, commercial, retail or wholesale sector in terms of those who sell catch and export this particular species. That is why it is important we work through that process. We have a Spanish mackerel working group that has been involved in the consultation on the species.

The important aspect in this case is the level of the stock assessment. It came down to a 17 per cent stock assessment. You know that the national trigger for assessment in terms of identifying the need to act is 20 per cent. That is why it is important that this government—and we are looking at it through the lens of making sure that we have a sustainable fishery into the future—protects this species where we can in terms of not only supporting those persons in the sector but also making sure that this industry is sustainable through that Sustainable Fisheries Strategy. That is why we implemented that strategy in 2019. We know those opposite oppose the strategy. We know those opposite sought to bring in amendments to allow black marketers five days free gain to make sure they got rid of their stock.

We never went down that path. We have a process to make sure our fisheries are sustainable not only for ourselves but also for our children and grandchildren into the future. That is why we rely upon science. That is why we rely upon the assessment provided. That is why we provided an independent stock assessment beyond that which was provided to ensure the sustainability of the Spanish mackerel species. We will not give up on the science. We will not give up on the consultation. We are a consultative government. We will make sure that we consult with all the regions and all the persons involved in this industry to ensure there is a sustainable Spanish mackerel species well into the future.

I am looking forward to the final analysis, the final stage of the assessment and the consultation. We will go out there with a position based on the feedback from that last phase of consultation. I am looking forward to hearing that result. We will then go back to the industry and make sure that we have delivered on what they require to ensure the sustainability of the species. Once again, I look forward to those outcomes. We will protect our fishery sector as we have always done as a government.

(Time expired)

Renewable Energy, Electricity Prices

Mr POWER: My question is to the Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement. With so many people in Logan using renewable energy in their houses, can the minister please update the House on any recent developments of the Palaszczuk and Albanese governments in building more clean energy, creating good jobs and putting downward pressure on future electricity prices?

Mr de BRENNI: I thank the member for Logan. There has been more meaningful development in national energy policy in the last week than in the previous nine years. We saw 22 different energy policies in the last nine years under the coalition—3,178 days of energy policy chaos. After just 81 days in office, there is now a new National Energy Transformation Partnership agreed by every state and territory unanimously with the Albanese government. I table this historic partnership agreement for the benefit of the House.

Tabled paper: National Energy Transformation Partnership, August 2022 [1153].

This agreement is already delivering for Queensland. The Premier announced a \$160 million commitment to connect the largest wind farm in the nation to the national electricity market—that is right here in Queensland. Then Queensland scored a second major win: enshrining emissions reductions in the national energy objectives. They are the laws that govern Australia's electricity system. That is a watershed moment for national energy policy shared by many of our national mastheads. The *Courier-Mail* covered it as 'Ministers move to keep the power on'. The *Sydney Morning Herald* headline ran with 'Energy ministers power up renewables transition with new deal'. Even Sky News covered this story. I table those stories.

Tabled paper: Article from the *Courier-Mail*, dated 13 August 2022, titled 'Ministers move to keep the power on' [1154].

Tabled paper: Article from the *Sydney Morning Herald*, dated 12 August 2022, titled 'Energy ministers power up renewables transition with new deal' [1155].

Whilst I am talking about national energy news, here is significant news story. At the height of the Morrison government's power trip, then energy minister Angus Taylor secretly changed national energy laws to deceive Australians. Whilst Morrison was asking the Governor-General to make him the 'minister for everything', then minister Angus Taylor was signing new regulations to hide electricity price increases until after the federal election. I table the amendment that the Morrison government secretly took to the Governor-General. It is signed by then minister Taylor for the treasurer as industry and energy minister.

Tabled paper: Competition and Consumer (Industry Code-Electricity Retail) Amendment (determination) Regulations 2022 [1156].

Ms Grace: Which treasurer?

Mr de BRENNI: Of course, Australians are not sure who was the treasurer. They are not sure today who was even the industry and energy minister. The fact is that, after nine years of failing this nation on energy policy, the LNP national energy minister, Angus Taylor, with presumably the approval of former prime minister Scott Morrison, then deliberately concealed vital information from the Australian people and, more importantly, from Queenslanders. This defines the culture of the Liberal National Party in this nation. They have been spreading lies about laptops, porkies about public servants and red herrings on renewables, all the while spruiking transparency and accountability. Their hypocrisy knows no bounds.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, I ask you to withdraw the word which was unparliamentary.

Mr de BRENNI: I withdraw.

Blackwater South Mine

Mr MILLAR: My question is to the Minister for Resources. I refer to the decision from BHP to shelve the Blackwater South mine. How can a young mine worker in my electorate have confidence in her future if investor stability is constantly eroded due to the state government's broken tax promises?

Mr DICK: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I made a comprehensive ministerial statement this morning.

Mr SPEAKER: That is not a point of order.

Mr DICK: In referring to that mine, I ask the honourable gentleman to authenticate the facts that the project has been shelved.

Mr SPEAKER: There has been a convention, Treasurer, that if something is published in the media there is an opportunity for that to be refuted at a later time, but until then it is considered to be factual. I will allow the question.

Mr DICK: I am asking him to authenticate it.

Mr SPEAKER: In terms of asking to authenticate, I understand that the member has referred to a media statement.

Mr DICK: It was purported.

Mr SPEAKER: No, but other members have—I do listen to what the chamber is saying, Treasurer. I will allow the question but I will also give latitude to how it is answered.

Mr STEWART: I thank the member for Gregory for that outstanding question. BHP and its workers have achieved record profits thanks to Queensland coal assets. I do not begrudge BHP making these superprofits, but at the same time the people of Queensland should get what they deserve because, at the end of the day, it is Queenslanders who own these coal resources. That is all we want. When I talk to mums and dads out there, they say the same. They just want their fair share.

The reality is that BHP has been moving away from coal for the last 20 years. BHP's own submission to the Queensland Coordinator-General says that construction on the Blackwater South project would not start before 2029, so a final investment decision would, in fact, be many years away. Last week, when BHP suggested Blackwater South was 'up in the air', the Office of the Coordinator-General went to BHP and asked, 'Do you want us to pause it?' What was their response? BHP said no. They wanted to proceed—'keep it going'.

The process of shelving projects that are a long way from breaking ground happens from time to time. For example, BHP shelved possible mines at Saraji East and Red Hill north of Moranbah before there was any change in these royalty arrangements. While we are talking about royalty changes, other coal companies have confirmed that the new royalty arrangements will not—not—impact final investment decisions for any of their new mines. This includes companies like Whitehaven Coal, which has said that the royalties will have no material effect on their proposed mine at Winchester South, a place where I turned the first sod. Let's also talk about Peabody Energy, whose CEO recently said—

So North Goonyella is still an attractive option for organic growth, probably our best organic growth opportunity that we have in the company.

He went on to say—

So it's still a very high priority for us in the list of all of our projects that we're looking at as being financially attractive.

There you go, Mr Speaker. They come in here and they spruik 'the sky is falling!' The truth of the matter is that if they got out and talked to those companies they would see a completely different story. I would also like to draw the attention of the House to Stanmore's half-yearly results, which were released Friday last week. Stanmore just invested nearly \$400 million to increase ownership of BMC. Those opposite supported the royalties. The member for Gregory supported the royalties. The member for Condamine supported the royalties. Yet they come in here and—

(Time expired)

Crime and Corruption Commission, Fitzgerald Report

Mr KELLY: My question is of the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence. Can the Attorney-General update the House on the outcome of the commission of inquiry into the Crime and Corruption Commission, what this means for Queensland integrity institutions, and is the Attorney-General aware of any alternative approaches?

Ms FENTIMAN: The CCC plays an integral role in Queensland's integrity framework. The importance of maintaining public confidence in the CCC is paramount. That was really the key finding of Tony Fitzgerald and the commission of inquiry—

Ms Simpson interjected.

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

Ms FENTIMAN: As I was saying, this side of the House welcomes the report of Tony Fitzgerald and Alan Wilson and thanks them for their 32 recommendations which the government has accepted in principle. On this side of the House we do not just talk about integrity, we act on it. That is why I continue to be so very disappointed that the Leader of the Opposition continues to undermine the role of the CCC.

It has been seven weeks—seven weeks—since the Leader of the Opposition publicly stated that appointments for the CCC chairperson should be five-year terms in line with Professor Coaldrake's recommendations about contracts for directors-general. In fact, he said that these appointments 'must be above politics' and 'cannot be a political plaything'. Despite this, his LNP colleagues continue to refuse to give the CCC chairperson a five-year term, refusing to endorse the chairperson unless his term is reduced to three years. Given the commission of inquiry report handed down by Tony Fitzgerald, now more than ever the CCC needs certainty. It needs continuity to implement these changes. Either the Leader of the Opposition was not telling the truth when he said the chair should be given five years or he does not have the support of the LNP members on the PCCC. Which is it? He is either not telling the truth or he is a weak leader with no support in his own party.

Dr Miles: It's the same.

Ms FENTIMAN: It's the same. It could be both. I take the interjection from the Deputy Premier. It is the same kind of leader who stood up for months inside this House and outside and said there were seizures and raids of laptops. It is the same leader who allowed his deputy and other members to make those comments despite a report saying there was nothing out of the ordinary and there were no seizures or raids. Despite the report saying that failure to correct the record would undermine the public's confidence in the CCC, have they corrected the record?

Government members: No!

Ms FENTIMAN: Have they apologised?

Government members: No!

Ms FENTIMAN: For months they have been misleading Queenslanders and undermining confidence in the CCC. The Leader of the Opposition must apologise, must correct the record and must support a five-year term for the chair of the CCC. He has neither not been telling the truth or he is incredibly weak.

Minister for Resources, Coal Royalties

Mr JANETZKI: This question is to the Minister for Resources. The minister did not know about royalty increases. The minister did not know about secret environmental regulatory changes. What action has the minister taken to ensure colleagues keep him briefed on significant changes in his own portfolio area?

Mr SPEAKER: You have one minute to respond.

Mr STEWART: It will not take me one minute. When it comes to secrecy, let's have a look at what the LNP does. Let's have a look at Keith Pitt. We saw that ScoMo operated within the 'Cone of Silence', so what does that make Keith Pitt? It makes him Agent 13! Let's hide him in the couch. Maybe we can hide him in the clock! The LNP is lecturing us about transparency when poor old Keith Pitt, the minister for resources, had no idea. He did not know what was going on. The first he heard about it was in a press conference when they asked him a question. When those opposite come in here talking to us about secrecy they should talk to 'Agent 13', Keith Pitt. Or maybe he is Hymie: 'Does not compute. Does not compute.' The LNP has no idea when it comes to how we do resources in Queensland. That is why we are on this side of the House.

(Time expired)

Mr SPEAKER: The period for question time has expired.

MAJOR SPORTS FACILITIES AMENDMENT BILL

Message from Governor



Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Tourism, Innovation and Sport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics and Paralympics Sport and Engagement) (11.16 am): I present a message from Her Excellency the Governor.

Mr SPEAKER: The message from Her Excellency recommends the Major Sports Facilities Amendment Bill. The contents of the message will be incorporated in the *Record of Proceedings*. I table the message for the information of members.

MESSAGE

MAJOR SPORTS FACILITIES AMENDMENT BILL 2022

Constitution of Queensland 2001, section 68

I, DR JEANNETTE ROSITA YOUNG AC PSM, Governor, recommend to the Legislative Assembly a Bill intituled—

A Bill for an Act to amend the Major Sports Facilities Act 2001 for particular purposes

GOVERNOR

Date: 17 August 2022

Tabled paper: Message, dated 17 August 2022, from Her Excellency the Governor recommending the Major Sports Facilities Amendment Bill 2022 [\[1157\]](#).

Introduction



Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Tourism, Innovation and Sport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics and Paralympics Sport and Engagement) (11.17 am): I present a bill for an act to amend the Major Sports Facilities Act 2001 for particular purposes. I table the bill, the explanatory notes and a statement of compatibility with human rights. I nominate the Economics and Governance Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Major Sports Facilities Amendment Bill 2022 [\[1158\]](#).

Tabled paper: Major Sports Facilities Amendment Bill 2022, explanatory notes [\[1159\]](#).

Tabled paper: Major Sports Facilities Amendment Bill 2022, statement of compatibility with human rights [\[1160\]](#).

Today I am pleased to introduce the Major Sports Facilities Amendment Bill 2022, which seeks to implement recommendations in the 2018 Stadium Taskforce interim and final reports through amendments to the Major Sports Facilities Act 2001. The Major Sports Facilities Act 2001 established Stadiums Queensland as the authority responsible for managing, operating, using, developing and promoting facilities in Queensland. Much has changed since the act was initiated and Stadiums Queensland was formed. It is timely that we revisit the role of this important statutory body in the lead-up to the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Stadiums Queensland is known for its nimble, responsive approach and making our state-owned facilities shine for national and international sports, recreational entertainment and special events. This was particularly evident during the pandemic. Over three million patrons went to Stadiums Queensland venues in the last year alone when the bigger states of New South Wales and Victoria were in lockdown. As a statutory authority, Stadiums Queensland is governed by a board of directors and responsible for several iconic and world-class major sports facilities across the state, including the world famous Gabba, Suncorp Stadium in Brisbane and the Queensland Country Bank Stadium in Townsville.

At this juncture I want to take a moment to put on record my thanks for all of the work undertaken by the staff of Stadiums Queensland, not only now but particularly through the challenges of the pandemic. The staff who deliver these events are led by a terrific board headed by chair Cathy McGuane and board members Sharron Caddie, Mandy Shircore, Brendan O'Farrell, Sharon Finnan-White OAM, John Warn and Peter Hyland. Their strategic leadership and ability to adapt to circumstances has been extraordinary and provided direction to the rest of the organisation to succeed.

CEO Todd Harris, who was recently awarded the Public Service Medal related to his leadership in the face of the pandemic, works with a dedicated team of professionals across multiple sites. Those staff are in demand worldwide, as I recently witnessed in Birmingham—with Mirella Taylor, the Sleeman Sports Complex general manager, and Danny Placek, the coordination manager in the operations team of Stadiums Queensland, taking leave here to assist in the delivery of the recent Birmingham Commonwealth Games. The request for Stadiums Queensland staff assistance in Birmingham was born out of the great relationships formed during the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games in 2018 where SQ staff were officially seconded to work on those Commonwealth Games.

At each and every venue in the Stadiums Queensland portfolio, a dedicated team work to provide a first-class experience for everyone who visits, whether it is the grassroots swim teams training at Chandler or full houses at Suncorp Stadium or Queensland Country Bank Stadium, among others. The venues are led by a group of skilled individuals, and I want to take this opportunity to thank them and their staff for what they do.

In 2018, the former minister for sport established the Stadium Taskforce to review the pricing and practices of Stadiums Queensland. The Stadium Taskforce delivered its interim and final reports to the government in 2018 which contained a total of 53 recommendations, all of which were supported

or supported in principle by the government in 2019. While most recommendations have been implemented, some require legislative amendments to the Major Sports Facilities Act 2001. As I mentioned earlier, it is timely we revisit the recommendations of the Stadium Taskforce, as in less than 10 years the biggest event on earth comes to Queensland. We can expect that over five billion people will tune in to watch the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games and our venues will be the backdrop to the world stage.

We must make sure that the governance, commercial agility and performance of Stadiums Queensland is second to none as we journey towards 2032. To do this, the Major Sports Facilities Amendment Bill 2022 implements an amendment to allow facilities and facility land declared under the Major Sports Facilities Act 2001 to be used for commercial outcomes by Stadiums Queensland or leaseholders. This will be implemented where a compatible social or community benefit can be demonstrated—for example, projects comparable to the childcare centre already operating at Metricon Stadium.

Additionally, by specifying the skills and experience required for individuals to be appointed to the Stadiums Queensland board, we will ensure a continued strong mix of expertise that supports the effective management of these public assets. The bill reduces the number of annual board meetings from at least 12 times a year to at least nine times a year which will improve governance efficiencies and contemporise meeting arrangements in the immediate term.

The bill provides that the responsible minister can approve Stadiums Queensland's property transactions, rather than requiring Governor in Council approval. This will improve the authority's ability to achieve the best results in the commercial property market outside the timeframes involved with securing Governor in Council approval. The minister will, however, continue to seek written approval from the Treasurer when required in line with existing approval conditions under the Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements Act 1982.

The bill will allow Stadiums Queensland to provide services in relation to the operation and management of assets within the responsible minister's portfolio where it does not adversely affect the performance of their primary functions. This could allow Stadiums Queensland to provide venue management and maintenance services at commercially competitive rates in a local market. An example of this might be the renowned ground staff at the Queensland Sport and Athletics Centre providing a service to a local football club to improve their surfaces. Matthew Oliver and his ground staff at QSAC have delivered a world-class surface that, while rarely used for competition, is heavily relied on for elite training across a number of codes, including the Brisbane Roar men and women, the Junior Matildas, the QRL Women's State of Origin and the Australian women's Rugby Sevens program.

An administrative arrangement will be in place allowing the responsible minister to exchange letters with the Stadiums Queensland board outlining government policies or priorities, as well as government's strategic intent for Stadiums Queensland facilities. The bill provides the responsible minister with the power to direct Stadiums Queensland on strategic matters and matters of public interest—for example, to support emergency responses such as natural disasters following consultation with the Stadiums Queensland board. The bill provides that the responsible minister may seek information, or reports on, matters of state interest and ministerial responsibility, including details on commercial-in-confidence information.

To promote transparency and accountability, the bill requires Stadiums Queensland to outline within its annual report a summary of each direction and how the authority complied with each direction. While not a recommendation from the task force, an additional amendment to the Major Sports Facilities Act 2001 clarifies that a spent conviction does not disqualify a person from becoming, or continuing as, a director of the board. This amendment was identified during targeted consultation on the draft version of the bill and is consistent with other current legislation. To support amendments to the Major Sports Facilities Act 2001, the bill also proposes some transitional arrangements in relation to existing requests for Governor in Council approvals and for existing directors of the board.

The Queensland government is committed to investing in existing Stadiums Queensland venues to ensure they meet industry and community standards and expectations, and to ensure we continue to attract world-class events that provide quality spectator and fan experiences. This bill will provide Stadiums Queensland the increased ability to operate in an effective, contemporary, commercially agile and responsive manner to achieve government objectives—all of which will have even more prominence as we prepare for the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

First Reading

Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Tourism, Innovation and Sport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics and Paralympics Sport and Engagement) (11.26 am): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Referral to Economics and Governance Committee

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Lister): In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Economics and Governance Committee.

I now remind the House that the following members have been warned under the standing orders this morning: the members for Mudgeeraba, Broadwater, Kawana, Nanango, Glass House and Maroochydhore.

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL


APPROPRIATION BILL

Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)

Appropriation Bill

Health and Environment Committee, Report

Resumed from 16 August (see p. 2005).

 **Mr MOLHOEK** (Southport—LNP) (11.27 am): I rise to make a brief contribution in the cognate debate on the appropriation bills with particular reference to the report of the Health and Environment Committee on the estimates process. At the outset, I want to draw the House's attention to the statement of the chair of the committee in his opening remarks at estimates. I quote from the transcript—

The House has determined that the committee will examine estimates for its portfolio areas as follows: health from 9 am to 12.15 pm, ambulance services from 12.30 pm to 1.30 pm, environment and the Great Barrier Reef from 2.30 pm to 4.15 pm ...

I have done the maths, and that is broken down to the following: three hours and 15 minutes to review the state's health budget, which is almost half the entire expenditure of the Queensland state government; one hour to review issues around ambulance services; and just one hour and 45 minutes to consider budgets and budgetary matters in regard to the environment and the Great Barrier Reef.

I raise this issue because I want to put on record again my frustration and concern that more time is not allocated to these incredibly important portfolio areas of the government. I do not think there is a member in the House who would disagree about the importance of health spending and the need for greater scrutiny, nor do I believe there would be a member in the House who would disagree that there are some challenges in respect of ambulance services.

Given the gravity and debate around environmental issues and protection of the Great Barrier Reef, I think it is a shame that we only had one hour and 45 minutes to prosecute issues in respect of the environment and the government's commitment to environmental measures.

I also wanted to draw the House's attention to comments by the Minister for Health in her opening address. I think I probably could have written the script myself prior to the meeting because there was no surprise about what we heard from the Minister for Health. She stated—

Demand for health services is rising rapidly, as is our population; by 2041 it is estimated to grow to seven million people, up from 5.2 million people this year.

I just draw your attention to that figure of 5.2 million this year. She went on to say—

An ageing population means an increase in patients with complex health needs. A decline in Queenslanders with private health coverage and a lack of funding for hardworking GPs ...


That also adds to the pressures and challenges. The minister went on to say—

Our Queensland Health and Hospitals Plan outlines how we are addressing these issues now and in the future. It is a big and exciting list.

Members, I am not sure that it is big enough and nor that exciting. I want to draw the House's attention to some reports that I downloaded from the department of state development and planning. I am not sure if all members are aware of the documents and the forecasts that Treasury and the department of planning produce, but in a report that I downloaded from the department of state development and planning's website, there is a spreadsheet available and it is a document that is relied on by councils, local government authorities and other departments of government that is produced by Treasury and then also supported and republished by the department of planning. This document outlines projections for growth.

I note that since the 2021 census data has been released more recently, there have been some updates, but this document published in 2016 is still online and I think it needs some inspection. In that Excel spreadsheet that you are able to download—it is a planning document provided by the state—they provide projections around growth and they are low, medium and high. I have a little bit of experience with these projections because when I was a city councillor, we relied on that data, as far back as 20 years ago. We looked at projections from the previous three decades. What those projections illustrate was that on every single occasion in the previous three decades—and I can confirm that the same has occurred now—Queensland's population growth, including the Gold Coast population growth, has always exceeded the highest projection made available in the previous decade. It has always exceeded that growth.

(Time expired)

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (11.33 am): I want to follow on from the member for Southport's contribution. He spent half the time just reading my opening statement. On population growth, two things: firstly, maybe the LNP when they were in government should have looked at population growth and actually planned some new hospitals and redevelopments; secondly, population growth is not the only thing causing pressure on our health system. In fact, it is lack of access to GPs, it is millions of people dropping out of the private health system, it is aged care and disability services failing people who are stuck in hospitals, and it is a global health crisis. But that is okay, I am used to the LNP being very selective in what they quote.

I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the Health and Environment Committee's report into the recent estimates hearings and, in doing so, I thank the chair, the committee, the secretariat, parliamentary staff and Hansard for their attendance and efforts to ensure the smooth running of the 2022 estimates hearings.

In preparing this statement, I had a glance at the one I made this time last year and I have to say most of it is as relevant today as it was then. Our lives are still being influenced by COVID-19. Our health system is still under strain because of it, even if those opposite do not wish to acknowledge the demands it puts on the health system. We have just heard that again now.

Our amazing health workers are still turning up day and night, providing world-class health care to Queensland. We cannot thank them enough for their ongoing dedication, and I want them to know the Palaszczuk government has their back. Since 2015, we have hired an extra 3,106 doctors, 10,637 nurses and midwives, 5,077 allied health professionals, and 1,103 ambulance officers. We will be hiring more than 9,475 more health workers this term of government, including 770 local graduate nurses to combat workforce pressures being led across the planet.


I note the comments of the opposition in the statement of reservation and would like to point out that the only time FTEs in Queensland Health have decreased in this state occurred under an LNP government.

Just two months ago, we announced a record health budget—\$23.6 billion. That is more than \$4,500 per person in Queensland. At the core of the Queensland Health and Hospitals Plan is a commitment to fund three new hospitals, build a cancer centre and upgrade and expand current hospitals. Here is a list, and by no means is it an exhaustive list, of where we are getting to work: Cairns, Townsville, Mackay, Bundaberg, Hervey Bay, Ipswich, Logan, Toowoomba, Redcliffe, four locations in Brisbane, Coomera and Robina. We are going to need them because with an ever increasing and ageing population, pressure on our hospitals and health professionals will intensify, but our plan means we are prepared and up to the job.

Just look at the latest performance figures for proof. As we stared down our third COVID wave this year, with around five per cent of our staff furloughed at any time, hundreds of beds taken up by patients waiting for aged-care places and shortage of GPs, our emergency departments managed to see all category 1 patients in the recommended time frame. That is 100 per cent seen on time. The median wait time for the 575,000 people who attended EDs was 17 minutes and, despite facing an Omicron wave, elective surgery went up 39 per cent from the previous quarter.

Our Ambulance Service has performed admirably. Those opposite like to claim, incorrectly I might add, that we have the worst ramping in the country. Let me be very clear, and to clear this up once and for all, while it is not always appropriate to compare the data from different jurisdictions because each has a different reporting method, we can compare Queensland to Western Australia and Victoria, which I tried to do at estimates and, despite the claims of those opposite for months that we were the worst in the country, when I tried to give them actual comparison figures, they said, 'Oh, you can't measure that; it is not apples with apples.' So, for the first time, suddenly we cannot compare. Yes, we can. Here are the facts: 55 per cent of Queensland patients were off stretcher within 30 minutes. In Western Australia, transfer of care within 30 minutes was 35.1 per cent. Transfer of care is actually shorter than off-stretcher. If we use the same methodology as Victoria where they calculate patient off-stretcher time within 40 minutes, we would have a post rate of 70.38 per cent, which is almost seven per cent better than Victoria.

It would be great if the members for Broadwater and Mudgeeraba could stop misleading the House and the good people of Queensland. Our health workers deserve so much more than the LNP who, when last in power, sacked 4,400 health workers, including 1,800 nurses. A heartfelt thankyou to all of our dedicated Queensland Health staff and the Queensland Ambulance staff for their continued hard work.

 **Mr ANDREW** (Mirani—PHON) (11.38 am): I would like to make some comments on the health and environment estimates report for 2022. As I outlined in my statement of reservation on the report, I have a number of concerns with the estimates process and whether it is properly fulfilling its function of providing transparency and accountability on the government's various policies and expenditure. This is particularly a problem for the committee concerned with health and environment which accounts for approximately 50 per cent of the government's total budget.

One day is simply not enough time, I believe, to do little more than skim the surface of either one of these portfolios. Both portfolios encompass a huge range of complex areas and each is of enormous importance to Queensland taxpayers and Queensland businesses in general. Individual committee members only get to ask three or four questions at these hearings, and much of the time available is wasted in political pointscoring and drawn-out answers that do little but wind down the clock. There is no opportunity for members to ask probing or follow-up questions half the time, even though the chair does do as best he can to make sure. Mostly, therefore, only very general questions are being asked and there is no opportunity to thoroughly review the output groups within each portfolio.


Many critical areas within the health, science and environment portfolios are getting no attention whatsoever. There needs to be a lot more accountability and transparency around the whole process or else the whole exercise will become pointless. At present, the estimates hearing provides only a very cursory examination of the budget estimates for the health and environment portfolios. This lack of transparency from the government and its officials is reflected in many of the issues that were raised during estimates. One case in point involves the Queensland forensic services lab. Only after the *Australian* newspaper exposed it to the public did the government even admit there was a problem. The issues with the forensics lab were not something that the government should ever have tried to suppress. It is disappointing, therefore, that it took so long for them to finally admit it and initiate a royal commission into the problems.

Another case involved the government's increasingly common practice of awarding multimillion dollar contracts to companies without tender or adherence to best practice. I was disappointed with the answers I received to questions asked about the Aspen Medical contracts along with other services within the Queensland health portfolio during estimates. My first question asked whether Aspen Medical had been contracted to also provide services at the Pinkenba facility. I was given a cryptic response from the director-general, who said, 'It is not open.' I took that to mean 'no' and only in hindsight did I realise it did not mean that at all. In fact, my question had been blocked with a non-answer. Since then I have seen a report in the *Australian* that said the leaked contract between the government and Aspen did in fact include a clause for Aspen to provide the same services at the Pinkenba facility. Whether that happened or not we do not know. Why could the director-general not have simply said that when I asked?

Other forthcoming answers came in response to questions about what other contracts Queensland Health had with Aspen Medical. I was told, 'We do not publicly release information around individual spends with particular providers.' These defensive answers to questions by government officials is extremely concerning. There is far too much stalling, blocking and feigning ignorance going on here. The Auditor-General, Brendan Worrall, has said he will be looking into the cost of the Wellcamp project and the government's use of confidentiality provisions. When he does, I hope he takes a look

at the estimates and committee process as well. I believe there should be a lot more crossbench members involved in this process. We have asked before for a committee of crossbench members and also for some of them to act as deputy chairs and even chairs. Mr Deputy Speaker, I think we have spoken about this in the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee.

I do not want to be too critical, but at times during the estimates hearing it appeared as though secretiveness had become the knee-jerk response to opposition and crossbench questions. I found the same problem during the hearings in the environment and science portfolio. All mining projects in Queensland are required to provide a PRC plan. So why when I asked the minister whether this also applies to renewables did she tell me that it would be a matter for state development? I would have thought administering the Environmental Protection (Rehabilitation Reform) Amendment Act came under the umbrella of the environment portfolio. Again, it seems there is a lack of transparency in the whole process, and that concerns me the most. I do think we should have more people from the crossbench in those positions to provide transparency across the board.

 **Hon. MAJ SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Youth Affairs) (11.42 am): I rise to speak on the report of the Health and Environment Committee following the 2022-23 budget estimates process. It is always wonderful to have the opportunity to talk about our historic investment in the environment. Of course, we now have the largest investment in Queensland's history in growing our protected area estate—over \$262 million. We also have the largest investment ever in our Recycling and Jobs Fund, which is a \$2.1 billion waste package—

Mr Butcher interjected.

Ms SCANLON:—more than \$40 million for koalas and threatened species as well as our Containers for Change scheme—I take the interjection from the member—and a significant investment in climate action, both for the community and internal capacity within the Department of Environment and Science and of course continued investment to protect our reef and to turn Queensland research into Queensland jobs.

I want to address some of the comments made by the Liberal National Party throughout this debate, in particular the comments made by the member for Bonney in relation to diversion targets for municipal solid waste. It was an interesting point made by the member for Bonney because it was the Liberal National Party that opposed the waste levy. They turned Queensland into the dumping ground of the nation. I do not know whether he did not realise, but at the end of last year we announced a 10-year plan that was backed in by LGAQ and CoMSEQ. Even Adrian Schinnerer backed in the reforms that they clearly missed and that was underpinned, again, by a \$2.1 billion waste package.

Not only did we do that; we provided up-front payments to councils to make sure they had confidence—so \$672 million was provided directly to councils to ensure there was no impact on households. To be clear, this is the largest investment in Queensland's history in recycling and jobs because we know how many jobs we can create in this industry. It was also a particularly interesting line from the member for Bonney given that the Leader of the Opposition in his budget reply speech actually backed in this investment. Either he is going off script or he is intentionally undermining the Leader of the Opposition.

I turn now to the protected area funding which, as I said, is the biggest investment we have ever made. It is three times what the Liberal National Party committed to at the election, so they have some nerve criticising this investment. Because they could not talk about the expansion given our significant investment, they then pivoted to management. Again, I think it is important to put on the record that we have increased management funding for our Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service to \$368 million. That is a 37 per cent increase compared to what it was under the Liberal National Party. I will stand up any day of the week on our investment in national parks compared to those opposite.


When it comes to koalas—apparently the member for Bonney has some new-found passion for koalas, which is interesting given his track record—not only are we investing in national parks, which protect critical habitat, but we also have funding for the Land Restoration Fund. They still cannot seem to get their head around how that fund works. We also put in place vegetation management laws that protect critical habitat which those opposite voted against. In fact, they actually referred to koala protections in a previous government as 'mindless green tape'. Frankly, they have absolutely nothing to stand on when it comes to the protection of koalas. We brought in the strongest koala protections in Queensland history which prohibit and regulate development in large areas of South-East Queensland. We are very proud of our \$24 million investment which will continue to do restoration work in South-East Queensland in particular.

In relation to our operational Department of Environment and Science commitment to make the department net zero by 2030, I welcome the fact that the Liberal National Party is happy about this. It is a shame, though, that they do not actually have their own commitment, but of course I will take praise when it comes. In fact, we are very proud in this budget to have money to increase the capacity of our climate team. I think it is important to put on the record again that the Office of Climate Change was completely axed by those opposite. While we accept the science and we support the internal capacity in departments to make sure we make informed decisions, time and time again those opposite have gutted those Public Service jobs and then pretended they care about the environment. I think it is pretty clear that they do not have any interest in science or young people or the environment when you look at their statement of reservation, because it says they want to cut the section, they want to cut—

Ms Grace: Those young people care more than those opposite.

Ms SCANLON: Exactly. Young people care significantly more about the environment and science than the Liberal National Party. They want to cut the section in estimates that talks about science and youth because they had no questions to ask.

(Time expired)

 **Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (11.47 am): I wish to address the health estimates, in particular with regard to service delivery. Gladstone is not a remote part of Queensland and for that city not to have a hospital where babies can be safely delivered is an absolute disgrace. This government is a tin-pot establishment that cannot support health workers and their communities and deliver this basic right in this community.

I want to quote from an article published only in the last few hours about what this means to women in this greater region. The article states—

The long-awaited birth of their baby girl should have been pure joy for first-time parents Mariana Duran and Victor Villamil.

They are from Biloela, a community in my colleague the member for Callide's electorate. We have discussed this. This issue affects a wide region. This couple needed to go to a hospital. They needed to have that baby born safely in the closest hospital, but Gladstone is closed when it comes to the birthing of babies. That baby and that family, like so many other women, have been diverted to Rockhampton. Rockhampton is not a suburb of Gladstone. It is about 110 kilometres away. Gladstone should have these birthing services. For this government to drop the ball is indicative of what they have done to health services and women seeking safe birthing services throughout Queensland. It is a disgrace.

Ms Grace: We won't be lectured to by you.

Ms SIMPSON: No government minister should yap away and try to defend the indefensible. It is an absolute disgrace. We have a Minister for Health who thinks she can blame COVID for all their problems. There were problems in Queensland Health before COVID struck.


There is another example I want to bring forward that I am most concerned about. The Premier talks about cancer services. On the Sunshine Coast, where there are 340,000 people, I know that in my electorate alone there are three category 1 cancer patients—they are supposed to be seen within 30 days under clinical guidelines—who are being told that they have to wait months before they can get cancer treatment. One of my constituents has ovarian cancer—another woman. This government seems to have it in for women in Queensland with regard to health services. We hear about birthing services, but for a woman with category 1 ovarian cancer to be told she cannot be seen for several months is a disgrace. That should not be happening in a First World country or a First World health service. Our health workers and our communities are speaking out.

It is time that we saw a restoration of critical services to deliver care. Cancer patients cannot be put on the never-never. I was able to go in to bat for these constituents and fight to get them seen earlier, but it is diabolical that people are being told they have to wait months for category 1 cancer care. People should not have to go to their local member to fight to be seen within the clinical guidelines. This government talks about clinical guidelines, but it has dropped the ball. There are people who are not getting the care they need because this government simply cannot manage money. It cannot manage and support those who are in critical need.

Let's talk about Caboolture Hospital in the electorate of Pumicestone. We saw the disgraceful behaviour of the member for Pumicestone, attacking people who had come forward to health forums and raised concerns about services in their local community. It is pretty poor to have nurses and doctors coming forward and saying that there are issues in these hospitals that they want addressed—and the

government's response is to attack the whistleblowers. There is a bullying habit with this government. They like to attack whistleblowers. They like to attack those who speak up and dare to say that services need to be improved and that they believe lives are at risk.

It is time the government listened and stopped bullying people. The community of Caboolture need to know that those services are safe, that their clinical workers are supported and that they have services in place to ensure they can have their babies safely delivered and safely get the critical surgery and treatment they require. There should be no more bullying from this government, which seems to want to silence the whistleblowers rather than listen to them.

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (11.53 am): Isn't it great that the member for Maroochydore has had an epiphany and realised that we do need health services? Maybe she should be talking to her side about not cutting medical officers as part of their policies. We need to have health workers; we do not need for them to be cut and sacked, and we do not need our health services being slashed.

Instead of attacking health workers, I would like to thank all of our health workers, who put Queenslanders front and centre. The strength of our health minister has shone through in the tough, unprecedented times during the health pandemic that we are still living through. The way that Minister D'Ath has worked with Premier Annastacia Palaszczuk has been commendable. They have both kept cool heads to make sure that Queenslanders keep safe compared to our southern states. I thank all of our health teams around the state who have tirelessly immunised our population, heading out to our sporting carnivals, Bunnings, shopping centres—anywhere they could find people and give them an opportunity to be immunised so they did not become gravely ill from COVID-19. That is not forgetting the testing crews that were out there in PPE for long hours.


Unfortunately, there are those in our communities who are still spreading misinformation about vaccination, and they are putting people's lives at risk. The member for Mirani is still out at rallies with anti-vaxxers, waxing lyrical about the dangers of vaccination and being outraged that we have approved vaccination for children. Shame on him for scoring cheap political points through these stunts.

On the back of our historic Path to Treaty signing, I give a special shout-out to our First Nations health workers who are working in all areas of our health system. The Queensland Health and Hospitals Plan has seen a record \$23.6 billion in operational funds in the 2022-23 budget, supporting our workers and our patients. In the Mackay region, the Palaszczuk government has increased the operational funding for our health services to \$562 million in the budget. This is an increase of 9.2 per cent on the previous year. We have seen operational funding for the Mackay HHS increase by 75 per cent since coming to government, or, put another way, \$241 million up from \$321 million in 2014-15.

We see a massive and historic spend on health infrastructure underway. This is the legacy of our state Labor government, because that is what this side of the House does. My heart is in regional Queensland, and that is why I am excited about phase 2 of the building rural and remote program. This building program will replace health facilities and staff accommodation by investing a staggering \$943.5 million over seven years to replace ageing infrastructure in a range of hospital and health services including: Torres and Cape; North West; Cairns and Hinterland; and Mackay, where we see 128 new beds and a \$250 million spend—and not forgetting the Sarina Hospital, with a \$31 million build which is in the midst of construction. There is also the Darling Downs, Central West, Townsville, West Moreton and Wide Bay.

In the first tranche we will see the Moranbah Hospital being rebuilt. I thank Mayor Baker for her advocacy of this project. We will see shovels in the ground next year. This development will see a new improved ED which is connected to the wards. There will also be a helipad on hospital grounds along with medical imaging and staff accommodation. This is great news for this area. This phase will include facilities at Bamaga, Normanton, Pormpuraaw, Tara and Cow Bay. There are tenders out for new and improved healthcare facilities in five rural locations across the south, central and north-west regions including Blackwater, Morven, St George, Charleville and Camooweal.

(Time expired)

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (11.58 am): I think this was my sixth or seventh estimates hearing and, once again, we saw a scintillating performance from the members of the opposition. Every year they seem to ask no questions of any substance and then whinge about the process. In fact, I once went and saw a Conor McGregor UFC fight. It lasted all of 40 seconds. In that time, Conor McGregor's opponent got in more punches than the LNP did on the government. At least the crossbenchers showed up with some decent questions to ask!

The LNP come in here every year and throw up questions about the process and talk about how the government is not giving them enough questions and how the system is not working. It takes a certain degree of arrogance and hubris to come in here and make those allegations and throw those barbs when they are the party that put every single estimates hearing on the same day so that nobody had the opportunity to scrutinise their government in the way it desperately needed to be scrutinised. It takes an absolute mountain of hubris and arrogance to do that yet, once again, we see that happening.

I was so pleased to watch the estimates process. There are only a few minutes left for debate. I would love to spend some time talking about the new member for Callide and his contribution and his vision for the future—let's cut down the trees, let's get rid of the Containers for Change program and if you come near anybody in my town I'm going to bash you up! That is the future for the LNP.

No, I want to talk about what we are doing in health care. I can tell members that I could not wait to get out of this parliament after the budget. On the Saturday morning afterwards I was standing outside the PA Hospital talking to people in my community about the 249 beds that are going into the Princess Alexandra Hospital. That is a fantastic thing—249 beds. If it was only there, I would be excited. It is not just there; it is Cairns, it is Hervey Bay, it is Ipswich, it is Logan, it is Mackay, it is QEII, it is Redcliffe, it is Robina, it is the Prince Charles and it is the Townsville University Hospital—more beds into all of those hospitals, and that is good for my community. I wanted to get out there and tell my community about the investment this government is making in health care.

I would have thought the opposition would have showed up to that estimates hearing to ask some decent and some serious questions. I thought they might have wanted to show up and ask about mental health, about alcohol and other drug services. I thought they would have wanted to show up because they had voted to support the tax measures—the levy measures—that we had put in place to fund—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Lister): Member for Greenslopes, the time for consideration of this report has expired.

Mr KELLY: I am sure there will be other opportunities, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am sure.

Report adopted.

Transport and Resources Committee, Report

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Lister): The question is—

That the report of the Transport and Resources Committee be adopted.



Mr KING (Kurwongbah—ALP) (12.03 pm): Today I rise to speak to the estimates report tabled by the Transport and Resources Committee, with this report being No. 20 from our committee. Our committee's estimates hearing went from 9 am to 8.15 pm, and it is always a very long day. This year it seemed to be the estimates of repeated questions. I sincerely hope that those opposite do not complain about time being wasted this year, because they were certainly a little bit guilty of this by asking the same question again and again and again—admittedly slightly differently—but the same question will always get the same answer. On that, I will say that non-government members did get significantly more time than government members, as always when I am chairing.

Generally proceedings were conducted civilly with the usual back and forth between the transport minister and the member for Chatsworth, who was once again trying to make some point about Cross River Rail costings. He seemed frustrated that the facts did not line up with his agenda, but, as always, I would like to thank the member for Chatsworth for a mature interrogation of the budget. I always make a point of allowing just about every question to proceed to ministers and officials despite the imputation and arguments in most of them. However, one or two from the member for Everton were basically loaded statements and had to be rephrased. However, the minister was given the opportunity to answer even those questions. The final session with the Minister for Resources brightened the evening with some poetry, dad jokes and even a Spice Girls analogy, which, at the end of a long day, let me just say, was a welcome addition.

The questions during the day highlighted some great achievements of the Palaszczuk government. Some of those resonated with me, and one that did was to improve the connectivity, access, safety and pollution response of our maritime services and infrastructure through the Maritime Infrastructure Investment Program which will enhance the sustainability of the industry. We are seeking to revitalise coastal shipping and create maritime jobs in Queensland, which was a recommendation of

a previous committee I chaired in the last parliament. Our future maritime industry workers will not exist unless we get more workers trained locally on Australian-flagged vessels. With the Great Barrier Reef being so close and valuable to us, our future Maritime Safety Queensland pilot boat captains must come from somewhere. We are also continuing the War on Wrecks program to remove derelict and abandoned vessels in Queensland waterways, and that can only be a good thing.


The energy and public works portfolio brought us a few topics also close to my heart. We heard about the \$35 million held centrally for feasibility works on further pumped hydro energy storage sites. This is exciting because, as we know, Wivenhoe's pumped storage helped save the network during the failure of a coal-fired generator at Callide recently. QBuild progressing its high-quality apprenticeship program also grabbed my interest. As we know, money invested in apprenticeships is something we on this side all get and it always returns dividends.

As I said earlier, the resources portfolio questioning was a decent process, albeit with some entertaining answers, and I commend the shadow minister, the member for Condamine, for his civil manner and decent questioning in both this and in the energy portfolio areas. I once again commend the shadow minister for transport, the member for Chatsworth, for his respect for the process. I want to thank all of our committee members. I will put out there that our deputy chair, the member for Gregory, has to be the best deputy chair in the parliament.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr KING: I would almost call him 'comrade'. I also thank committee members, the members for Stretton, Mundingburra, Toowoomba North and Callide, for their participation on the day. I again want to thank the ministers, their staff, directors-general, their departments and GOC executives for their participation. We had several non-committee members who attended on the day to question the ministers, directors-general and CEOs. I want to thank them for their participation and hope some of them can get more professional one day. One year we will have a perfect estimates; I hope I live that long!

Thanks also to Hansard, parliamentary attendant staff and our hardworking Transport and Resources Committee secretariat for all of their work in preparation for estimates and on the day. In particular, I want to thank Deb for putting up with me as chair for the last term and a half. Our new secretary will have big shoes to fill. I commend the report to the House.

 **Mr MINNIKIN** (Chatsworth—LNP) (12.06 pm): Off the cuff, I simply thank the member for Kurwongbah in relation to the way that he chaired the Transport and Resources Committee. I have always said that he is a thoroughly decent bloke. I absolutely and vehemently disagree with his ideology, but I think he actually does a reasonable job. I wanted to get that out at least once.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr MINNIKIN: Yeah, with the rest of it! I have always been a fervent believer in the old adage that actions do indeed speak louder than words. The Minister for Transport and Main Roads likes to talk up a good game and we have heard that things are always awesome, but the simple fact is that he must be living in a parallel universe because cost blowouts and project delays continue to haunt this wasteful and very tired third-time government.


Whilst there was justifiable outrage at the waste attributed to Wellcamp of approximately \$237 million, the transport and main roads minister, who was called foolish by the CCC, makes the waste at Wellcamp truly look like petty cash. The real cost of this government's biggest infrastructure project, Cross River Rail, continues to be a commercial-in-confidence secret. The simple fact is that the number often quoted by Minister Bailey of \$5.4 billion, which was again mentioned earlier today by the Premier, is completely inaccurate because the budget shows that construction costs with the PPP, the public-private partnership, will be at least \$6.88 billion as published in the government's own financial papers.

The government also refuses to come clean on all of the other ancillary projects that have their own separate line items and they are not part of the \$6.888 billion. This includes projects such as the New Generation Rollingstock, automatic train operation and platform screen doors fitment. This is a new project listed in QTRIP this year. The platform screen doors are part of Cross River Rail and have been included in project animations for many years. However, it is a \$275 million cost that is separate to the budgeted \$6.888 billion for Cross River Rail. When adding all of these ancillary projects, the LNP believes that the real cost of Cross River Rail is more like \$8 billion. Again, the government was asked to admit that the project would not open in 2024 as previously promised. The minister dismissed this by saying that the 2024 date was—wait for it—a typo! The project is late and the government should simply

come clean about it. The government even refused to answer simple questions such as when the Coomera Connector was changed from a six-lane road to a four-lane road. This is the level of secrecy that exists within the government.

Another project that has seen significant cost increases is the European Train Control System, the ETCS. The project cost was originally \$634 million according to QTRIP in 2016-17, but alas the minister was quoted as saying the cost is now \$764 million, which is more than the \$717 million cost stated in this year's QTRIP. Extraordinary! The department's explanation for the cost change was that parts of the project costs were originally in the Queensland Rail and Cross River Rail Delivery Authority budgets but it has all been brought together as an alliance contract. If this is the case, how can Queenslanders have faith that any project cost for any project listed in QTRIP is a true and accurate reflection of reality?

We also discovered there has been \$3.6 million spent to date on the Bruce Highway Trust, which has held only four meetings. It is truly difficult to understand how taxpayers are getting real value for money. The Minister for Transport and Main Roads has been in the role for 2,739 days and, aside from 24,000 tweets and criticising the previous LNP government, cost blowouts and waste are what he has to show for it. Truly, is it any wonder that questions are being asked by leading figures in industry about this minister's ability to deliver critical transport infrastructure in the lead-up to the Olympic games. We do not have, under this minister's watch, a project that he can seem to bring in on budget and on time. Minister, the clock is absolutely running on your time.

 **Mr WALKER** (Mundingburra—ALP) (12.11 pm): I rise to speak to estimates report No. 20 of the Transport and Resources Committee. I want to thank the chair, the member for Kurwongbah, for his excellent work chairing our estimates sessions. The first session was with the Hon. Mark Bailey, Minister for Transport and Main Roads. We heard that our population is booming off the back of the Palaszczuk Labor government's strong economic record, with 80,000 Australians moving to Queensland in the last two years. Queensland's unemployment is at a 50-year low—three per cent, in fact, in Townsville.

The Palaszczuk Labor government continues to lead Queensland through the first global pandemic in a century as well as an extended La Nina which has brought heavy rain in summer and winter with widespread flooding this year, as well as high inflation left by the Morrison LNP federal government—and a Morrison federal government it was: a government of one. Despite this, last year the Queensland Department of Transport and Main Roads delivered an additional \$366 million in capital projects above the forecast in last year's budget—that is a fact; 20 per cent more infrastructure than in previous years—another fact. The Palaszczuk Labor government is investing \$29.7 billion in transport and road projects over the next four years, our seventh consecutive record budget.


It is also this side of the House that is bringing train manufacturing back to Maryborough, delivering Queensland-made trains made by Queensland manufacturing workers. A \$7.1 billion Queensland-made trains manufacturing investment will see 65 new trains built here while also rejuvenating rail supply chains in our state—not from China, made in Queensland. We are not just delivering on rail; we are investing over \$21 billion in road upgrades over the next four years to continue improving Australia's largest road network. We on this side of the House are protecting the area's wildlife as we do it. We have just secured 400 hectares of pristine land to create a protected koala habitat at Greenridge in Pimpama to be the future home to hundreds of koalas. It is great news for koalas and other flora and fauna as well as the Gold Coast community and all Queenslanders.

Labor is investing heavily in Queensland regional roads, from the billion dollar Gympie bypass to the \$500 million Peninsula Developmental Road upgrade in the cape, to the \$1 billion Rockhampton Ring Road and the \$145 million Mackay Northern Access Upgrade. We are delivering more lanes, better interchanges, a better Bruce Highway and safer Queensland regional roads. I might add, that includes the \$54 million duplication of Stuart Drive in Townsville and \$70 million for a second bridge for Bowen Road in the seat of Mundingburra, a very important investment in my electorate, and I thank the minister for that.

During estimates the Hon. Mick de Brenni, Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement, gave a very detailed opening address to the estimates committee about his portfolio. We heard that the budget we examined was creating more good jobs, delivering better services and protecting the great Queensland lifestyle. What the minister reinforced was the leadership of the Premier and delivering in this budget record investment in health, education, more jobs in more industries, particularly in regional Queensland, great environmental protections, additions to frontline community services and a record investment in energy transformation.

We heard from the world's first hydrogen minister the vision and investment in the renewable energy space, and it is that energy transformation that is our most significant challenge. It is also our greatest opportunity. As a hydrogen champion for Townsville and a former Townsville city councillor who helped make Townsville the first solar city in Australia, I know that the people of Queensland want leadership and investment in the renewable energy space. They love seeing the energy and passion the Palaszczuk Labor state government has shown by investing in the new green energy future. This will mean jobs such as industrial engineers optimising chemical reactions throughout the manufacturing process and technicians trained in maintaining electrolyzers and ancillary equipment such as pipelines and storage equipment.

I can go on for hours about the committee and the detail that the minister gave us. I also thank the resources minister for his great work and for showing us where the investment is in our resources future.

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (12.15 pm): I rise to speak about the estimates hearings. I appeared before the Transport and Resources Committee. The area of interest to me was public works. The issue that we focused on the most was the performance of the Queensland Building and Construction Commission, which has been under incredible pressure for some time. Our focus and our criticism of the QBCC has not been on the workers of the QBCC; it has been on the leadership, from the minister to the board, to the senior executive leadership of the QBCC. Some of what we learned through this estimates hearing was incredibly disturbing.

What was very well publicised in the media is the fact that the QBCC decided that they needed somebody to help them work out how they could have better relationships with the minister. They engaged Anacta, that magical lobbying firm that has had such incredible success, that lobbying firm that is a known big donor to the Labor Party and that lobbying firm whose principal is a former Labor MP, Evan Moorhead. The QBCC chair engaged him so they could be trained better on knowing how to deal with the minister. Let us just examine how ridiculous this is. A Labor minister who comes from the left faction has appointed, as chair of the QBCC, the former president of the Labor Party who was also from the left faction. He then went outside of the normal procurement processes and engaged Anacta and Evan Moorhead, who was a former Labor MP and still part of the left faction and who also worked for Dick Williams, the chair, when they were together in the union body.

Mr Watts interjected.


Mr MANDER: The ALP, that is correct. All of that to work out how to deal with the minister who appointed them in the first place. I have not heard of a more ridiculous situation than this, and all at taxpayers' expense; a waste of nearly \$10,000 to engage them.

Mr Watts: So cash changed hands.

Mr MANDER: You said that, member, not me. We also found out that the QBCC spent over \$1 million on a publicity campaign to improve their image because they have been attacked lately. They put a you-beaut promo together with a couple of stars from the television program *The Block*. What they failed to realise was that this builder from *The Block* is actually a registered builder in Queensland. He was on this video promoting the work of the QBCC and encouraging builders to do the right thing, but they forgot to check his registration. This guy, who is a registered builder in Queensland, had had his licence suspended five times for not paying his licencing fee. No-one thought to check the registration of the person who would be the pin-up boy for the QBCC. He was person who had not paid his licence fees.

We also talked about the Varghese report into the operations of the QBCC over the past number of years. Mr Varghese warned the minister and the government about politicising the QBCC. However, as I have already mentioned, the minister has been guilty of exactly that by appointing the former president of the Labor Party as the chair of the QBCC, by appointing a former Labor minister to the board of the QBCC and by appointing an assistant secretary of the CFMEU to the board of the QBCC. That is politicisation in anybody's language and the minister is guilty of doing that.

Mr Varghese also talked about the fact that there have been nine reviews into the QBCC over the past seven years and still those issues have not been resolved under the leadership of this minister. Mr Varghese said that they need a sustainable funding model and this minister has not ruled out increasing fees and taxes on builders. At this time when the building industry is struggling, the minister needs to do the right thing to remove that fear and anxiety by ruling out that proposition.

 **Mr MARTIN** (Stretton—ALP) (12.21 pm): I am pleased to report to the House that the estimates hearing for the Transport and Resources Committee was successful, enabling Queenslanders to hear from government ministers about some of the fantastic things the Palaszczuk government is doing to

create jobs, improve services and protect our great Queensland lifestyle. My thanks go to all the committee members, including the member for Kurwongbah and chair of the committee, who kept things flowing and productive. I echo the sentiments of the member for Kurwongbah about the member for Gregory. As a government member of parliament, I can say that he is a great deputy chair.

From the Minister for Transport we heard about this government's strong commitment to public transport improvements across the state, including in my local area. The public transport system is absolutely essential to having a balanced transport network overall. We are investing in better rail systems with Cross River Rail, the Kuraby-Beenleigh double track duplication and station upgrades. These upgrades will decrease travel time for rail commuters by getting express trains through the network much faster and make life much easier for road users by removing level crossings.

There is huge support for the removal of the Kuraby level crossing and I am proud to be part of a government that has delivered this for my community. It will make school pick-ups and drop-offs easier and safer. It will allow people to get to work and home sooner, with less time spent on the road. My community is eager to see the project completed and I will keep them updated on its progress. I have had overwhelming and positive feedback about this from my local community. Kuraby State School, Kuraby Special School and the Kuraby Mosque are located near the Kuraby crossing. It is a big win for the people in my local area. Our thanks go to Minister Bailey for listening and delivering that important upgrade for my area.

In addition, we heard important news about the Coopers Plains level crossing. Unfortunately, the project is being held up by the LNP in the Brisbane City Council. We have funding commitments from the federal and state governments but, strangely, there is nothing from the Brisbane City Council. I am not sure what the LNP has against the people who use that road, but I encourage them to do the right thing by the community in this case.

We are committed to making sure that public transport is improved to get people out of cars and into public transport. We are ordering high-quality disability-compliant trains that are made right here in Queensland. We are also investing \$1.5 billion over four years to upgrade roads and support driver education and safety campaigns.

One of those road upgrades is happening in my local area at the intersection of Illaweena Street and Beaudesert Road. Many cars travel through that intersection every day. The Palaszczuk government has committed \$30 million for improvements to extend the road to six lanes, add signalised left turns and pedestrian crossings, improve cycle access, upgrade bus stops and provide shared paths. This is a big deal for the mums, dads and grandparents who do the school run in my community, especially those who live in Drewvale. They have been calling for this and are very appreciative that it is happening. I was very pleased to visit the site with Minister Bailey and Minister Enoch only a couple of weeks ago, just before construction started.

In addition to transport, investing in energy is very important. We know that cost-of-living pressures have been tough on Queenslanders, which is why earlier this year we announced the \$175 cost-of-living rebate that will be applied to electricity bills for all Queenslanders. As the Minister for Energy and Public Works says, we are able to do this because Queensland's power assets are publicly owned, meaning we can share in the dividends. That rebate builds on our \$50 asset ownership dividend, which was announced earlier in the year. That is a total of \$575 in dividends over the past four years. Since 2017 total cost-of-living assistance amounts to nearly \$1.2 billion. All of that money has gone straight back into the pockets of Queenslanders because Queenslanders own their electricity assets, not corporate shareholders.

Another thing that I was very interested to hear about from Minister de Brenni is our investment in renewable hydrogen, which is another major part of our plan to create heavy industry jobs. We are well positioned to scale up a hydrogen economy using our abundant renewable energy resources and technical and research capabilities. Recently, I visited the Motor Trades Association of Queensland to check out the hydrogen vehicles.

(Time expired)



Mr WEIR (Condamine—LNP) (12.26 pm): I rise to speak to the Transport and Resources Committee's report No. 20 as the shadow minister for natural resources, mines and energy. I have expressed my frustration in this House before about the committee process. Estimates always provides its own challenges and this year was no different. Once again we saw evasive answers and filibustering from ministers, despite the fact that the committee chair is the member for Kurwongbah, Shane King, who I believe is one of the better committee chairs. I acknowledge the government members for Mundingburra and Stretton for not intervening all the time with frivolous points of order. I acknowledge

the deputy chair, Lachlan Millar, for his work as well as Trevor Watts and Bryson Head. I also thank the assistant minister for natural resources and member for Lockyer, Jimmy McDonald, for his help in our preparation for the estimates process.

Despite energy being one of the most topical subjects in the state due to the mismanagement of the minister, opposition members only managed to get two full blocks of questions. What were we able to find out in that time? We found out that the minister still has not released an energy plan for delivering an affordable and reliable energy supply for this state. We are yet to see any plan on how the transition to 50 per cent renewable energy will be managed. I note that this morning the minister was very critical of Angus Taylor, but in the entire time he has been the minister he has produced no plan nor brought one piece of legislation into this House—not one in his role as energy minister. We continue to wait. We were told it will be soon, but we were told that last year.

Similarly, Queenslanders are still waiting for the promised \$175 energy rebate that the minister promised would be delivered by August. I asked Mr Duke, the CEO of Energy Queensland, why this had been delayed and his response reflects the ineptitude of the minister. Mr Duke stated—

The \$175 rebate per customer would be applied by retailers and, of course, that means in South-East Queensland retailers other than Ergon retail, who only are responsible for the selling of electricity to retail customers in regional Queensland, outside the south-east. As for the timing of the application of that rebate, we do not have any specific instructions on the timing of that and I would have to take some advice as to whether, in fact, it would be August or some other time.

The minister had not even notified his own government owned retailer.

We also heard of yet more budget blow-outs with the Digital Enterprise Building Blocks IT system. There was \$633 million budgeted for this program. We are now at \$814 million and still going. We had many more questions for the minister but ran out of time.

Turning to the Minister for Resources, the most disturbing thing we heard during the estimates hearing was how sidelined and irrelevant this minister has become. We now know that, despite being the minister of the industry being impacted, Minister Stewart was not included or consulted about the coal royalty increase until a number of days after QRC had been informed! We are already seeing the impact of these increases with BHP's announcement yesterday that it will not be proceeding with the Blackwater South mine due to the lack of certainty regarding this Queensland government. Instead of standing up for the industry, the minister simply parrots the lines handed to him by the Treasurer. The Treasurer stated this morning that coal producers such as BHP are making huge profits for their shareholders but omitted to mention that almost 17 million Australians benefit from these shares and dividends through their superannuation.


The minister also had to admit that he has been sidelined by his cabinet colleague the environment minister regarding the formation of the EPOLA Bill. Once again the minister has not stood up for industry regarding the outrageous condition that any industry bodies are not part of the consultation process unless they sign a confidentiality agreement.

I could not conclude without mentioning the ongoing debacle that is New Acland stage 3. This has been going for 14 years and is sitting on the minister's desk. The minister stated that he would have to read the thousands of pages of material before making a decision. If the minister is not across this issue by now, what on earth has he been doing?

I conclude by thanking Deborah Jeffrey for her role as research director. I have worked with Deb for many years and I wish her the best in retirement.

(Time expired)

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Before I call the minister, I want to remind the members for Mudgeeraba, Broadwater, Kawana, Nanango, Glass House and Maroochydore that they all are on warnings.

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (12.31 pm): I rise to speak on the Transport and Resources Committee budget estimates report. I would like to thank the committee chair, the member for Kurwongbah, for his stewardship as chair as well as all members of the committee who appeared to ask questions about our government's investment in transport and main roads. It continues to be an honour to serve Queenslanders as transport and main roads minister, especially at a time when our state is attracting record numbers of interstate migrants.

Queensland's unemployment rate is at a 50-year low and we continue to lead Queensland through the first global pandemic in a century as well as an extended La Nina heavy rain summer and winter. Of course, we experienced widespread flooding earlier this year.

At budget time the Premier outlined three key things the government is delivering: good jobs, better services and a great lifestyle. This budget shows exactly that, with a \$29.7 billion QTRIP investment in rail and roads—our seventh record commitment—with more than 25,000 jobs supported. Our rail revolution has substantial commitments: Cross River Rail, Gold Coast Light Rail to Burleigh, the Sunshine Coast duplication and the Kuraby to Beenleigh—\$2.6 billion—double-track duplication.

Not one single question was asked of the Queensland Rail CEO in four hours of questioning—extraordinary. The wheels are really falling off the LNP when the Queensland Rail CEO is entirely ignored, when often the criticisms are around rail. Members opposite were too afraid to ask a question of Queensland Rail—

Mr Watts interjected.

Mr BAILEY: The member for Toowoomba North did not ask a single question. He is interjecting now, but he was as quiet as a church mouse at the committee hearing when it came to asking the Queensland Rail CEO a question. He did not say a word.

Last year the then member for Callide did not get a single question in. Embarrassingly, the member for Chatsworth left the ex-member for Callide out to dry last year. This year he left the whole committee out to dry by not asking a single question of the Queensland Rail CEO. The wheels are really falling off for the LNP on this committee. We are building trains in Queensland, not overseas.


We have population growth and the games coming. That is why we are building transformational infrastructure. I acknowledge that within hours of the committee's hearing the member for Chatsworth, after criticising Cross River Rail so much, said on radio that it was a transformational project. If only we could get that sort of flip-flopping happening on other issues, we would see a bit more honesty from those opposite. We released the SEQ Rail Connect plan as we bring a whole new underground line into the system, yet there was not one question of the Queensland Rail CEO.

There will be \$21 billion in road upgrades over the next four years, including the Coomera Connector—otherwise known as the second M1. At \$2.1 billion, it will be the largest road project in the state. It is only happening because of this government. We saw it blocked by the opposition when they were in power. Four extra lanes will take pressure off the M1, as opposed to the puny little six-kilometre version. The LNP did not promise six lanes; they only promised four lanes—and for less than half the length we are building. We announced the 400-hectare parcel of Greenridge to add to the Pimpama River Conservation Area to save koalas and work with the koala groups—a substantial reform.

In terms of Queensland regional roads there are 16,000 jobs: Gympie Bypass, Peninsula Developmental Road, Rockhampton Ring Road upgrade, Mackay Northern Access Upgrade and the Bruce Highway, to name a few.


In my last minute I will address some of the criticisms offered by the member for Chatsworth—the same tired, old arguments from those opposite. While they are belligerent, we build. While they cut, we construct. Of course, we would have Queensland Rail looking at opportunities to leverage off such a transformational new underground rail line. That has been well established for a long time. There has been no advice to me to say that the stated cost of Cross River Rail has changed. You could only dream about ETCS under an LNP government. They do not build anything. They cut this project previously. This new signalling system is safer and better and has greater capacity. We are living in the real world and we construct. The Liberals in Victoria, just like the Liberals here, are cutting, cutting, cutting. That is in their DNA. Those opposite can choose to talk about a contractor getting a sign wrong. We actually build the interchanges and the upgrades. We provide the jobs. This is another record budget from this government.

(Time expired)

 **Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (12.36 pm): The rail link to Maroochydore, connecting the Sunshine Coast's largest city to the South-East Queensland rail network in time for the 2032 Olympics, should be a priority, but it is at grave risk due to the delay tactics of this state government. I call on the state government to release a whole-of-project timeline for the Maroochydore rail project and a commitment to match the \$1.6 billion committed by the federal government. All we have heard so far from this government is a name change and another planning study that will take a few more years. Worse, without a time line outlining how the rail can be built to Maroochydore before the Olympics these delay-and-distract tactics risk putting this project beyond these deadlines. Rail to Maroochydore is necessary to match population growth, regardless of the Olympics, to get people off the road. It needs to be the centrepiece of a modern, integrated public transport network. However, the Olympics is the opportunity to connect South-East Queensland properly to a modern public transport system that can achieve mode shift as well as get people off the Bruce Highway.

I was a little bemused to see that the government, in changing the name of the CAMCOS project—the Maroochydore rail project—called it the ‘Direct Line to the Sunshine Coast’. They must have forgotten that the Sunshine Coast is not only east of the Bruce Highway; the Sunshine Coast as a region goes up to the range. It includes Beerwah and Landsborough. Why change the name to ‘Direct Line to the Sunshine Coast’ when we already have communities that are west of the highway with a rail line? We want a rail line to Maroochydore. Hear the message, Minister. Where is the timeline? Where is the timeline to hit critical deadlines?

I also raise the need for the Sunshine Motorway duplication. That is not part of the current Mooloolah River Interchange project and is not funded. There are 41,600 vehicles per day on a two-lane section of the Sunshine Motorway, with major congestion now. There is no funding allocated by this government or a commitment to a future plan to deliver the four lanes in a timely way. The figures I have had from this government show that by 2031 there will be 68,000 vehicles on a road that is already not coping with 41,000. We need to see this built. We need to see funding rather than government inaction and denial that this is an issue.

 **Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement) (12.39 pm): I am pleased to address the committee’s examination of the 2022-23 Queensland budget. I am pleased to address it because it is a budget that creates good jobs, delivers better services and, of course, protects the great Queensland lifestyle. I thank the committee for their work. I give my accolades to the chair of the committee, the member for Kurwongbah. I also acknowledge my colleagues the Minister for Transport and Main Roads and the Minister for Resources. In particular, I note that the Minister for Transport and his department are doing outstanding work helping electrify the transport fleet in Queensland through the Electric Super Highway. There are now 31 charging stations, from Coolangatta to Port Douglas and Brisbane to Toowoomba. I say thank you to the minister. They are building another 24 charging sites in regional and rural locations, taking Queensland’s total to 55.

The committee also heard that there has been an historic investment in roads. That is important for the workforce of the portfolio that I represent because it helps make sure, particularly in regional Queensland, that people get to and from work sooner and safer.

I also acknowledge the Minister for Resources. We heard that his department is expanding the mining of critical minerals, particularly in the North West Minerals Province and through export out of the mighty Port of Townsville. That work will enable the build-out of Queensland’s energy system through industries like battery manufacturing in facilities like those in the electorates of Maryborough and Gladstone via Queensland-made components with local Queensland content. This is incredibly important.

It is that energy transformation that is our most significant challenge. It is also our greatest opportunity. We have done the forecasts. The numbers show that to capitalise on that opportunity we will need to build three times as much energy generation as the state has now. As part of that new energy generation, I note the committee’s strong interest in our firming strategies—building utility and network scale batteries—and our commitment to progress additional sites for more pumped hydro-electricity. To start charging up these assets, Queensland now proudly boasts 50 large-scale renewable energy projects. By 2024 our publicly owned generators will support the equivalent of another entire power station worth of generation and 600 megawatts of grid-scale battery storage.

The committee clearly knows that to power the industries, homes and transport fleets of tomorrow, the majority of that power and the jobs that will be created will come from regional Queensland. That is why it was important that the committee allowed me to not only outline our commitment to deliver more jobs in more industries but also reiterate that we will not be shutting the gate on our power stations, their workers or their communities. On the contrary, I outlined that we will invest in those. Not only do we need to invest in those assets and the power they generate but we need to invest in our greatest energy asset: our workforce.

I thank the committee for their interest in the restoration of the Callide Power Station. I am pleased to update the House that three of those four units are now online and C4 is due back in service by April next year. It was only members of the government who took any interest in the Callide Power Station. True to form, despite the facility being in the member for Callide’s electorate, not a single question was asked about it. It is almost as if the LNP have kept the hat but swapped the voiceless member underneath it. It demonstrates his predecessor’s own words ‘when you put rubbish in, you get rubbish out’.

I will address some the remarks of the member for Everton and the member for Condamine. Predictably, they used their time as an opportunity for more personal attacks on individuals. Their lack of policy and budget interrogation or even seeking any answers about cost-of-living measures is a clear indicator that they have learned nothing in eight years. In fact, incredibly, the opposition has gone backwards. Their obsession with operational minutia like dates, emails and slander seems to be directly correlated to their capacity or lack of capacity to stand up for the communities they represent. While they spend time spreading lies about laptops, porkies about public servants and red herrings on renewables, this government is focused on the issues that matter to everyday Queenslanders. Matters like costs of living, like keeping the lights on and getting people back into their flood-damaged homes, like delivering national energy efficiency reforms and addressing the cost of living and like helping our tradies and frontline workers in good, secure jobs.

We are proud of the programs we are delivering—programs like the Household Resilience Program, rebuild QBuild and the Resilient Homes Fund. This government is focused on creating good jobs, delivering better services and protecting the great Queensland lifestyle. For that reason, I am very happy to endorse the committee's report. I again acknowledge the government committee members. Of course, I reject the statement of reservation because it is juvenile, petty and unbecoming of members of this House.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Minister, about 30 seconds ago I think you did use some unparliamentary language and I would ask you to withdraw.

Mr de BRENNI: I withdraw.



Mr MILLAR (Gregory—LNP) (12.44 pm): I rise to make a small contribution in the debate on the estimates committee report. Firstly, I thank the committee members and the chair, the member for Kurwongbah. The member for Clayfield asked why we are praising him. We have the unfortunate situation of looking at other estimates hearings and seeing how some of those processes go and how the chairs interfere or committee members interfere in the asking of legitimate questions by the opposition. We saw that in the estimates process from the start. The member for Kurwongbah has respect for the process. Opposition members can ask questions of the government freely without other members of the committee interfering or being stopped.

That is important in this parliament. Given that we only have a lower house, it is important that we get the committee system working as effectively as we possibly can. It is important not just for this place but for all Queenslanders that we have an effective opposition and questions can be asked without being interrupted. Member for Kurwongbah, you do a sterling job, you are a good chair and I enjoy working with you.

Thank you to the member for Stretton and the member for Mundingburra for their involvement in the committee process. I thank the member for Toowoomba North. I give a shout-out to the member for Callide. One of his first official parliamentary duties was to sit in estimates from 8.30—our first meeting—to eight that night. I thank the member for Callide who is doing a sterling job. He will be a significant member in this place and a member for a long time. I enjoyed his first speech yesterday. I congratulate him on his maturity and on his ability to do his job. I look forward to working with him.

The budget is characterised by numerous shortcomings which have failed to meet the expectations of Queenslanders. Many of these shortcomings became increasingly evident during the estimates process. Cost blowouts and project delays continue to plague this government. What we want to know is the real cost of Cross River Rail. It continues to be commercial-in-confidence. The figure often quoted by the minister of \$5.4 billion clearly is not accurate, with the budget itself showing construction costs of at least \$6.88 billion. The government also refuses to come clean on the ancillary projects that have their own separate line items and are not part of the \$6.88 billion. Why does the minister not come clean and give us the true cost of Cross River Rail?

Every taxpayer dollar is precious, especially when there is a \$5.7 billion maintenance backlog and the government has failed to meet its performance targets for fatalities where the road condition was a contributing factor. The \$5.7 billion maintenance backlog has a huge impact in regional Queensland, especially where I come from. It has an impact not only on road safety but also on industries such as the cattle industry. In getting cattle to the processor or to the port cattle are losing condition on these roads. This is having a financial impact on the cattle industry. I call on the minister to please address the maintenance backlog, get the money out and fix these roads up.

When it comes to energy, we raised the issue about the IT program designed to manage purchasing and payroll for Energy Queensland which has blown out by at least \$181 million. The botched digital enterprise building blocks program has ballooned from \$633 million to \$814 million,


proving again that this government is incapable of delivering projects on time and on budget. Why are we continuing to see blowouts and increased costs with this program? We found out about this issue from the ETU. They put out a media release. It was their own people who back them who are concerned about an IT program that continues to blow out. The minister is refusing to address this issue at the moment. He needs to rein this program in.

Finally, the Minister for Resources all but confirmed he was blindsided by the royalty hike and was not invited into the cabinet discussions about the royalty hike. You are the Minister for Resources. You hold one of the most important portfolios in this government.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Order! Member for Gregory, I ask you to direct your comments to the chair. I also ask all members to refrain from shouting out. If you have a point order to raise, stand up, seek the call and make a point of order. I do not know who it was but please, members.

Mr MILLAR: Thank you for your direction, Mr Deputy Speaker. Resources are important. Please, Minister, address this issue.

 **Hon. SJ STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (Minister for Resources) (12.49 pm): I would like to correct the record while I am on my feet. Previously I said I was at a sod turning at Winchester South. I was actually at a site visit at Whitehaven Coal with the Whitehaven Coal CEO and Isaac Regional Council Mayor Anne Baker.

I welcome the tabling of the Transport and Resources Committee report into the proposed budget appropriations for the 2022-23 financial year. I acknowledge the committee's recommendations that the proposed expenditure, as detailed in the budget bills, be agreed to without amendment.

I would also like to thank the chair, committee members, my department, the GasFields Commission, the Land Access Ombudsman, Resources Safety and Health Queensland, my ministerial staff and all those who participated in, and prepared for, the hearing. The estimates process is fundamental to transparency, accountability and our Westminster system of government. As the Minister for Resources, the safety of Queensland's resources workforce continues to be my No. 1 priority. I would like to thank the independent regulator, Resources Safety and Health Queensland, for the work it continues to do in that area.

As announced during estimates, the Transport and Resources Committee will initiate an inquiry into how the coal industry has acted on recommendations from the Coal Mining Board of Inquiry, which examined the explosion that took place at the Grosvenor mine in 2020, leaving five people seriously injured. I look forward to that progressing and thank the committee in advance for taking on this important work.

My portfolio is one of the major economic drivers of this state, whether it is through our administration and management of land or our leadership and advocacy for, and regulation of, the resources industry. With less than 10 years to the Olympics, my department will play an essential part in utilising state land to support our Olympic venues and transport infrastructure, which will help continue to support and improve the great lifestyle we have right here in Queensland.

My department is already taking the necessary steps to ensure that extractive resources like sand and gravel will be available and accessible to support the necessary construction and development for the games. My department is leading the transformation and diversification of our multibillion dollar resources industry to ensure good jobs for Queenslanders and economic prosperity well beyond 2032.

The Palaszczuk government is backing this effort with almost \$80 million in the 2022-23 budget across both the georesources and lands divisions of my department. The big ticket item is the almost \$40 million that will transform Queensland's fledgling new economy minerals sector into a long-term pit-to-product mega industry. This is an investment in future good jobs for Queenslanders, particularly for the students we have in the gallery here today—jobs in regional communities so that kids in school now can build rewarding, well-paid careers without having to leave their regional towns and cities. This is a transformative investment in this state's future, underpinned by the Queensland Resources Industry Development Plan.

Working with industry and our community, this budget lays the foundations for a transformation that will see Queensland do more than produce minerals for the world: we will process and manufacture with our rich mineral endowment, generating high-skilled, highly paid long-term jobs. It all starts with exploration. This budget continues the government's longstanding commitment to driving exploration, increasingly focusing on the new economy minerals needed for renewable energy and advanced

technologies. Included in the almost \$40 million is an additional \$17.5 million over four years for exploration, particularly for new economy minerals, taking total investment over five years to \$22.6 million.

Our new economy minerals are what the world is demanding right now, and we have the opportunity to capitalise on this as world economies look to decarbonise. Mr Deputy Speaker, you cannot have a renewable energy industry without a resources sector. That is why this government continues to support the industry.

Also, this budget provides \$15 million over two years for airborne and ground based geophysical surveys and research to better define our new economy minerals potential. Mackay's Resources Centre of Excellence, which I visited with the Treasurer earlier this year, will receive \$5.7 million over three years to add a future industries delivery hub. They will be able to expand their existing services including providing critical mineral testing and commercialisation for new economy minerals.

As I said, my department also performs a critical role in land administration. Significantly, this budget provides an annual \$10 million for a Natural Resources Recovery Program, which will allow the department to support better sustainable productivity and jobs from Queensland's land resources. Despite flooding rain across parts of the state, almost 45 per cent of Queensland remains drought-declared, so we will continue to back our drought stricken producers.

(Time expired)

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Members, I would like to acknowledge and welcome the principal and school captains from Wellington Point State High School in the electorate of Oodgeroo in the gallery here with us today. Welcome to Queensland parliament.



Mr WATTS (Toowoomba North—LNP) (12.55 pm): I look forward to the Minister for Transport advocating for a longer estimates hearing next year. He seems very concerned that we have not had an opportunity to ask questions of some of his departmental staff. I am more than happy to sit for an additional four, five, six, seven, eight, 10 or 12 hours. I am more than happy to come back on another day. I am more than happy for the minister to give shorter answers and/or stop his Dorothy Dixers from his own side.

Let me turn to a couple of things that came out of this hearing which were very important. One thing that the people in my electorate, particularly the people who live at Highfields, have been very interested in is whether we are developing a road for a north-south corridor. There has been a lot of discussion about this over the years. I have been a strong advocate that this north-south corridor should go via Boundary Street. The corridor has had \$2.422 million spent on investigating it. That is a good investment because it needs investigating. It is definitely a traffic problem for the community in the future and it needs to be addressed. A corridor needs to be protected, and we need to understand the triggers for when we need to start developing that corridor.

Unfortunately, there is almost nobody in Highfields who would suggest that what was outlined to us at estimates—which is the corridor going via Charlton—will be particularly helpful at all for any of the commuter traffic that is currently blocking the New England Highway. The road should clearly go from Highfields to Westbrook and around to the New England Highway on the south side of Toowoomba via Boundary Street.

It is a really important corridor and one that will protect the western suburbs from congestion into the future. I ask the minister to go back and have a look at that. I look forward to getting some more details on that particular topic from the department. I am sure that we can come to a sensible decision. The overpass for the Toowoomba bypass is already built. It is already there, so the people of Highfields will be able to connect straight to it if we simply jump across Gowrie Creek and the old rail line. I look forward to that.

With regard to royalties and sovereign risk in our resources industry, I was told repeatedly that the royalty regime is not something that should be discussed in the briefing for mining because it is Treasury's remit. There is a 30-year plan for how we are going to manage resource exploration and development in Queensland but it is not allowed to include any discussion on royalties. I suggest that it is somewhat naive to put that plan together without discussing what is a key cost base for industry. BHP CEO Mike Henry said, 'We've had changes to the Queensland royalty regime which were quite sudden and didn't involve any engagement with industry which has been a significant increase in the sovereign risk associated with Queensland.'

We are talking about a metallurgical mine that has a 90-year life, will employ several thousand people and provide great revenue into the future. We are all going to need steel no matter what. Discussions about sovereign risk and royalties should have happened between the Treasurer and his


cabinet colleague whose portfolio it is. In terms of sovereign risk, ask the people at Acland Coal Mine whether they think the process they have had to go through has increased or decreased sovereign risk for the development of resources in Queensland.

The last thing I want to mention is the \$175 energy rebate that was announced on 26 May. What an announcement. The people of Queensland had been waiting with bated breath for this. The Premier said at the time that people were making difficult choices, including going without. Well, Premier, they have had to go without for many months subsequently because it would appear that the minister and his department have been unable to work out how to deliver this rebate to the people of Queensland. As their substantial winter bills are arriving, the rebate is not there.

I would also add that there needs to be a network upgrade at Highfields because there have been 16 unplanned outages in the last month. I look forward to the minister looking into that and making sure those unplanned outages do not continue into the future.

(Time expired)

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Members, there is one minute of debate time left if anyone would like to seek the call. Member for Maryborough, we can round this out.

 **Mr SAUNDERS** (Maryborough—ALP) (1.00 pm): I would just like to say how great the committee was. I watched it sitting in my electorate office. I would also like to say that the chair did a great job. The ministers did a fantastic job. I have listened to the opposition talk about the lack of money for roadworks. They should go out and have a look around Western Queensland and talk to the people out there.

Mr Millar interjected.

Mr SAUNDERS: I hear the member for Gregory. What about the Blackall-Jericho Road, the Cramsie-Muttaburra Road and roads like that in Western Queensland? Western Queensland has never seen money like this.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Member for Maryborough, unfortunately the time for this debate has expired just as you were getting going!


Report adopted.

Sitting suspended from 1.01 pm to 2.00 pm.

Legal Affairs and Safety Committee, Report

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Martin): The question is—

That the report of the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee be adopted.

 **Mr RUSSO** (Toohey—ALP) (2.00 pm): On 3 August 2022 the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee met to examine the budget for the 2022-23 financial year. The budget estimates examination of the ministers, along with their chief executive officers of agencies, is an essential process of government and allows for the public examination of a committee's portfolio area of responsibility. At our public hearing on 3 August we heard from the Hon. Shannon Fentiman MP, Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence and the Hon. Mark Ryan, Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services.

The committee's recommendation is that the proposed expenditure for the committee's areas of responsibility as detailed in the Appropriation Bill 2022 be agreed to by the Legislative Assembly without amendment. On behalf of the committee I thank the ministers, their staff and officials from relevant departments for their assistance and providing detailed answers to questions from the committee during the estimates hearings. I also thank the secretariat staff, Hansard staff, parliamentary broadcast staff and all other parliamentary staff for their assistance.

On behalf of the committee I would like to wish Deputy Commissioner Smith a well-deserved retirement and thank him for his service over the years. Sadly, I would like to reflect on the loss of State Emergency Service volunteer Merryl Dray, who lost her life in the line of duty. I would like to express the sympathies of both myself and the committee to her family and friends. We are grateful for Merryl's selfless dedication.

As highlighted by the ministers, important aspects were examined at this year's estimates hearing. The Attorney-General spoke about the reforms being delivered in her portfolio, with \$246 million being invested over five years to modernise Queensland courts. The Attorney-General recognised that advances in technology have been rapid and it is vital for the courts to keep pace with

advances being made in this area. Queenslanders must have access to justice, and this access means investing in the people who are providing services on the front line. Legal Aid Queensland will receive funding to increase essential legal services. The growing demand for the services of the Queensland Human Rights Commission will be addressed with increased funding to allow the commission to continue its valuable work. The Queensland Law Reform Commission has been asked to recommend a framework for a decriminalised sex work industry in Queensland to improve health, human rights and legal protection for workers.

The Palaszczuk government has committed to criminalising coercive control and shining a light on this repulsive behaviour, which is linked to the risk of domestic abuse and can lead to homicide in some cases. The budget also includes an investment of \$363 million to respond to all recommendations of the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce. The Palaszczuk government is making serious inroads towards improving support for victims and their families in our multicultural communities through building capacity and making it easier for victim survivors to get the help they need.

The committee also met with Mark Ryan, the Minister for Police and Corrective Services. The committee was assured that the Palaszczuk government will always support the critical work of the Queensland Police Service and that they are doing this with more personnel, new facilities, the latest resources and stronger laws. This year for the first time ever the budget for the Queensland Police Service exceeds \$3 billion. In Queensland we have a record historic investment in better services. The Palaszczuk government will deliver the biggest boost in police numbers in 30 years. This financial year approved police officer strength is expected to increase under the Palaszczuk government to over 1,200 positions, and there are more to come. This record \$3 billion police budget supports the rollout of new state-of-the-art police equipment over five years, including: the newest integrated load-bearing ballistic vests, an additional 5,000 QLiTE tablet devices, an additional 4,500 new body worn cameras and an additional 250 new police vehicles.

Since the Palaszczuk government took office there have been an additional 3,600 beds built across the correctional system. The record budget will further boost safety through the deployment of additional body worn cameras. I commend the report to the House.



Mr NICHOLLS (Clayfield—LNP) (2.05 pm): Firstly, welcome to the Woolloowin State School students who are here in the gallery.

Estimates of the Attorney-General and justice portfolio and the women and prevention of domestic and family violence portfolios lasted just short of two hours. The opposition and non-government members shared three question blocks of 20 minutes, for a total of one hour to examine some \$623.5 million of departmental outlays. This included time to allow an examination of statutory bodies such as: the CCC, the Human Rights Commission, Legal Aid, Office of the Information Commissioner, Queensland Family and Child Commission, Prostitution Licensing Authority, Electoral Commission of Queensland, the Ombudsman, the Public Trustee and bodies such as the Legal Services Commission—in one hour. The time blocks were also the only times available to scrutinise the operations of divisions of the Department of Justice and Attorney-General such as the Office of Liquor and Gaming Regulation and the Office of Fair Trading as well as the operations of all of the courts including, critically, the Coroner's Court. Importantly, the operations of the service area of women and violence prevention were also included in this one-hour block of time. While the member for Toohey was fair in his allocation of time, the reality is that an hour is far from ideal for a complete and thorough examination of departmental expenditure of over \$620 million.

I acknowledge the increase in departmental expenditure, particularly in the area of women's justice in response to the *Hear her voice* report of the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce. As this involves the first allocation of funding for their response, it will be vital that future estimates have time to adequately examine this expenditure to ensure it does in fact deliver better experiences and more appropriate outcomes for women who come into contact with the justice system in Queensland.

Obviously the \$363 million is not all in the Attorney's portfolio and covers many departments. Keeping track of its myriad expenses will be vitally important. Equally, I want to acknowledge the long-awaited increase in funding for Legal Aid service providers. This was a matter I raised in last year's estimates committee. The reality is that fees for the provision of these reports have been woefully low for too long, and this funding increase will no doubt be welcomed.

I raised the issue of the lack of funding for the Court Network service. Staffed by up to 200 volunteers and organised by a small number of employees for less than \$600,000, this is an extremely valuable low-cost service that helps those attending courts, especially the Magistrates Court, as well as the courts themselves. To be told that the Court Network missed out on a tender and so the


service was cut was a real slap in the face to the hundreds of volunteers who do this work. It is also clear that the organisation that did receive funding is not in fact offering the same or all of the services that Court Network did. We were told by the director-general that the new organisation, PACT, is taking up some of that space. It is clear that services are being cut.

Concerningly, estimates revealed that the government is completely obsessed with hiding the cost of the indemnities and legal assistance granted to former deputy premier Jackie Trad. Embarrassingly, the Attorney was completely confused about who granted the indemnities to former deputy premier Jackie Trad. Two days after her evidence to the committee that she and the Premier granted the indemnity the Attorney had to correct the record. The Attorney's letter revealed that she had got it completely wrong on two counts: she confused herself with the former attorney-general and the Premier with the Deputy Premier. Perhaps there was some wishful factional thinking going on.

That is despite an almost 20-minute period for the Attorney or her staff, the battery of public servants and the Crown Solicitor, who were all sitting in estimates, to check and ensure the correct answers could be given. The Attorney repeatedly refused to tell Queenslanders how much has been spent on, firstly, the CCC inquiry itself and then Ms Trad's separate legal action to prevent the CCC report being made public. During almost 20 minutes of questioning, the Attorney continued to dodge and obfuscate on the entire question of granting legal assistance to former deputy premier Jackie Trad. In fact, what we did learn through relentless and continued questioning was that this is the first time that the existence of the second grant of legal assistance had been made public. It had never been mentioned before.

Critically, the Attorney did not answer two simple questions: firstly, the reasons she gave special approval for legal assistance to stop the release of a CCC report into the appointment of senior public servants by this government; and, secondly, the cost to Queensland taxpayers of the indemnities to date and the amount of legal assistance to date. In both instances, the Attorney gave no adequate explanation. We also heard about the \$500,000 report into the fees and charges of the Public Trustee—a report the government has had for over six weeks and has still refused to make public. Many other matters were canvassed. Transparency and openness were not a hallmark of these estimates.

(Time expired)

 **Mr HUNT** (Caloundra—ALP) (2.10 pm): I rise to make a brief contribution on report No. 29 of the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee as it pertains to the 2022-23 budget. I thank all members of the committee for the way the process unfolded this year. All members were given sufficient time to speak, including other members who were given leave to participate—including the member for Clayfield, the member for Whitsunday, the member for Burdekin, the member for Mudgeeraba and the member for Maiwar. A special note of thanks goes to the committee chair, Peter Russo, the member for Toohey. As acknowledged by Sandy Bolton, the member for Noosa, the chair allowed a sufficient amount of extra time for the opposition and crossbench to ask additional questions, and I will come back to those questions in a moment.

The Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence spoke at length about the great strides this government is making across her portfolios: \$246 million to modernise the state's courthouses; a very welcome \$76 million over four years to bolster the services of Legal Aid Queensland; initiatives that include gambling harm minimisation strategies; and a budget that strengthens casino and gaming regulations. For me, however, the jewel in the crown was the \$363 million in response to the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce. This will begin to respond to all of the recommendations of the excellent work undertaken by Justice McMurdo. A very recent injection of \$2 million to DVConnect over two years is further evidence that this government and in particular this minister are absolutely committed to the provision of a Queensland where women and girls are safe at home and have access to secure jobs and every opportunity that our state can provide.


The Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services was similarly buoyant about his portfolio, and with good reason. The minister was able to outline that the police budget has exceeded \$3 billion for the first time in the state's history and will be part of the biggest boost in policing numbers in 30 years. More than 1,000 new officers have graduated from the state's two police academies since July 2020. These officers will be equipped with the newest integrated load-bearing ballistic vests. They may also be lucky enough to be issued one of the 5,000 new QLITE tablets. When called to an incident, they may be riding in one of the 250 new police vehicles, and when they step out of that vehicle, they may be activating one of the 4,500 new body worn cameras.

I also commend our Police Commissioner, Katarina Carroll, who with commendable patience and great professionalism had to point out to the LNP that, when questioning the increase in policing numbers, it is always helpful to look at the correct figures. Similarly, attempts to draw new sensationalism into the long-defunct Caloundra watch house saga fell spectacularly flat yet again. A quote from Deputy Commissioner Smith is all that is required at this point. He said—

... we were always planning, with the growth that is on the southern part of the Sunshine Coast, for an increase in those facilities. Obviously, that would have included the ability to increase the use of that particular watch house. It was not suitable ... in its form ... but the opportunity that has been presented to us means that we can increase it now.

I take the opportunity to wish Deputy Commissioner Smith the very best in his new role after his retirement.

I cannot let the opportunity pass without highlighting the eye-watering comments in the LNP's statement of reservation as they pertain to corrective services. The LNP were also concerned about the lack of available beds in jails. I have said in this House that the LNP response to overcrowding was to close a jail. That was their response to bed space, and I will happily repeat that every time they hold the door open for me to raise it again. The LNP cannot complain that double-bunking is not proceeding quickly enough when their sole contribution to overcrowding was to close a jail. The LNP comments belittling custodial staff about the issuing of show bags is a slap in the face for officers who had just risked their lives to quell a major riot. It is ridiculous to belittle their efforts in that way in the ongoing LNP onslaught against the Public Service. On that incredulous note, I commend the report to the House.

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (2.15 pm): I rise to speak to the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee's report into the 2022-23 budget estimates. I want to put on the record at the outset my appreciation of the respective commissioners for their candour and willingness to answer the questions that we asked at the hearing. There is a very good reason why I went to the commissioners—because they answer the questions and they provide the information.

There are two words from the estimates hearing that illustrate perfectly the claims made by this government in the crucial areas of police, fire, emergency services and corrective services. Those two words are 'incredibly inaccurate'. Those were the words of the Police Commissioner when questioned on the numbers used by this government in the budget documents, and I must agree. Back in 2020, this government gave a commitment that by 2025 police numbers would be boosted by 2,025 staff, including 1,450 sworn officers. In the estimates hearing following that announcement, the LNP questioned how that would be achieved. What we learnt during that estimates process was that those plans are in tatters. The attrition rate was revealed at 40 per cent higher than predicted and far higher than we have seen in at least eight years, resulting in an increase in sworn police officers of just 143 for the last 12 months.

We heard terms like approved strength, actual strength, headcount and, get this, minimum obligatory human resource information. All Queenslanders want to know is: what is the operational policing number on any given day? How many police officers are available on any given day to go out there and respond to a call for service? I do not think that is too much to ask. Instead, what we got from over there is more smoke and more 'minimum obligatory human resource information' terms to cover up what is clearly a major issue with their recruitment targets.

Let me talk about domestic and family violence. We know about the issue of domestic and family violence in this state. The estimates process revealed that over half of Queensland's domestic and family violence specialty officers are yet to complete the specialist course. Frankly, that is not good enough. During the review of the corrective services portfolio it was revealed that not one of the nine additional positions budgeted for will be a custodial corrections officer. The 2020 riot at the Arthur Gorrie Correctional Centre and the 2021 riot at the Capricornia Correctional Centre left taxpayers with a bill for almost \$2 million worth of damage. As we did in the statement of reservation, the LNP calls on the government to seek full restitution for the damage from those convicted in court.

The paid staff and volunteers who form part of QFES's response to incidents are victims of this government's repeated practice of receiving key reports and shelving them. The fact is that this government has held the Darby review into the SES for over two years and has held the KPMG review into the structure of QFES for almost nine months. Despite our repeated calls for those documents to be released, what have we seen? Nothing. What is even more concerning is that the minister was either unable or unwilling to advise when we could expect any form of response and also hinted that the implementation of the KPMG review itself may be the subject of a review—so now we are looking at a review of a review. Is it any wonder that our QFES employees are demanding leadership from this government?

Given the importance of the role of volunteers in assisting Queenslanders, the LNP questioned the commissioner about ensuring volunteers have the appropriate training to undertake emergency response tasking. It is deeply concerning that the commissioner said tasking of volunteers to undertake duties they are not qualified for could potentially occur. The LNP will continue to hold this government to account to ensure that all volunteers receive the training they require for the tasks they are assigned.

When it comes to staffing levels for QFES, the estimates hearing revealed that the government's 2020 election commitment of 357 new firefighters by 2025 is now also seriously in doubt. Given that just over \$19 million was spent on overtime payments last year just to keep our stations open, it is clear that this commitment will not be honoured.

For the record, the LNP was relieved to hear that the commissioner advised that new helmets for firefighters which address the communications issue is progressing. It is blatantly clear, however, that when it comes to departments that Queenslanders rely on for safety, this government is big on talk and low on action.

(Time expired)



Ms BUSH (Cooper—ALP) (2.20 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee estimates report. Before I do, as a former public servant, I have to pick up on some of the comments that were made yesterday by the member for Kawana where he stated that public servants were coming in to the estimates process and refusing to answer questions. His comment about wanting to return to the good old days where members of parliament could continue to question and harangue public servants until, I think the quote was, he got the answer he wanted was, for me, just so incredibly chilling. If the member for Kawana cannot see the issue in that particular statement and cannot see the issue in haranguing and harassing public servants who, I might add, are required by legislation to be fulsome and transparent in a style that generates the answer that he wants, then he really needs to spend some time in deep reflection. Queensland's public servants take their role in estimates preparation incredibly seriously. To suggest that they are being dismissive of the estimates process is incredibly uninformed.

There are a number of issues that the residents in my electorate really care about—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Martin): Pause the clock! Member for Nanango and member for Hervey Bay, please stop quarrelling.

Ms BUSH: There are a number of issues that people in my electorate would really care about that came up in the estimates process. It was really wonderful to see the progress being made, for example, by the Public Trustee's office under new leadership, and particularly I would like to commend the current PT, Samay Zhouand, for the work he is doing. The Public Trustee has been on an incredible reform journey and it is really good to see that their customers' first agenda has already delivered significant benefits for clients. A number of projects from their strategy have already been successfully delivered, including imbedding La Trobe University's best practice decision-making model across frontline services of the organisation. They are the first and only public trustee to do this.

I was really pleased also to hear about the additional financial support being provided to Legal Aid Queensland. Anyone who has experience in Queensland's legal system knows the value that LAQ brings, ensuring that all Queenslanders, regardless of income, background and ability, have access to good legal representation. It is important that every Queenslanders can access justice, regardless of their financial situation, and it is wonderful to see the significant increase in funding of \$76.8 million over four years. As part of that budget, Legal Aid Queensland is receiving additional funding of \$6.1 million ongoing to support the government's response to the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce report.


The Attorney-General provided an update on some transformative work currently being undertaken by the office of births, deaths and marriages which is exploring arrangements that will allow trans and gender diverse people to have their gender identity accurately reflected and affirmed on their birth certificate. There have now been three roundtables on this really important issue, and the office continues to work with the LGBTIQ community and stakeholders to craft the preferred solutions. We heard during the estimates process that there is now an exposure draft of a bill being circulated with a bill likely to be introduced this year.

On a final note, I want to highlight an area of continued concern to me and many of my colleagues which is the fundamental right to access safe abortion services. I know this is something that my predecessor, Kate Jones, was really proud to give her voice to here in this chamber around the decriminalising of termination of pregnancy and giving women control over their health. I am really proud of our government's record in supporting women's reproductive choices. In this year's budget,

we have allocated almost \$1 million to Children by Choice to provide domestic violence counselling because we know that controlling a woman's reproductive rights is often a form of domestic and family violence. Many of us have watched in horror, and continue to watch, at what is happening over in the States with decisions being overturned. It is a stark reminder that progressive laws exist only for as long as we have progressive governments.

Here in Queensland, the Leader of the Opposition has been asked if the LNP would review Queensland's abortion laws were they to win government. He has refused to answer this, but he has suggested that we should look at how he conducted himself in 2018. Regrettably, in 2018 the Leader of the Opposition voted for abortion to remain in the Criminal Code. He did not speak on the bill to even share his decision-making. The opposition will, I predict, do everything they can in the lead-up to the next state election to keep this issue off the agenda, and I would urge Queenslanders to remember this environment. Our women and girls cannot afford to forget what is at stake here.

In the final seconds I have left, I want to thank my committee colleagues, those who attended as visitors—I think it was all very collegial on the day—and to thank the parliamentary staff for their support as always and, of course, to thank public servants for their attendance. I commend the report to the House.

 **Mrs GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (2.25 pm): As I speak, Queenslanders are suffering from the rising cost of living. They are struggling with housing and worrying about whether they can afford the rising cost of rent, electricity, food and petrol. While Queenslanders are making daily sacrifices to get by, estimates has revealed that the state government is wasting taxpayer money and blowing the budget with a litany of cost overruns and financial waste.

The Palaszczuk government wasted \$2 million on flashy pamphlets, ads and websites for the Tradies in Paradise campaign, a scheme that produced just two tradies. They approved \$2.7 million to be spent on a roller-coaster when it was intended to produce a world-class koala research facility. Meanwhile, the social housing they promised will take 25 years to deliver, and Queenslanders are still waiting for the electricity power rebate promise because the government actually forgot to tell energy retailers to provide it. Cross River Rail has blown out by \$8 billion. Then there is the biggest waste of all—Wellcamp.

Over \$220 million of taxpayer money was spent on this quarantine facility that we will never own and is not being used. Wellcamp? More like 'Wastecamp'. This was a trigger-happy decision that put politics above people. With \$220 million the government could have funded 870 social housing homes. When you total up the waste, it amounts to over \$3 billion of taxpayer money, all at a time when local businesses were fighting to keep their doors open during border lockdowns, when our community was inundated by floods, and while families had been struggling to keep a roof over their heads. This is \$3 billion that could have been used to give our community a handup. This government's inability to plan and deliver meaningful infrastructure and services is costing our community.

Then there is the integrity crisis ripping through this state government. Estimates added yet another sorry chapter to this Labor government's integrity crisis. The former deputy premier and treasurer Jackie Trad is fighting in court to keep a CCC report secret, and the government is using taxpayer money to pay for it. Questioning over estimates revealed that two indemnities have been provided to Jackie Trad, and it is the second that is so extraordinary—a special indemnity to pay for the legal assistance for Jackie Trad to fight to keep the CCC report secret.

Despite repeated questioning, the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice failed to provide the reasons for giving the second special indemnity and refused to tell Queenslanders how much it is costing them. The decision of the Attorney-General to provide the second indemnity and her unwillingness to share the costs of this with Queensland taxpayers flies in the face of transparency and good government. It is extraordinary that the taxpayer is funding an action by Jackie Trad to keep a CCC report secret, but the decision of this government to hide those costs from the public is disgraceful.


As if that was not enough, estimates revealed that not only has the police minister broken his promise to get more police boots on the ground, with budget documents showing that the growth rate of sworn police officers has been less than one per cent per annum since Labor's election, but the police minister is not across his brief when it comes to our Coolangatta Police Station. We are suffering from the scourge of crime. We have witnessed community members brutally assaulted, homes broken into, family members held at knifepoint while their cars are stolen, and one family is lucky to be alive after surviving a shooting in Coolangatta.

Cross-border crime is on the rise. Criminals regularly flee across the border, which is why the Coolangatta Police Station is so important. However, when I asked this police minister to guarantee that the Coolangatta Police Station will be rebuilt in Coolangatta when the light rail goes through

Coolangatta—and there are plans to resume the land of the Coolangatta Police Station—this incompetent police minister did not even know what I was talking about. He did not even know that there are plans to resume the land of the Coolangatta Police Station because of the light rail. He could not guarantee that a new one would be built.

Coolangatta deserves a police station. All we are asking is that this police minister is across his brief, that this police minister starts planning for the land that might be required in order to rebuild the police station when the land on which our Coolangatta Police Station stands is resumed for the light rail.

(Time expired)

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (2.30 pm): I thank the House for giving me the opportunity to speak on the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee's budget estimates report. I want to thank the committee for their work, particularly the committee chair, Peter Russo MP.

I was very proud to once again discuss all of the important work being delivered by the department. Ensuring Queensland has a modern, fit-for-purpose justice system is a core priority of our government. Once again, it was very disappointing to see that the LNP is not interested in the issues that matter. They did not want to ask questions about our unprecedented bumper justice budget or any of the historic work we are doing to protect victims of domestic and family violence. The member for Scenic Rim, who sat on the committee, did not ask a question about the \$22 million we are putting towards the new Beaudesert Courthouse. Sorry, I should be more specific. He did not ask a single question, full stop. There was only the same old non-issues and fearmongering they have been going on with for months.

The member for Clayfield came along and had but one thing on his mind. Members on all sides of the House have noted ministerial indemnity plays an important role in ensuring that all ministers and former ministers on both sides of the House can perform their duties. In fact, we heard just yesterday how important the Deputy Leader of the Opposition thought they were back when he was in government. Of course, there are strict guidelines around when and how ministerial indemnity is granted. I must say, it is disappointing to see the LNP again playing politics with serious matters like this.

As I said in the House yesterday, 69 indemnities have been granted in the last 15 years. That is how many people have applied for and been granted indemnity. Plenty have applied to LNP former ministers, yet all we saw from the member for Clayfield was him repeatedly ignoring my very simple statement that every indemnity application I have ever approved was in line with advice from the Crown Solicitor. As the Deputy Leader of the Opposition says, it is not news.

However, the member for Currumbin—and we saw again her theatrical contribution—the deputy chair of the committee who is paid more than \$25,000 to sit on the committee, did not ask a question. She did not ask one question. She could not be bothered to ask a question—the deputy chair of the committee. I guess she was worried about looking like the member for Mudgeeraba who, to her credit, managed to ask three questions. Never mind that none of them had anything to do with my portfolio responsibilities. I give her credit though: it is better than last year when she did not even bother to ask any questions.

Then, of course, we had the member for Whitsunday. I want to thank the member for Whitsunday for her very kind words because on four occasions she referred to me as an 'advocate for women'. Yes, I am; I am a very proud advocate for women. I think next time the member for Whitsunday needs to learn the difference between perpetrator and prevention programs. The member for Whitsunday could not even get this basic fact right. Before she starts accusing the government of inaction, I really need to thank the member for Whitsunday. My own team could not have written a better dixer. It would not hurt to bring a few more questions along next year though. The most embarrassing moment of the whole committee hearing was when the member for Whitsunday ran out of questions.

Mrs Gerber interjected.

Ms FENTIMAN: I take the interjection from the member for Currumbin, who did not even bother to ask a question. However, it was probably more embarrassing that the shadow minister ran out of questions. I also note that the member for Whitsunday failed to call out her own leader of the LNP for his recent comments indicating an LNP government would possibly wind back abortion laws in this state. In fact, that is a matter that the member for Whitsunday has failed to take a stand on at all.

I am very proud of this government's track record when it comes to supporting women and girls across Queensland, even when we have received pushback from those opposite every step of the way, because it is the Palaszczuk government that stands up for Queenslanders. We are the ones investing in our justice system unlike those opposite, who gutted the department of justice, who abolished specialist courts, who decreased funding to domestic and family violence services and then gagged them. That is their record on supporting domestic and family violence services.

Ms Bates interjected.

Ms FENTIMAN: The member for Mudgeeraba was a cabinet minister only for the first 12 months.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Martin): Pause the clock. Member for Mudgeeraba, you have been continually interjecting. I am going to ask you to stop interjecting. You will be warned if you continue. Attorney-General, you have nine seconds remaining.

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

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, what is your point of order? I hope you are not about to reflect on the chair.


Mr WALKER: No. The member for Mudgeeraba needs to sit in her seat if she wishes to—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, she is acting as the Manager of Opposition Business. That is not a point of order.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, members. I will wait for silence.

Ms FENTIMAN: It was an embarrassing effort from the LNP. The member failed to ask questions, when the shadow minister asked questions they were not about the portfolio and then they ran out of questions. It was incredibly disappointing.

 **Ms BOLTON** (Noosa—Ind) (2.36 pm): I rise to make a contribution in support of the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee report on the budget estimates for 2022-23. Instead of speaking about the questions I asked at our hearing, as the responses were self-explanatory and available for anyone to view or read as I posted them, I wish to again highlight the importance of ensuring the estimates hearings and process meet the expectations of Queenslanders. The operations of parliament are a key part of how our Queensland democracy works and its committees are one of the key avenues that provide scrutiny and accountability of the government.

As honourable members are aware, reforms to the committee system were undertaken in 2011. Ten years later, in 2021, I was on a live streamed panel with the architects of those changes, former members Judy Spence and Lawrence Springborg, as well as our Speaker, Curtis Pitt MP, sharing insights on the system.

As I and others have articulated throughout the 57th Parliament, the committee system and the estimates process need tweaking to improve their effectiveness for Queenslanders. Issues highlighted again this year include the limited time for a diversity of questioning. For example, in a 45-minute session, non-government members receive half of that time after the minister's opening remarks of up to six minutes are taken out, leaving 19 minutes. The crossbench, 17 per cent of the opposition, receives understandably 17 per cent. This is actually just over three minutes as a standard. With ministers allowed three minutes to make responses, members can see this is not practical or equitable, leaving possibly only one question to be shared between the three very diverse parties and one Independent who make up the crossbench. The diversity of the communities represented cannot be accommodated in one question.


Therefore, for a second year in a row I attempted to circumnavigate the missing out by submitting two questions on notice to other committees—unsuccessfully, I might add, due to those standing orders. However, there are opportunities for change, as summarised in my statement of reservation. Firstly, the Coaldrake report recommended expanding the oversight role of the committees, specifically that integrity bodies' independence be enhanced by involvement of parliamentary committees. How this is done is important, leading to my question at our hearing regarding the role of committees as key stakeholders in implementing the Coaldrake recommendations.

Secondly, on the first day of hearings it was stated that for the accountability of government the parliamentary committees had not necessarily been discharging some of the things that were envisaged in the 2011 review. Anyone who listened to the live stream would have heard what they were. Hence, it is important that the Committee of the Legislative Assembly consider our previous request for a review of the committee system and the estimates process, taking into account the submissions that were

made by me and other current and past MPs. This, along with the implementation of the Coaldrake review, provides an opportunity for real change and an end to the arguments that go backwards and forwards in this chamber. As I have said previously in this place, we have nothing to lose and everything to gain by seeking an efficient, transparent and equitable committee system and process.

In closing, I thank the Attorney-General and Minister Ryan for their fulsome responses. Even though there was no time to pursue matters further during the hearing, I have now submitted questions on notice to obtain clarification. I thank departmental staff for their hard work over many weeks, as well as those in attendance at our hearing. I make special mention of our chair, the member for Toohey, for providing 'unallocated time' for the crossbench and opposition to ask extra questions.

I wish to provide some clarity around the member for Caloundra's comment that I said the word 'sufficient'—it was not. The word that I used was 'appreciated'—and it is. There should be a standard which allows sufficient time. It should not be something that is at the discretion of individual chairs of different committees. We should not have to go cap in hand to sneak in an extra question. In conclusion, I express to all of our front liners our ongoing gratitude for what they do every day.

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (2.41 pm): I start by acknowledging all of the participants in this year's estimates process: the members of parliament, committee members, departmental representatives, Hansard staff, ministerial staff and committee staff.

Our record 2022-23 budget invests more than \$5 billion in better services for the Queensland Police Service; Queensland Corrective Services; Queensland Fire and Emergency Services; and Office of the Inspector-General Emergency Management. Investing in police officers, firefighters and custodial officers is evidence of our government's commitment to good jobs and better services to support Queensland's great lifestyle.

It was very disappointing in this year's estimates to see that the opposition—as always—tried to demean and undermine the contributions particularly of departmental staff. I particularly note their playing of politics with the Police Commissioner's testimony in their statement of reservation. A review of the transcript—you always have to look at it in context; you never accept as fact the assertions of those opposite—shows that the opposition has deliberately, obviously and maliciously selectively quoted the Police Commissioner. As the transcript shows, the commissioner was referring to a very small window of data which is prone to fluctuations due to a range of factors. The Police Commissioner made it very clear in the transcript in estimates that the approved police strength and police officer headcount give the clearest snapshot of the increase in police numbers over time. To be frank, that is the measure that has been used by both sides of politics to measure police numbers and strength in the state. If the opposition chooses to not accept that measure, then that is a deviation from past practice and further evidence of their deliberate maliciousness when they selectively quote the Police Commissioner.


The facts are that this financial year the approved police officer strength is expected to increase by 370 positions, which will take the total increase in approved police officer strength under the Palaszczuk government to over 1,200 positions, with more to come. I am advised by the Queensland Police Service that the government's election commitment to deliver 2,025 extra police personnel remains on track. I am advised by the Queensland Police Service that it has achieved its police officer growth and recruitment targets for the first two years of the election commitment. I commend them on their efforts in this regard.

The fact is that if the LNP were elected there would be 1,000 fewer police in Queensland. Ian Leavers, President of the Queensland Police Union, said publicly of the 2020 election commitment, 'What I did get out of the LNP was a commitment of nearly 400 new police officers across the state of Queensland. I got a commitment from Minister Ryan and Anastacia Palaszczuk of 1,450 new police officers over the same period of time.' The commitment they made to Ian Leavers was 1,050 less than the commitment this government made—1,000 police officers less in Queensland.

Despite all the talk from those opposite in estimates, they did not manage one question to the Police Commissioner or me about youth crime—not one. They are all talk and no substance. We saw evidence of that in respect of their statement of reservation on Queensland Corrective Services, choosing to talk down professional custodial officers demonstrating heroic actions and saving lives.

In respect of Queensland Fire and Emergency Services, I am assured by the commissioner that the election commitment remains on track—an additional 357 firefighters over and above attrition. We were also able to highlight at estimates the record budget for Queensland Fire and Emergency Services—a boost of \$38 million for Rural Fire Service, SES and the marine rescue services.

I thank the member for Toohey for his excellent chairing of the committee. As the member for Noosa acknowledged in her statement of reservation, the chair allowed opposition and crossbench members extra time to ask additional questions, proving it is a fair process and a good one.

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Scenic Rim—LNP) (2.46 pm): As other members have reflected, I thank members of the committee for their work in the estimates process. We did not have a single point of order raised during the day. The member for Toohey did a good job as chair. Having said that, I agree with many of the other comments that have been made by members about improvements that could be made to the estimates process. I will provide a couple of examples of where this committee could have done better. We had one hour allocated to examine the Queensland Police Service. When you break that down to government and non-government questioning, it means that the non-government members—both the members of the opposition and the crossbench—had somewhere in the vicinity of 30 minutes to ask questions about the QPS. That is woefully inadequate for such an important organisation in Queensland.

In the opening session of justice and Attorney-General, all of the statutory bodies were present. Then, according to the resolution of this House and the committee, the statutory bodies went away. In the second session of justice and Attorney-General, we were unable to ask questions of the statutory bodies. Given the number of them under that portfolio, it would not have been a very big imposition for them to stay in estimates for another two hours, given that this is the one opportunity per year that we have to ask questions of those bodies. Two hours out of 365 days is not too much to ask, yet it was denied by the government. They used their numbers in this House to send them away from that part of estimates.

There have been a lot of inquiries into the CCC in the last 12 or 18 months. It has been a huge time of change. They have now had three reports about them: the five-year review completed by the PCCC in 2021; the Logan inquiry, which reported in December last year; and, of course, the commission of inquiry headed by Tony Fitzgerald which reported last week. In addition, there was a five-year review that took place in 2016. There are some 30 recommendations from the 2021 five-year review. The quick reckoning that I have carried out shows that 16 of those recommendations remain unactioned by the government. There were seven recommendations in the Logan review and, as far as I can see, there are three where there has been no action taken. There are now 32 recommendations made by the Fitzgerald commission of inquiry.

Given that it is now 14 months since the five-year review was handed down and the government has not acted on any of those recommendations, even the ones that it has accepted, I really think it is time for the government to get on with the job of actually making some changes that have been recommended and agreed to in relation to the CCC. It goes back further than that too, because in that 2016 review a lot of those changes were agreed to by the government but a number of them have not been implemented either.

When it comes to the CCC, there is a lot of change in the air. There are a lot of recommendations that have been made and accepted by the government from the PCCC on two occasions in five-yearly reviews, from the PCCC in the Logan review and now from Tony Fitzgerald again. I think it is high time that the government and the Attorney-General in particular get on with their job of legislating those changes, because it is too important an institution for Queensland for it to be left hanging with all of those changes outstanding that have not been legislated and which are required to be made for the CCC to go through that very important change process.

Recommendation 32 of the commission of inquiry report handed down last week was that the CCC should regularly and progressively report to the PCCC about its progress on these changes. As the chair of that parliamentary committee I will ensure that it does that, but the government has a role to play in those changes as well and it needs, as I have said, to get on with the job of legislating those changes.

I thank all members of the committee in relation to their cooperation. I also thank QFES, which gave information to me about a local project that really needs to be progressed in the next couple of years in relation to the Boonah auxiliary fire station. It is one of the oldest in the state. It desperately needs replacement so that new members can come and train and so that equipment can be properly stored at that facility. It is well beyond time. It is on the works program, but it needs funding. Finally, I again thank the non-government members of the committee who assisted so much on the day of estimates.



Hon. MC BAILEY (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (2.51 pm): I rise to speak on the tabling of the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee report. The committee was well chaired by the member for Toohey and well supported by the members for Cooper and Caloundra. They are all hardworking members of great integrity whose confidence and judgement can be relied upon when it matters.

The member for Scenic Rim is a member to whom I would have no hesitation in offering a confidential advance briefing with respect to matters that are sensitive to his community. I would say the same for the member for Noosa, but I certainly cannot say the same for the member for Currumbin due to her tawdry contribution to the committee on the day as she has shown that she cannot be trusted on matters, unlike some of her own colleagues. She did not even have the courage to come to the correct committee and asked about a matter where Transport and Main Roads was the responsible department. Instead, she asked a cheap political question at the wrong committee.

On 12 July TMR officers met with the member for Currumbin to provide a courtesy and in-confidence briefing about the proposed category C gazettal of a corridor for the proposed Gold Coast Light Rail stage 4 project, part of early planning for a better public transport system for the southern Gold Coast. Briefings of this nature are provided to members because of gazettal processes and because the establishment of road, rail and light rail corridors can be distressing for members of the public who are impacted landholders. Transport and Main Roads understands that landholders may contact their local members to seek advice once that process begins, so it is important for members to understand the approach taken by Transport and Main Roads for handling that contact. The in-confidence nature of those discussions means that the Transport and Main Roads officers will be comfortable to share information with members.

It is disappointing to say the least, therefore, that the member for Currumbin breached the confidence provided to her to make a pathetic political point at the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee budget estimates hearing. She asked the minister whether the police station and Magistrates Court would be demolished as part of light rail stage 4. The member for Currumbin then added two and two together to invent a fictional scenario. That was a pathetic and low act. After misusing the privilege granted to her and breaching that confidence, the member for Currumbin subsequently used the information from that briefing to go on a petty political politicking spree on ABC Radio on the Gold Coast. Noting that the project is years away from an investment decision, the member for Currumbin only needed to wait until TMR had completed the early notification period and commenced the public consultation on the gazettal process—a matter of only a few months—before going on her political pointscoring exercise.

For the record, advance and in-confidence briefings by Transport and Main Roads are not provided to seek a member's support for a proposal nor to manage the politics of any proposal. They are to help manage sensitive processes around people who own property. Of course, in a functioning democracy members may take a public position about any transport proposal that is not consistent with the government position at an appropriate time—in this case, once Transport and Main Roads has finalised the process of notification and commences public consultation towards the end of October.

For the member for Currumbin to go out there trying to scare people about fictional scenarios around taking away police services to her local community is one of the lower acts I have seen in this place and to see her trying to scare property owners is consistent with the low standards set by the Leader of the Opposition, who did not tell the truth and who misled this House for five months about the laptop, was exposed and will not apologise, will not acknowledge it, will not tell the truth. We see the member for Currumbin using the same low tactics as the member for Broadwater and Leader of the Opposition. It is pathetic and low politics of the lowest order called out by Ian Leavers, called out by Bill Potts and called out, I might add, by a lot of members of the community who hate this sort of nasty politics when this was an appropriate process.

It is a breach of trust. It was a question to the wrong minister. She did not have the courage to ask me the question in my committee, that is for sure. She did not have the courage to come to the correct committee and ask me because it would have been the relevant committee and it would have been answered appropriately. It was the wrong committee. It was a pathetically low act from a pathetically low member. She should apologise for her pathetic behaviour.



Mr MILLAR (Gregory—LNP) (2.56 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate about the estimates process. The questions that I wanted to ask probably go back to last term with regard to a couple of things where we need to find out what is going on. We need to find out what is happening with the SES review. Where is it? What is happening with it? It has been sitting on the minister's desk. It was sitting on the previous minister's desk for a while. It is now sitting on this minister's desk. I can tell the House

that volunteers and councils are absolutely frustrated with this whole process. There are councils that have limited money but are more than willing to donate to their SES to ensure they have the right equipment, from chainsaws to boats to vehicles, and access to all equipment. However, we have an SES review that has been sitting on a desk this term and last term. There has again been a review that is just sitting on a desk with no action taken. It is frustrating.

Volunteers are not paid people; these are people who work in their community but donate their time to wonderful organisations like the SES and they want to get this review settled. They want to know their direction, and it is getting harder and harder to get people to volunteer for these groups. We have what they call volunteer fatigue. The government sitting on a report and not releasing it and not acting on it only frustrates those people more and gives them more reason to say, 'Why do I do it?' Over the next couple of months, when things start to dry out, we possibly might have a bushfire situation like we saw a couple of years ago. We need to have our rural fires, our SES and our volunteers ready to go and wanting to participate. They need to protect properties and put fires out. It is important, so I ask the Minister for Police and Emergency Services: where is that review and why is he not acting on it?

The other review which is still sitting on a desk—and it has been going for a long time—is the Blue Water review regarding the volunteer Coast Guard and VMR. They want to know what direction they are going in, because that is the only service people have when they are out at sea and their boat is taking on water. The only people going out to get them are either a Coast Guard or a VMR and they want some certainty.

The Minister for Emergency Services in the last term had the Blue Water Review. It has been handed to the current minister, but he is still sitting on it. VMR and Coast Guard deserve respect. They deserve to have the ability to say, 'This is our path forward.' It is not that hard. Can the Labor government make a decision, please, to ensure that our VMR and Coast Guard are going in the right direction? Stop sitting on these reports. As I said, councils and volunteers are getting frustrated and we are giving them a reason not to be a part of it. They provide a valuable service. There is volunteer fatigue out there. I would also like to talk about youth crime. We hear a lot about youth crime in the south-east and in Townsville and Cairns.

Mr Lister: Gundy as well.


Mr MILLAR: I will take the interjection from the member for Southern Downs. Youth crime is in regional Queensland. People are getting sick of it. We need to get back to making breach of bail an offence for youth. We have crime right throughout regional Queensland. To see this, one only has to talk to the Baumans from the Dingo Roadhouse, which is a very popular roadhouse and a very important piece of infrastructure along the Capricorn Highway. They are now having to lock their doors at night when people come and fuel up for fear of being held up due to the youth crime situation or cars being stolen from the Dingo Roadhouse. It goes from Rockhampton all the way along the Capricorn Highway, through Emerald and Blackwater and out to the Gemfields. There is a crime epidemic out there at the moment.

Report adopted.

Community Support and Services Committee, Report

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Martin): The question is—

That the report of the Community Support and Services Committee be adopted.

 **Ms McMILLAN** (Mansfield—ALP) (3.01 pm): It was my great honour to serve as the chair of the Community Support and Services Committee as we considered the Appropriation Bill 2022 and the estimates of the committee's area of responsibility which includes a large portfolio: community, housing, digital economy, the arts, seniors, disability services, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partnerships, children, youth justice and multicultural affairs. The Palaszczuk government's budget focuses on good jobs, better services and a great Queensland lifestyle. Estimates is a necessary process allowing all members of parliament, in particular non-government members, to question members of the executive and senior public servants on the array of positive programs and initiatives being delivered by this Palaszczuk government.

I felt professionally empathetic and embarrassed for the opposition members of the Community Support and Services Committee as they were continually denied the opportunity to ask questions by their self-assured learned scholar—namely, the member for Everton, whose conduct was somewhat improved on his behaviour during the 2021 estimates process although he still requires regular reminders that he is no longer working on a football field.

A spotlight is cast on the behaviour of politicians as our communities continue to grapple with issues of violence, particularly family and domestic violence. Rightly or wrongly, our male leaders have a responsibility to demonstrate and encourage respectful behaviours. I always enjoy working with the member for Surfers Paradise. We share significant history from when he was the minister for education and I have always acknowledged and appreciated his dignity and his decency. I also thank the member for Whitsunday for her contribution to the estimates process. Further, I acknowledge the professionalism of the deputy chair, the member for Burnett. It is an honour to work with him. I am very fortunate to lead an outstanding committee who work collegially, diligently, deliberately, ethically and industriously.


Transparency and accountability are the hallmark of good governments and I am proud to be a member of the Palaszczuk government. Estimates provides members opportunities to explore areas of government spending and the facts speak for themselves. On a review of *Hansard* and on a rough calculation of questions, I have been advised that the committee sat for seven hours and 31 minutes, of which three hours and 49 minutes were allocated to non-government questioning compared to two hours and 52 minutes of questioning by the government. This was deliberate on my behalf as chair. Further evidence that ample scrutiny of the government's budget was afforded to the opposition was that, of the 135 questions that were asked, just 41 questions were asked by government members and 94 questions were asked by non-government members. Again this was a deliberate intention on my part as chair of this committee.

As a long-term employee with the Public Service I am well aware of the degree of rigour that exists regarding the expenditure of public money, as there should be. As elected officials we should strive every day to ensure that public money is expended for the benefit of all Queenslanders. The estimates process is a vital process to allow all members, in particular non-government members, to hold the government to account.

I see in my community firsthand the record investments in the arts, housing, communities, disabilities, multiculturalism and youth justice. The benefits of expenditures noted during estimates included \$125.6 million over four years and nearly \$19 million ongoing to help address social isolation and loneliness and support neighbourhood and community centres throughout Queensland. This is an outcome of the inquiry that my committee conducted that I know every member of my committee, regardless of their political association, is proud of. This will result in an increase for our Mount Gravatt Community Centre's operational funding to \$233,643 per annum, up from around \$126,000. Further, the Mount Gravatt Community Centre will receive \$148,950 in 2022 for the continuation of their world-leading Ways to Wellness program.

The \$21.2 million allocated to the new performing arts venue at the Queensland Performing Arts Centre, which will be frequented by my community and, of course, the housing providing to members of my community under the Queensland Housing Strategy 2021-2027, as well as numerous concessions to the elderly, are going to be much valued by my community.

These are amongst the many investments made by the Palaszczuk government to ensure the economic recovery of our great state. I take this opportunity to thank all of the public servants, the parliamentary staff, as well as the three ministers that I serve, for their great support and I commend report No. 18 to the 57th Parliament.

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (3.06 pm): I rise to address the Appropriation Bill 2022 and, specifically, the proposed expenditure of the Palaszczuk state Labor government as examined by the Queensland parliament's Community Support and Services Committee. There is no question that the last 2½ years has been one of the most difficult periods endured by Queensland artists and performers, as well as artistic and cultural organisations and associated businesses. After two years of considerable disruption due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the associated necessary public health measures, Queensland's artistic and cultural community were looking forward to a rejuvenation and a brighter year ahead at the start of 2022. Unfortunately, the significant weather and flood events of this year have undoubtedly had considerable impacts across Brisbane and South-East Queensland.

That being said, these events have not diminished the spirit or determination of our key artistic institutions and I particularly wish to acknowledge the significant hard work and determination of all within the Queensland Cultural Centre precinct to ensure that there was as little disruption as possible and the displays, exhibitions and performances could continue as planned. As just one example, many Queensland families and parents have shared with me, as the Liberal National Party shadow minister for the arts, their disappointment at the ongoing closure of the Queensland Museum's outdoor dinosaur garden due to the impacts of this year's floods. In the budget estimates hearing of 4 August it was confirmed by the chief executive officer of the Queensland Museum Network, Dr Jim Thompson, that

this closure was as a result of severe damage to the soft fall in the dinosaur garden area. It was further confirmed that, with a replacement bill of approximately \$180,000, the Queensland Museum Network is seeking to expand its scope of work beyond the soft fall replacement with an estimated expenditure of approximately \$300,000 to \$400,000. With an estimated completion date of 16 September, I know that many Queenslanders will be eager to see the reopening of this enjoyable and educational exhibit.

This budget estimates hearing of the Community Support and Services Committee also underscored the state Labor government's track record of failing to deliver projects on time and on budget. Nowhere is this perhaps more evident than with the Labor government's delivery of the new performing arts venue at the Queensland Performing Arts Centre. This will be an important new theatre for that precinct. Since Labor first announced this \$150 million project it has become a \$175 million project. It has now become almost an annual tradition for the budget estimates hearing to reveal that the projected completion and opening date for the new performing arts venue has been set back further.


In 2018 the Palaszczuk state Labor government told Queenslanders that the new performing arts venue would be fully operational from 2022. Last year, in a press conference just prior to the 2021 estimates hearings, both the Minister for the Arts and the Premier announced the completion date would be 2023, with the Minister for the Arts even stating—

There was always a commitment that would see the new theatre open to the public in 2023 ... I'm looking forward to 2023 when we have our official opening.

In these estimates hearings it was confirmed by the Director-General of the Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy that the practical completion date of 4 January 2023 has now blown out to a practical completion date of mid-2024.

The Minister for the Arts must comprehensively explain to this parliament how the project completion for the new performing arts venue has blown out by a further 18 months and how the Palaszczuk state Labor government intends to keep the project within the allocated budget, as it is previously promised. The Queensland Performing Arts Centre is a cultural icon, and Queenslanders want to know with certainty when the doors will open so that they can finally enjoy the new theatre. Our vibrant arts and cultural community, and all Queenslanders, deserve openness and transparency from the state government on this important project.

Finally, I wish to briefly reflect on the opening statement made by the Minister for Communities and Housing and Minister for Digital Economy wherein she promoted the Queensland government's \$115.8 million boost to neighbourhood and community centre funding over four years. That is \$115 million yet still nothing has been progressed by the state Labor government, in collaboration with the Brisbane City Council and the federal Commonwealth government, to deliver a much needed community centre for residents of the electorate of Moggill. That is very important local infrastructure that needs to be delivered for my residents. I encourage the state government to consider working in conjunction with the Brisbane City Council and the federal government, given that there is an allocated grant by the federal government. That would certainly provide additional assistance to local residents and provide a much needed community centre that could house community organisations and provide additional services.

 **Ms LUI** (Cook—ALP) (3.11 pm): I rise to speak in support of the 2022-23 budget estimates. On 24 June, the Appropriation Bill 2022 and the estimates for the committee's areas of responsibility were referred to the Community Support and Services Committee for investigation and report. I would like to acknowledge the Hon. Leeanne Enoch, the Minister for Communities and Housing, Minister for Digital Economy and Minister for the Arts; the Hon. Craig Crawford, the Minister for Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships; and the Hon. Leanne Linard, the Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs. I acknowledge their commitment to improving the lives of Queenslanders every day under their respective portfolios. I also acknowledge the great work of the Community Support and Services Committee; our committee chair, Corrine McMillan; the committee deputy chair, Mr Stephen Bennett; and the member for Oodgeroo, the member for Maiwar and the member for Nicklin. I acknowledge the committee secretariat, Hansard and all public servants.


On August 2022, the committee conducted a public hearing and took evidence about the proposed expenditure from the relevant ministers and other witnesses. The committee followed a careful process to examine the government's expenditure and, as such, encouraged transparency in all government operations. The estimates proceedings gave all members of the committee an opportunity to ask questions of the ministers and to hear their responses. All in all, the process ran very well and I commend the committee for their commitment to the estimates process.

It is fantastic to see investments pouring in to the areas of communities, housing and the digital economy to provide Queenslanders with more options. In 2022-23, the total investment in the capital program for the Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy will be \$566.2 million. This includes \$431.3 million to increase the supply of social housing, upgrade the existing social housing property portfolio and further invest in infrastructure projects across community, arts and cultural facilities. The 2022-23 capital grants budgeted expenditure of \$134.9 million will principally increase the supply of social housing and enable upgrades to existing housing properties, in partnership with community housing providers and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander councils. I know that councils in my electorate will welcome that.

We are investing more into services that are doing incredible work in communities to influence social outcomes for Queenslanders. Organisations such as community and neighbourhood centres do incredible work. I acknowledge the important work that they do. The government has invested \$51.8 million to increase neighbourhood and community centre based operational funding to ensure the ongoing viability of, and maximum benefit from, social services infrastructure. I am pleased that in my electorate neighbourhood centres in Port Douglas and Mossman will benefit from that injection of funds.

We heard from Minister Crawford about his department's expenditure. I want to make special mention of the budget that we have allocated to the Office of the Commissioner, Meriba Omasker Kaziw Kazipa. We have invested \$3 million over two years to support First Nations families to make applications for legal recognition of Torres Strait Islander traditional child-rearing practices by continuing to operationalise the Meriba Omasker Kaziw Kazipa (Torres Strait Islander Traditional Child Rearing Practice) Act 2020. It has been three years since that important act was passed here in the parliament and it has been over a year since we accepted and processed our first application. I commend the work of the commissioner and all of his staff in giving legal recognition to kids who were disadvantaged before.

Young people are our future. It is important that we give every young person the opportunities that they deserve to participate fully in society. I acknowledge Minister Linard and her department for their hard work and ongoing support to some of the most vulnerable and marginalised young people in the state. Government investment into the Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs means that we can continue to support families to safely care for their children and young people; provide services to support the safety, belonging and wellbeing of children and young people; and keep communities safe by working together to prevent offending and reduce reoffending. I commend the Community Support and Services Committee report to the House.

 **Mr LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (3.16 pm): I want to thank the Community Support and Services Committee; the chair, the member for Mansfield; and the deputy chair, the member for Burnett. This morning it was mentioned that last Friday was the birthday of the member for McConnel. I note that she shares the day with the member for Mansfield and also the former premier, Campbell Newman. That really asks us to question astrological generalities. I wish them all a happy belated birthday.

Ms McMILLAN: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Along with the Minister for Education, I also share it with Rob Borbidge.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Martin): That is not a point of order.

Mr LANGBROEK: My point is that astrological stereotypes are obviously called into question given the number of people who share that birthday and their differences. Going back to the estimates hearings of 2022, due to time constraints—and I note that the minister responsible for communities is here—I could not follow the progress of certain issues, although I have done so subsequently. One issue was the allocation of 15 Care Army volunteers to 127 neighbourhood centres. I would like to know more about the policy position on extending funding to current non-funded centres such as at Loganholme, which I have already mentioned in this place.

There is a need for more centres on the Gold Coast. Only four of the 127 neighbourhood centres in Queensland are located on the Gold Coast, compared to nearly 20 centres in Brisbane. I looked at the recently released census figures for median household weekly income for Gold Coast state electorates. The Surfers Paradise electorate has a median household weekly income that is 89.85 per cent of the Queensland level. I think that is a lot lower than people would think. I table that for the benefit of the House.

Tabled paper: Document, undated, titled 'Gold Coast State Electorates (Source ABS 2021 Census)' [[1161](#)].

When it came to seniors and disability services, it was interesting to follow up on something that I had asked about the year before, that is, the position of associate director-general in the department. Last year, the director-general and the minister both stressed the importance of having an associate director-general, who I now see is with the Minister for Communities. I note that last year the director-general said—

I think it is appropriate that the department should have an associate director-general to oversee the very important and significant seniors and disabilities work that is ahead of us.

The minister said—

At times, it does require a director-general, an associate director-general, and also deputy directors-general and assistant directors-general to meet that load.

I table a copy of that from last year's hearing. I do not know what has happened in that department but, obviously, Premier and Cabinet has taken away that position.

Tabled paper: Extract, dated 13 August 2021, from the proof transcript of the Queensland Parliament estimates hearing for the Community Support and Services Committee, page 31 [\[1162\]](#).

I asked some significant questions about accommodation services and respite services. There were concerns about vaccinations and future services under NDIS. I also table the organisational chart for the department of seniors and disability services.

Tabled paper: Document, dated 30 June 2022, titled 'Department of Seniors, Disability Services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships (DSDSAT SIP) Organisational Chart' [\[1163\]](#).

I received a thankyou for asking those questions. I quote—

... many frontline staff have been very worried about Covid and the clients with disability we support. we have had large numbers infected. The figures they gave of 94% and above were about 1& 2nd Vaccinations, not about Winter boosters. We were told it was a Vaccine contract with a private org that got held up in red tape and then stopped

...

there were families who complained both to local Oxley office Management and to the Royal Commission about the slow rollout of Vaccination of their family member.

I had asked whether there was any feedback or input into the royal commission, and they answered with 'further information to come if it came to hand'. They were also concerned about the in-kind contract with NDIS taking over next year.

I also note that very few have completed the seniors survey. Only 750 have completed the online seniors survey out of more than 950,000 Seniors Card and Carers Card holders. I would like to know what actions the department is taking to increase survey responses.

I note that in terms of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships there had been a significant issue in the director-general's own family. I want to reassure him and the department that any questions I asked were made with no knowledge of what had happened in that situation.

I was interested to hear about the increased support for voluntary income management as reported by the Family Responsibilities Commissioner, given the removal of the Cashless Debit Card. That has now been legislated. I table an article by the mayor of Alice Springs warning of the consequences of scrapping the cashless welfare card. If it is an issue in the Northern Territory, it will be an issue in our state as well.

Tabled paper: Document, undated, regarding the Mayor of Alice Springs and the cashless welfare card [\[1164\]](#).

With respect to multiculturalism, I will be interested to see the effect of having another staff member who, I was advised by the minister, will be taking care of South Sea islander policy. With all that being said, estimates was conducted in good grace.



Mr SKELTON (Nicklin—ALP) (3.21 pm): I rise to speak on the 2022-23 budget estimates report of the Community Support and Services Committee in its role of overseeing the areas of portfolio responsibility for communities, housing, digital economy, the arts, seniors, disability services, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partnerships, children, youth justice and multicultural affairs.

Firstly, I would like to thank ministers Leeanne Enoch, Craig Crawford and Leanne Linard for their participation in the estimates committee process. I would also like to thank: committee chair Corrine McMillan, deputy chair Stephen Bennett and acting chair Linus Power for their leadership and direction; and fellow members Cynthia Lui, Michael Berkman and Mark Robinson for their contribution.

I recognise the presence of members opposite, including the member for Surfers Paradise, at the public hearing and thank them for their interest in the matters discussed. Of course, I recognise the work of the committee secretariat, Hansard, parliamentary and departmental staff during the estimates process.

The purpose of the estimates process is to examine the intended expenditure throughout the areas of portfolio responsibility to verify the effective use of the state's resources. I note that through this process the committee has recommended that the proposed expenditure as detailed in the Appropriation Bill 2022 be agreed to by this House without amendment. I take the opportunity to once again congratulate the Treasurer on delivering such a well-balanced budget, delivering good jobs, better services and a great lifestyle. It is a budget that gets things done for the people of Queensland.

We can see how busy the Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy has been. It is getting on with the job of delivering over \$2.3 billion worth of investments to increase the supply of social housing, invest in our community facilities and enrich the lives of Queenslanders by enhancing our access to arts and cultural experiences.

A measure of success is the QuickStarts Qld program, which had a target of 727 new social housing commencements before 30 June this year. The Palaszczuk Labor government had commenced 832 by that date. This investment includes \$125.6 million over four years to strengthen the role and functioning of neighbourhood and community centres—for which I know my local Nambour Community Centre is very grateful—and to support the delivery of the government's response to the committee's inquiry into social isolation and loneliness. For the benefit of all members, these centres operate all over our great state. All are similar in their goals and outcomes but have different challenges to address. Providing the added funding but leaving it to those centres to manage is important for the context I just described. In 2022-23 the government has committed \$3.9 million to 43 social isolation services across the state to help older Queenslanders stay connected and engaged with their community. An example is the work of the Australian Red Cross.

We have seen also the hard work of the Department of Seniors, Disability Services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships as it continues to work with our First Nations people and the broader community to progress the Path to Treaty. What a proud day for our state as we embark on a fully funded Path to Treaty. The date was not lost on me, as it was also the day in 1975 when a Labor leviathan, Gough Whitlam, met Vincent Lingiari at Wave Hill Station. From little things big things grow. I thank the House for hosting such a moving event yesterday. I know that many in my electorate of Nicklin were watching with pride. I look forward to the truth-telling and healing. I am also keenly aware that there will be forces arrayed that will attempt to stop us. Let us, all Queenslanders, get this done.

The 2022-23 budget also includes an additional \$385 million to provide households with the \$175 cost-of-living rebate for electricity. This will come into effect for bills after 30 August this year.

We can see the rebuild and ramping up of capacity in the Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs, which has seen a 23 per cent increase in funding on top of the last estimates. This allows the department to get on with the job of supporting families to safely care for their children and young people as well as caring for those in out-of-home care. Through this increase we are extending support for young people leaving care up to 21 years of age. This means that foster and kinship carers will continue to receive financial support. I thank the selfless Queenslanders who undertake foster care. It is an extraordinary and generous thing to welcome another into your family.

This report once again confirms that we are a government committed to getting things done for the people of Queensland—a government that cares about the community and looks forward to a bright future where each of us has access to good jobs, better services and a great lifestyle. I commend this report to the House.



Mr BENNETT (Burnett—LNP) (3.26 pm): I place on the record that the estimates process went very well for us on the day. While I have five minutes, I will talk about the neighbourhood centre program and acknowledge the increased funding. It is very welcomed. With the minister in the House, I thank the minister for acknowledging the issues at Agnes Water. It was nice to talk to the minister. I saw the minister's social media post the other day. I thank her for that. It is important that we put on record that 6,000 people at Agnes Water are desperate to see a neighbourhood centre. Again, the extra funding is welcome. Our inquiry over the last year or so highlighted how important those particular services are.

In terms of child safety and youth justice, I recollect that the department is struggling to keep the investigation and assessments of child safety under control. According to departmental figures, in March there were 1,660 investigations not yet finalised. Of those, 522 had been outstanding for more than 100 days. Of course, we do know that the department's practice manual talks about statistics and about how the notification and assessment process needs to deal with that.

The doctor-shopping issue was raised. It was not denied by the department. We have to acknowledge that if foster carers do not get the answer they want it is not unusual for them to go and find a different outcome. We heard that only six young people have been fitted with GPS trackers since the legislation was enacted in April last year. We still have not seen the Bob Atkinson review of these reforms. I urge that document be made available for the benefit of all.

An issue that I want to talk about more—it is an issue right across the state and the nation; people around Bundaberg and Burnett in particular are crying out for help—is the housing crisis that continues to hit the region hard. The waiting lists are exploding. Of course, we know that 600 people in the Bundaberg and Burnett electorates are on a very big waiting list. It is something that a lot of members are experiencing in their communities.

I continue to urge the government to genuinely consider the findings of the Auditor-General's report into social housing and to take real action on this housing crisis. We have not built enough homes in Queensland to keep pace. In estimates I did ask about the capital investment in housing. We heard that there was \$42 million for the whole of Wide Bay. I point out that that is for Winfield, Eidsvold, Kingaroy, Gympie, Rainbow Beach, Hervey Bay and Maryborough. The director-general gave me a figure of 50 homes or thereabouts.

The fact remains that doing the same things repeatedly will not give us the result we want. We need to work together to ensure the housing needs of Queenslanders are met. I continue to call for the release of more freehold land. Affordable and social housing must become a priority for us all. Over the last seven years we have started to see an acknowledgement that community housing providers are a solution. We need to be more aggressive in engaging with private sector housing providers to leverage housing stock and ensure the most vulnerable in our community have a roof over their heads and have security.

We heard during the estimates process about the selling off of homes by the government. While I am not openly critically of that, those homes should have been repurposed by developers. That land should have been used. The issue for the government is that they have plenty of land. That is where the value is. We should have repurposed the homes and put some more fit-for-purpose homes on those blocks. The 67 empty blocks of land should have gone to a community housing provider to provide housing solutions right across the state.

The member for Cook raised the issue of housing for her Indigenous and Islander communities. My takeaway from the estimates process is that councils should be empowered to get on with the job of providing solutions for their own communities. It has been mentioned that there is \$100 million on the table for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. This funding is needed to address housing needs in these regional communities. The capital housing program of the former federal government has been in place since 2019 to alleviate overcrowding in Indigenous communities. We know that the most disadvantaged people in our state often live in these remote communities. It is time to address these issues.

There was a question on notice around the Torres Cape Indigenous Council Alliance leaders calling for the issue of overcrowding to be addressed. I put on the record that we have heard that there does not look to be any capital funding from the department in Canberra. We had a meeting about that the other day. It is very disappointing to see that that is the case.

The Auditor-General's report on social housing exposed that there is no real modelling to identify the needs of Queenslanders into the future. We all need to work to ensure we know what we will need and what we are going to build. The most vulnerable in our community need to know that there will be a house for them on the horizon and their families will be safe and secure. We all have a role to play in doing that.



Hon. LM ENOCH (Algeria—ALP) (Minister for Communities and Housing, Minister for Digital Economy and Minister for the Arts) (3.31 pm): I start by thanking the members of the Community Support and Services Committee, the parliamentary staff and officers from the Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy who supported the estimates process this year. I acknowledge the ongoing leadership of the committee chair, the member for Mansfield, who is an outstanding committee chair. I welcome the committee's report and recommendation that the proposed expenditure be agreed to by the Legislative Assembly without amendment.

On this side of the House, we work every day to enrich the lives of all Queenslanders. That is why I am incredibly proud of what this budget delivers for Queensland communities. This budget delivers a record investment of \$115.8 million to build capacity and expand our network of 127 state

government funded neighbourhood and community centres. This includes an investment of \$51.8 million in operational funding for neighbourhood and community centres—the largest boost in operational funding ever. This is part of a wider \$125.6 million investment over four years in the 2022-23 state budget to strengthen the community and social services sector.

This year's state budget also makes a landmark \$115.5 million investment over four years into Queensland's arts sector and cultural infrastructure. This includes \$50 million in new investment over four years to support the delivery of Grow 2022-26, the second action plan of the whole-of-government Creative Together 10-year road map.

When it comes to housing, we are, as we all know, faced with the compounding challenges of the ongoing impacts of COVID-19, mass migration into our state, shortages of skilled trades and building supply chain constraints. These challenges have also been impacted by consecutive flooding events. The convergence of these challenges has meant more and more people are turning to government for support.

Despite this, the Palaszczuk government is getting on with the job of delivering housing outcomes for vulnerable Queenslanders. Since coming to office in 2015, we have commenced 4,891 new social and affordable homes and completed 3,939 homes across Queensland. We continue to roll out our four-year \$1.8 billion investment in social and affordable housing under the Housing and Homelessness Action Plan 2021-25. The action plan is supported by the \$1 billion Housing Investment Fund, managed by Treasury, to drive new supply to support current and future social and affordable housing needs. We are delivering our \$40 million Help to Home initiative to support 1,000 additional housing solutions for vulnerable Queenslanders. Our budget also delivers for young people—investing \$29.8 million over four years to support initiatives to assist young people experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness.

We are also delivering housing outcomes for Queenslanders right across the housing system. In 2021-22 we delivered almost 200,000 forms of housing assistance to households to support them to gain and sustain a home in the private rental market. We also recently announced an investment of \$16 million through the immediate housing response package to support families experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness in these challenging times.

When speaking to the committee about the social housing register, the director-general made clear that the number of households on the register as at 30 June 2022 was 27,437—a reduction of applications from last year. We also heard some whacky 'Mander maths' from the member for Everton on this issue—blustering his way through, misrepresenting the fact that there has been a net decrease of households on the register as compared to last year.


Let me share some of the 'Mander math' that he oversaw when he was housing minister. We had the wholesale giveaway of 90 per cent of Queensland's social housing. The LNP's failed housing policies saw a 90 per cent cut to the social housing construction program, leading to an overall reduction in the number of social homes in Queensland. In fact, during the three long years they were in government they left that portfolio with 428 fewer social homes in Queensland. Queenslanders know what they got from the whacky 'Mander math'—428 fewer social housing dwellings. Further, in 2013-14—

Mr LANGBROEK: I rise to a point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker. Can I ask you to refer the member to standing order 244?

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Lui): Member, can I ask you to use correct titles.

Ms ENOCH: We saw whacky math from the member for Everton. We saw 428 fewer social housing dwellings. Further, in 2013-14 there were zero commencements in Logan, on the Gold Coast, on the Sunshine Coast, in Mackay/Whitsunday, in Ipswich, in the Redlands and in remote Indigenous communities. That is the legacy of the LNP on social and affordable housing.

At the heart of everything we do is providing Queenslanders with good, secure jobs and delivering better services so that the great Queensland lifestyle can be enjoyed by all Queenslanders. That is what this budget delivers. Every day we work hard to ensure that we are meeting the needs of Queenslanders. I commend the report to the House.

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (3.37 pm): I rise to make my contribution on this year's budget estimates report of the Community Support and Services Committee. Before anything else, I express my thanks to the committee staff in particular for all the time and effort they put into arranging these hearings, all of the public servants throughout the seven days of estimates who make themselves available for questioning, and all of those people behind the scenes who spend countless hours

preparing for every conceivable question that ministers might be asked. I want to acknowledge them especially because so much of that work goes to waste. Yet again this year we have gone through an estimates process where we are denied the opportunity to apply genuine scrutiny to the government.

Mr Sullivan interjected.

Mr BERKMAN: There is some muttering going on from the member for Stafford. If he wants to interject he is more than welcome to.

This year we have a couple of fresh voices who have joined the chorus of criticism. We are well aware of the comments that came from Professor Peter Coaldrake in his review. It is noteworthy that he identified that both sides of the House have contributed to a pretty pathetic estimates process over the years and a decline.

It was interesting to hear from the Clerk this year about how the quality of the estimates process is, in his view, worse in some respects than it was before the 2011 review of the committee system. Year on year we are certainly not seeing any improvement in the process. To hear from someone with as much experience in this place as the Clerk of the Parliament that it is not just failing to live up to expectations but is in fact getting worse than it was before we last reviewed the committee system is telling. It is a pretty shocking indictment not only on this government's record but its complete disinterest in allowing any scrutiny of what is going on behind the scenes.

The problems are the same as they have been year on year. There is just not enough time. The member for South Brisbane and I endeavoured to share whatever slim time was available to us and the rest of the crossbench. We were told at one of the committee hearings at about lunchtime that we would be allowed two questions for the remainder of the day. I do not know how anyone can look at a set-up like that and pretend that that is genuine scrutiny—a once-a-year process.

Mr Sullivan: Take it up with the opposition.

Mr BERKMAN: I take the interjection from the member for Stafford. If budget estimates is like a masterclass or the embodiment of everything that is wrong with this parliament and the government's approach to it then perhaps the member for Stafford is himself actually the embodiment, the personification, of everything that is busted about the Labor Party. Let's face it: this bloke would not be here were it not for his daddy's time here. The kind of sycophancy and subservience that he puts forward, particularly in the estimates hearings, is just extraordinary.

Government members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Lui): Members to my right, order!

Mr BERKMAN: Honestly, how he can sit there with a straight face and put his question to the minister, 'Minister, I have a very important question on behalf of my electorate,' and then not vomit under the table when the minister pays him credit back when responding, 'Well I know the member for Stafford is, of course, very concerned about his electorate.'

Ms McMILLAN: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I remind the member that allocation of crossbench time is the responsibility of non-government members, not government members. I believe he is misleading the House.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is not a point of order, member.

Mr BERKMAN: It is simple: give us more time.

Ms Boyd: You have the lion's share.

Mr BERKMAN: Again, the government continue to say that the opposition and crossbench get more time than they do. It is their government we are meant to be scrutinising. Why do they need any time? They can hold a press conference. They can stand out the front with the minister and sing each other's praises and pat each other on the back. It does not have to be done at estimates.

Government members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members to my right, order!

Mr BERKMAN: The opposition at least has enough time to pursue a line of questioning or two; the crossbench gets cut off. That was absolutely my experience in this committee hearing when I asked questions about the opaque nature of the social housing eligibility criteria. They keep coming back again and again and we keep hearing what I can only consider to be misleading responses from the department pretending that they have not changed. These interruptions, the baseless points of order—it is an absolute farce of a process. If the government are not going to take steps to improve it, they need to at least just own up to the fact that they have no interest in scrutiny or accountability.

(Time expired)



Hon. CD CRAWFORD (Barron River—ALP) (Minister for Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (3.42 pm): I would like to thank the Community Support and Services Committee for their recommendation that the expenditure for my department's budget as proposed in Appropriation Bill 2022 be agreed without amendment.

I believe our hearing was respectful. It was without issue. I acknowledge all of those members who sat opposite who asked questions in a very professional manner—the members for Surfers Paradise, Maiwar, South Brisbane and others. I take a comment from the member for Maiwar. He is correct in one thing he said before: the amount of work that goes into estimates preparations from our departments is incredible—the number of hours that go into it—and sometimes for questions that do not get asked. He is right; that is estimates. That is preparation. Sometimes it is like studying for a grade 10 maths exam.

Madam Deputy Speaker Lui, how good was yesterday! How good was that treaty launch! It was such an historic event, such a momentous occasion. At the end of the event yesterday I received a text message from Jim from the Wuthathi ranger base in Cape York who was watching the whole process online. I have no idea how he got my phone number. Obviously the minister's phone number is on the wall of the ranger base in Cape York, so that could be challenging, but it was great to know that it was not just those of us sitting here at parliament who watched it. There were a number of people from very remote areas in your electorate, Madam Deputy Speaker Lui, who were dialled in and watching and were moved by it.

I had my first meeting this morning via teleconference with the new Independent Interim Body—the 10 members that we announced yesterday. They have already started work. They had their first formal meeting this morning. I put it very clearly to them. I said, 'Bring me a co-designed bill for a treaty institute and a truth-telling inquiry and bring that to me before the end of this calendar year, before the end of this sitting year, so that we can introduce such a bill to this House.' They have accepted the challenge. I wish them all the best, as well as my department representatives and other department representatives, as they bring that forward. It will be a momentous occasion.

I acknowledge that Victoria passed their treaty legislation last night. Two states in only a matter of hours have made significant advances. This afternoon there is an Indigenous Affairs Taskforce meeting via Teams with the Hon. Linda Burney. All states will be dialled into that. We will be having a conversation about the Uluru Statement, about voice, about treaty, about truth, as we talk about where all states are at, where we are all heading. It is quite an inspirational time.

I have to make one concession. Yesterday when I signed the statement of commitment I flogged the pen—I did. I stole the pen from DPC. They are welcome to send me a bill but they are not getting the pen back. I figured that is a keeper. That is going in the pool room. That is going in the trophy cabinet because that statement of intent is something that I think will sit in historic records in Queensland for some time.

I get back to the estimates hearing with a minute to go. Our department looks after some of the most inspirational Queenslanders. I acknowledge the work that they do. Whether it is across the NDIS, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Closing the Gap, our seniors and concessions rebates and discounts, it is a significant amount of work. We are very mindful that there are a lot of pressures on families right now around cost of living and other things.

I am surrounded by inspirational people in my office and my department. I am surrounded by amazing people in the Labor caucus. With that, again I want to thank the committee, the chair, all of the members, all of my department, my commissioners, my DG and everyone who attended our estimates. I do look forward to estimates next year.




Dr ROBINSON (Oodgeroo—LNP) (3.47 pm): With regard to the Community Support and Services Committee estimates I will make a very brief contribution so others can have an opportunity. There is a housing crisis in the Redlands with many Redlanders, including Quandamooka families, sleeping either on the streets or in the bush. With the \$220-plus million this government wasted on the Wellcamp white elephant we could have solved this housing crisis, including the Aboriginal housing crisis in the Redlands, and delivered what was promised by Jackie Trad and funded Homeless United and others to get all those sleeping rough off the streets.

I want to make two points. In terms of public housing for the Quandamooka, the Palaszczuk government has failed to deliver for the Quandamooka people of North Stradbroke Island-Minjerribah. Jackie Trad's promised jobs, consultation, a coming together and new social housing never happened. Quandamooka people are still forced to camp in the bush and the promised housing at One Mile has never materialised. Quandamooka leaders have learned that you cannot trust this government to deliver in practical ways to close the gap for Aboriginal people on North Stradbroke Island-Minjerribah.

The second point is in terms of homelessness in the wider Redlands. Homeless United is an excellent local service that helps the homeless in so many ways, including very successfully and effectively placing them in homes permanently. I have mentioned their work and plight a few times in this House.

I wish to make a brief statement for the record. Recently in the parliament I criticised the Minister for Housing for stopping the initial funding to Homeless United. I believed it should continue. The minister, on learning of my criticism, subsequently took personal offence, so I take the opportunity today to withdraw the comments that she found offensive. Having unreservedly withdrawn, let me be clear that I do not resile from fighting for the funding to be restored to Homeless United. If funding is not provided homeless Redlanders will keep doing it tough on the streets, so I again call on the government to immediately reverse its hard-hearted decision to cut these funds to Homeless United.

 **Hon. LM LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (3.50 pm): I would like to start by thanking the members of the Community Support and Services Committee for their report and their work supporting the estimates process. I would like to particularly acknowledge the committee chair, the member for Mansfield, for the professional way she always chairs these hearings.

Estimates are an opportunity to acknowledge and speak about the work undertaken by the Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs. My department works with some of Queensland's most vulnerable children, young people and families, and they deserve to be acknowledged for the work they do each and every day to support children, keep our community and young people safe, and promote a united, inclusive and harmonious Queensland. While asked very few questions by members of the opposition or crossbench about my portfolio, I appreciated the opportunity provided by government members to do so.

As we emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic many of the families my department works with, who were already facing a complex range of issues, are struggling more intensively with domestic and family violence, substance abuse, mental health and intergenerational trauma. While the number of families and children requiring child protection intervention is now showing signs of stabilising, sadly there was an increase in children coming into the care of the department during the pandemic. There are now over 11,000 children and young people in out-of-home care in Queensland. We are responding to that demand with an additional investment of \$2.2 billion over five years and \$500 million per annum ongoing for out-of-home-care services.

My \$2.3 billion budget this financial year represents an increase in funding across all three of my portfolio responsibilities and includes an historic commitment to extend support to young people leaving care to the age of 21. We are making a \$400,000 commitment to co-design, establish and review the extension of the availability of the foster care allowance by two years for carers of young people who remain living with them up to the age of 21. We will also be funding culturally appropriate non-government caseworker support and financial support for young people leaving non-family-based care from 18 up to 21. This reform was called for by young people and our government listened. Now it will be designed by young people for young people and will commence from 1 July 2023. This will be life-changing for roughly 700 young people every year. There were no questions asked about this reform by those opposite.


This budget also includes increased funding of \$75.3 million towards implementing our youth justice strategy reforms, including an expansion of the number of locations from eight to 14 for the statewide multi-agency collaborative panels. We are also continuing our investment in Indigenous youth and family workers and family-led decision-making, the Mount Isa Transitional Hub and our co-responder teams across the state who work with at-risk youth to keep our communities safe. There were no questions by those opposite about these areas of investment.

Earlier this year I announced a one-off \$1.4 million Community Partnership Innovation Grant scheme in response to calls from the community to support innovative place-based initiatives to prevent and reduce youth crime. We had such a strong reaction from the community that in this budget I was pleased to announce an additional \$3 million has been allocated to the grant scheme to partner with local communities on crime prevention projects targeting repeat offenders. There were no questions asked by those opposite about this grant program either. There were questions from the government members, and I thank them for their interest.

We are also investing \$16 million in this budget to continue delivering on the whole-of-government Queensland Multicultural Action Plan to ensure equitable access to job opportunities and services for all Queenslanders, migrants and refugees from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. There were no questions about this new plan from those opposite—

only questions about why I had not had trade discussions with multicultural leaders. It may surprise some to learn that I am not the trade minister. We have also allocated a million dollars over four years and \$170,000 ongoing to support and engage with the Australian South Sea islander community, with a dedicated Australian South Sea islander to be employed in my department. I am pleased to say that I got one question from those opposite about this investment.

In closing, I would like to acknowledge the work of my department under the leadership of my director-general, Deidre Mulkerin, and all of my deputy directors-general all across the department who work every day to serve the interests of Queensland's most vulnerable. I also acknowledge my ministerial staff. I will continue to work in the interests of children, young people and families.

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (3.55 pm): I want to tackle some of the evidence given by the Minister for Housing at this year's estimates. The minister was asked by the member for Burnett when she had in fact read the State Archivist's report on the mangocube affair that was sent to her office on 22 September 2017. The minister did not like that question. She said it was not in her portfolio and the chair accepted that when it clearly was in her portfolio. I will table the transcript of that particular exchange.

Tabled paper: Bundle of emails regarding the State Archivist [1165].

Later on the member for Moggill asked the same question and again it was rejected by the chair as not being in her portfolio, but eventually the minister did answer. The minister basically said that she had not read the draft report and that the report had been recalled by the State Archivist. I would like to tackle that statement.

The State Archivist sent an email on 22 September at 4.49 attaching his report on the mangocube affair directly to the minister. Later that afternoon the minister's office replied and said they had received that report. On Monday morning the State Archivist sent an email to a lady in the minister's office which basically said, 'Here's my report. It's different to what the CCC got, but similar.' The email states—

It also highlights my requirement to make independent judgement around prosecution under the public records act

On Thursday I will likely make that decision

Will DSITI make a media statement around the conclusion of this independent investigation and my decision around prosecution


Here the State Archivist is saying that he is going to make a decision on prosecution and will DSITI put out a statement on that particular report, and the minister has told us that she did not even bother to read it. The State Archivist was sent back a response by someone in the minister's office, saying that this is an issue he should take up with the director-general at their meeting the next day. That meeting took place the next day and then the State Archivist's report was in fact recalled.

You have to wonder: the minister receives a very, very important topical report into mangocube. It arrives in her office. She does not bother to read it. A director-general meets with the State Archivist the following Tuesday and that report is recalled. What did the director-general have to say to the State Archivist to push for that report to be recalled? That is the question the minister needs to answer. If the minister received that very important report and did not bother to read it that is an entirely different question. Why did the minister not bother to read it?

The director-general was asked at his particular estimates—he has moved offices to a different ministerial office, although he is a director-general still—if he ever protects his minister by not giving full information. He said no. I suspect that he has misled the estimates committee as well and I will be writing to the Speaker about that. I table information relating to that.

Tabled paper: Extracts from the transcripts of the estimates hearings of the Queensland Parliament for the Community Support and Services Committee, held on 4 August 2022, and the Health and Environment Committee, held on 29 July 2022 [1166].

This minister has a lot of questions to answer. She has dodged and weaved around these as best she can with the protection of the chair of this committee, but she needs to answer a couple of things. What did she do? Did she read that report or not? She says she did not. If she did not read the report, why did her director-general meet with the State Archivist within a couple of days and then that report was mysteriously returned? The minister has a lot of questions to answer.

 **Dr MacMAHON** (South Brisbane—Grn) (4.00 pm): I rise to speak to the Community Support and Services Committee report on budget estimates for this year. The committees, guided by excellent secretariat staff, do an incredibly important job but, from all the hearings that the member for Maiwar and I attended, this was one of the most dispiriting. With portfolios like housing, disability services,

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partnerships, children, youth justice and multicultural affairs, this hearing on the final day of estimates covered some vital ground but I have to say this yearly window into the workings of the government did not reveal a heartening picture.

The government estimates process is a debacle. We see combative chairing and effort by committee members to minimise scrutiny of the government as much as possible. We see ministers who ensure that no question is answered properly. As for the Dorothy Dixers, the reality is that a huge amount of time in hearings is taken up by government backbenchers asking scripted, planted questions of the government. It is cringe-worthy and embarrassing.


Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Lui): The time allocated for the debate has expired.

Report adopted.

Clauses 1 to 4, as read, agreed to.

Schedules 1 and 2, as read, agreed to.

Third Reading (Cognate Debate)

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (4.02 pm): I move—


That the bills be now read a third time.

Question put—That the bills be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

Bills read a third time.

Long Title (Cognate Debate)

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (4.02 pm): I move—

That the long titles of the bills be agreed to.


Question put—That the long titles of the bills be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

TRADING (ALLOWABLE HOURS) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Resumed from 25 May (see p. 1327).

Second Reading

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (4.02 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

It is with great pleasure that I rise to speak on the resumption of the debate on the Trading (Allowable Hours) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. The bill before the House today amends the Trading (Allowable Hours) Act 1990 to fine-tune the operation of Queensland's current trading hours arrangements and provide ongoing confidence and certainty for our vital retail sector, businesses, workers and consumers alike. In doing so, the bill implements the recommendations of the report handed down in January this year by the Education, Employment and Training Committee.

The committee was asked to conduct the legislated five-year review of trading hours reforms that the Palaszczuk government introduced back in 2017. The committee found in its review that the current trading hours arrangements introduced in 2017 have operated effectively, providing consistency and stability which has benefitted individual businesses, consumers, workers and the retail sector as a whole over the past five years, particularly through the COVID-19 pandemic.

The committee did not recommend any wholesale changes or significant deregulation of current trading hours and instead recommended a range of amendments aimed at further streamlining and simplifying current trading hours arrangements. In total, the committee made nine recommendations, all of which the government accepted, and this bill introduced in May gives effect to these recommendations.

The same committee was expertly chaired again by the member for Redlands for this bill. I thank the member for the way in which this inquiry was held. There were two ways we could have done this. We could have gone with an independent inquiry by a nominated person, like we did last time, or we could have used the parliamentary committee, and I am glad we went with the committee because they did an excellent job. I thank the member for Redlands and all of the committee members. They have since conducted the inquiry into the bill itself and their report, which was tabled on 22 July, made one single recommendation—that the bill be passed.

I would like to thank the chair and all members of the committee from all sides. They did an excellent job, and I can see the member for Southern Downs, who is the deputy chair. I thank them for their report into the bill and also for their work on the five-year review. It was conducted comprehensively. Everyone was given an opportunity to have their say. It was really good to see how effective this bill has been over the last five years. It has stood through the very difficult time of COVID-19 since 2020. It was actually remarkable at the time. When we put in the moratorium back then, we had no idea we were going to be facing a world health pandemic, and we are not out of the woods yet. I thank all of the stakeholders who made submissions to the committee about the bill and those who appeared as witnesses before the committee. Again, as we did in 2017, I believe we have got the balance right and the committee did great work in coming to that right balance.

It is worth recalling again where we were before our 2017 reforms. We had a trading hours regime with an array of complexities and anomalies that were confusing for businesses and consumers alike. For example, we had a hotchpotch of almost 100 different trading hours orders across the state. For Sundays and public holidays alone there were 30 different trading zones across Queensland. Easter Sunday was closed for trading in South-East Queensland but open for trading in major regional centres. Shops closed at 5 pm on Saturday but 6 pm on Sunday. In South-East Queensland, most major hardware shops could not open until 9 am on a Sunday—the day that most people want to go early to get their goods from a hardware shop.

Successive Queensland governments failed to act and tackle these issues. By contrast, the Palaszczuk Labor government grasped the nettle, modernising and streamlining Queensland's previously complex trading hours laws which had been acting as a handbrake on jobs and business expansion for too long. The 99 different trading hours orders across the state were reduced down to just 12. To provide a period of stability and end the merry-go-round of trading hours applications in the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission, the 2017 amendments included a moratorium on changes to trading hours for a period of five years with a review at the end of those five years, which leads us to the bill today.

At the centre of this bill are four new simplified and streamlined core trading hours areas for larger non-exempt shops, largely modelled on existing trading hours. The new type 1 trading areas category has the most expansive trading hours: 6 am to 10 pm, Monday to Friday; 7 am to 10 pm on Saturdays; and 7 am to 9 pm on Sundays and public holidays, except for closed days such as Christmas Day and Easter Friday. Type 1 covers non-exempt shops in locations which already enjoy those longer trading hours such as the Cairns CBD, New Farm in Brisbane, the Gold Coast tourist area and the Pacific Fair Shopping Centre.

The type 2 category continues the existing trading hours arrangements for the remainder of South-East Queensland, which are 7 am to 9 pm, Monday to Saturday and 9 am to 6 pm, Sunday and public holidays.

The type 3 trading areas category covers mainly the larger cities and centres in regional Queensland and continues their current trading hours arrangements including: 8 am to 9 pm, Monday to Friday; 8 am to 6 pm, Saturday; and Sunday and public holidays trading from 9 am to 6 pm. An exception to this will be the Townsville tourist area, which will retain its own unique 7 am start, Monday to Friday.

The type 4 trading areas category combines the former seaside resort and any other area categories into a single category. In doing so, the type 4 trading area adopts the more favourable permitted hours of the former seaside resort category, which will mean that 21 smaller regional towns will have public holiday trading for the first time, but will continue to have no Sunday trading where they currently do not trade on a Sunday.

Importantly, these trading hours I have just outlined do not fundamentally alter trading hour arrangements in any part of Queensland. The categories of exempt shops and independent retail shops are not changing. No small business owner or manager will find themselves suddenly struggling in a

different trading hours environment. That is a great outcome. Everything largely remains the same. What the bill does is provide stability and confidence by continuing in a trading hours framework that has worked for retailers, employees and customers over the last five years, and particularly through, as I mentioned before, the COVID-19 pandemic. Key to providing this continued stability is that the four core trading hours areas will remain fixed in the legislation.

In its five-year review the committee found that the moratorium and reforms to restrict the QIRC's power to vary prescribed core trading hours have been effective in achieving stability and certainty for industry stakeholders, particularly our small business retail sector. We will not be returning to the previous system pre 2017 where applications could be made to the QIRC to set new trading hours or vary the prescribed hours in the Act.

As I mentioned before, this created the unworkable muddle of almost 100 trading hours orders across the state spread over 40-plus pages of QIRC orders. Instead, the bill will provide a more limited and targeted role for the QIRC to make orders to move a location from one trading area type to another—for example, from type 3 to type 1—or to change the prescribed boundary of a particular locality if needed to deal flexibly with changing consumer, community and retail needs.

The bill makes clear that the QIRC can only make an order that increases the core trading hours of a location. It cannot make an order that moves a location into a trading hours area that has shorter permitted trading hours. It is a no-disadvantage provision.

I make clear again that, under the bill, the QIRC will no longer be able to make orders that change the core permitted trading hours for a trading area category. To ensure transparency and clarity, the bill clearly sets out the factors the QIRC must consider when making trading area orders. These factors include the needs of industry in the area, including the tourism industry, the likely impact on employees and employment, the interests of business and consumers, and the views of the relevant local government if they are making the application or seek to be heard.

Over time, as locations move into new trading hours areas, as a result of QIRC trading area orders, the Office of Industrial Relations will publish and maintain a consolidated reference of all trading hour arrangements.

I note that the committee made a number of useful suggestions in their report for actions the department could take to assist the retail sector better understand trading hours arrangements—for example, publishing a map showing the boundaries of trading areas and the trading hours of each area—and the department is giving careful consideration to all of those suggestions. I will be urging them to produce this on a website where it can be easily available.

Under the bill, the QIRC will also continue its important function of making special event declarations which exempt shops in a stated area from trading hours restrictions for a specified period. The bill will provide clear guidelines about the factors that the QIRC must consider when declaring a special event which will assist stakeholders who might be affected and provide greater transparency in decision-making. These factors reflect those recommended by the committee and include a new consideration for the QIRC to determine whether there is in fact a need for a non-exempt shop, or class of non-exempt shops, to trade for extended hours during the event, the size of the event, whether it is held at multiple places, predicted attendance numbers, any expected media coverage, and the event's contribution to Queensland's national or international reputation.

As a prime example of an event that might attract a special event declaration, the bill provides the example of the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games, just as there was a special event declared during the 2018 Commonwealth Games on the Gold Coast. They were the kind of events that these exemptions looked at. Unfortunately, they have been whittled away and we are just trying to go back to the original intent. Local governments and industrial organisations will also be able to make submissions to the QIRC about potential impacts on the local economy and employment if a special event declaration is made.

We recognise that changes to trading hours can have impacts on retail workers and their families. That is why voluntary work protections are an essential component of the existing trading hours framework in Queensland, ensuring that workers are not disadvantaged and can freely elect whether or not to work extended trading hours. I am, therefore, glad to inform the House that the bill will strengthen existing voluntary work protections for employees by closing a loophole that exempted employees covered by an industrial instrument from the voluntary work protections in the act.

Currently under the act an employer cannot coerce, threaten, intimidate or harass employees to work extended hours beyond the shop's core trading hours, and it is an offence to do so; however, an exemption applies if an industrial instrument provides arrangements for working extended hours. This exemption has allowed unscrupulous employers to coerce, harass, threaten or intimidate employees, many of them part-time casual female workers, in an attempt to force them to work extended hours.

In their evidence to the committee, the SDA referred to the many complaints they have received from their members over the past two years where they were threatened with being rostered to work less in future if they did not elect to work during the period of extended trading hours. This is exactly the type of actions we were trying to avoid in the bill.

The SDA explained that for workers who are very vulnerable the flow-on effect is that if you are offered extended hours during extended trading later on down the track you take them because you saw what happened to the person last week who did not where they are not getting shifts. Unfortunately, in a very casualised industry where you are employed on an as-and-when-required basis you are a casual and you are given shifts according to the needs. If you say you cannot work certain hours, particularly female workers, for whatever reason—family responsibility, having to pick up a child from school, whatever the circumstances are—then the next time a very clear message is sent where, instead of your usual three shifts, you may only get half or one. That is the manner in which this is often used. The SDA had many examples of where that has actually occurred.

It is vital that we support our retail workers and working families and we strengthen protections so these types of things do not occur. When someone has a genuine reason why they cannot work there is nothing worse than seeing retaliation or someone making an example of them to others because they fear saying no to any extended offers. The bill, therefore, removes the exemption, ensuring these voluntary work protections apply consistently across the entire retail sector and that employers must obtain an employee's written consent to work extended hours regardless of any industrial instrument. Most of the time these are worked out. Employers work with their workers. There is no doubt that this does happen; however, there are times when these kinds of situations occur. We have seen many examples of that occurring, so we are going to make it pretty clear in the act that it applies.

The bill also provides that voluntary work protections and related offence provisions apply to future scenarios where extended working hours could be required such as extended hours that might result from amendments to the act or if the QIRC makes a trading area order or special event declaration. Honourable members can imagine if a special event declaration is made, such as for the Olympic Games, those retailers will be trading 24/7. There are not too many workers who can work those extended trading hours and not have significant impacts on their family or personal responsibilities.

To allow a reasonable time for industry and the QIRC to adapt to these changes, the bill extends the existing moratorium on applying for or making trading hours orders for a further 12 months, until 31 August 2023. I want to see the department put in place the new trading areas and take up the recommendations of the committee. I want to have the QIRC well equipped; applications are coming. We are still not out of the pandemic phase. There are still challenges in terms of workforce issues. Implementing this straightaway could have significant ramifications, so we are going to extend the moratorium by 12 months. That will protect those small businesses, get them ready for what is coming, get the QIRC ready and get the department ready. Hopefully next year towards the end of August we will be in a position to go back to the normal requirements of the act. Applications to the QIRC for a trading area order cannot be made until that time.

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

The bill also makes some minor amendments to the Education (Queensland College of Teachers) Act 2005—the QCT act—and the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006—the EGP Act—to make permanent arrangements that were temporarily in place during the COVID-19 health pandemic that have proved to have worked very well. The amendments allow meetings conducted as part of investigations by the Queensland College of Teachers under the QCT act and the Parents and Citizens'


Association meetings required under the Education (General Provisions) Regulation 2017 to be conducted through communication technology in addition to being held in person. We had to make special arrangements for them to conduct their meetings online and I think they have proved to be very successful. Busy parents are now dialling in virtually into meetings. I have been to P&Cs where there has been a hybrid model where some people have been in person and others have been online. The technology in the schools enables them to have a very constructive meeting. We are now allowing that in the act to be a permanent method of holding their meetings. Then if issues arise again and they need to go back to being fully virtual, they can do that and still be in line with the act requirements.

The amendments also allow for the production of documents as part of a QCT investigation to be provided electronically or by post in addition to providing these through in-person attendance. It is allowing modern-day technology to be used in the various areas. The act probably did not consider that at the time. We made those temporary arrangements and we are now making them permanent. The arrangements are being made permanent after consultation with stakeholders including the Queensland College of Teachers and P&Cs Queensland, and they are very happy with the amendments that are being put in place.

The consultation identified that the sensible temporary changes would have value if permanently put in place due to Queensland's geographic dispersion and the various reasons that may otherwise prevent someone from attending the meeting in person. I have been to those hybrid meetings and they have worked extremely well. With the technological advances and changes in society due in part to the pandemic, people are increasingly using communication platforms for meetings. I must admit I find them a bit frustrating to use all the time. These amendments ensure the legislation reflects contemporary practice. The integrity of QCT investigations and meetings conducted by P&Cs will not be impacted by these sensible changes.

The bill before the House today builds on the reforms the Palaszczuk government introduced in 2017. I must admit, it is hard to believe it has already been five years since those reforms which aimed to modernise our trading hours framework in Queensland. Time does go quickly. Just as we did in 2017, we have worked with stakeholders across the retail sector—large retailers, small and medium businesses and unions—through a transparent and consultative process to strike the right balance in this important area. Our retail businesses and their staff have worked tirelessly through the challenges of the COVID pandemic, and we want to provide an environment that allows them to continue to flourish into the future and gives a little bit more time for the transition to the new legislation. Confidence and certainty are critical for the retail sector, and that is what this bill delivers. Every time I meet with the Queensland retailers association, with smaller supermarkets and with other retailers, it is the certainty and the confidence that are critical for them being able to plan for the future. I thank the committee for engaging with them throughout the process.

The committee's inquiry has confirmed that the current trading hours framework has worked effectively over the past five years, subject to the sensible recommendations for finetuning and further simplification that are reflected in this bill, it will continue to serve Queensland well. As I said to the House when this bill was introduced, it is another demonstration of how the Palaszczuk government delivers lasting, practical reforms for the benefit of all Queenslanders by working with stakeholders, consulting widely and genuinely balancing the needs of workers, businesses, consumers and the general public, ensuring appropriate protections are in place for workers and their families and providing certainty and stability for business. That is the Labor way. We work in a very collaborative way. Once again I thank the committee for the work they did as well as the chair and the deputy chair. They did an excellent job. Thank you for the one recommendation that the bill be passed. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (4.28 pm): It was all going well in the minister's speech until the last sentence when she said 'it is the Labor way', that they do consultation, they do this and they do that. I listened for 30 minutes to the kindness being expressed by the minister in terms of this. It nearly put me to sleep, but the last line has energised me. If the minister wants to talk about the 'Labor way', I would say that Labor have been destroying the small business community across Queensland for many years, and there are elements in this bill which will continue to destroy small businesses across Queensland. I will respond to some of the minister's points in a moment.

Talking to the bill, I note that this bill comes from a committee report. I note also that the minister said she could have obtained an independent report, but she decided to do a parliamentary report. Isn't that good of her? However, the parliamentary committee she chose just happens to be outnumbered; the LNP and crossbenchers are always outnumbered on these parliamentary committees. As a result,

effectively it does not matter whether the parliamentary committee decided to recommend changes to this or not because the Labor Party will just have their way because of their majority vote on that committee.

I note the great statement of reservation that was submitted by our committee members and note the great work the deputy chair did. I wish the deputy chair were the chair, because he did a stellar job on that committee, together with the LNP members. In their statement of reservation the LNP members made some good points that should be considered.

Ms Richards interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection from the chair of the committee—no, that is misleading the House. There are many points in that statement of reservation that do not support elements of this bill, including some of the nine recommendations which we will get to shortly. No doubt my foreshadowed amendments have been circulated to the House. We will get to those in consideration in detail. They deal with some of those matters in more depth. I look forward to that debate ensuing.

We had the five-year review. The minister does say that it is a long time ago. The minister is still here, I am still here and we are still debating industrial relations in the parliament. Long may it continue, but on opposite sides of the House shortly. Trading allowable hours legislation is always contentious, because many people on all sides of politics ask why we cannot have 24/7 trading. Community members are frustrated on some occasions when they can go to their local big supermarket late at night or early in the morning, but when they travel across regional Queensland those shops are not open. There is an element of frustration because of a lack of convenience. People do not realise that we have a structured trading hours system in Queensland. I recognise that it is complicated and confusing to a lot of people. The point is: you have exempt shops and you have non-exempt shops. If you are an exempt shop you are a small retailer, like the wonderful IGAs in our communities. We all have them—the convenience stores such as SPAR, Drake and so forth. If you are a non-exempt shop you are Coles, Woolworths, Aldi—the big guys.

Being the Liberal National Party shadow minister, whenever I look at legislation in this House—particularly in the IR space—I always look to put the interests of our small business community first. It is always the case with the Liberal National Party that when we look through legislation we look through the lens of a small business owner in Queensland. Many colleagues on this side of the House in the Liberal National Party come from small businesses and understand small business. They understand how small business ticks; they understand that small business, from colonisation, has been the backbone of the Australian economy. It has been the backbone of the Queensland economy and continues to be so. The Liberal National Party will look at all the issues—the confusion and complexity around the trading hours system—but we will always look through the lens of a small business owner-operator in Queensland.

In this case, the submissions state that there are over 700 small businesses across Queensland associated with being an exempt shop. These businesses employ 21,000 people across Queensland and return billions of dollars to the Queensland economy. These are not big corporates and the Liberal National Party is not the ‘party of big business’. We were formed for small business—

Ms King interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection from the member for Pumicestone, who was attacking everyone for not wearing a mask yesterday but does not have one on herself. Enjoy your coffee. Sip your latte. That is nice—thank you for lecturing us all!

The member for Pumicestone talks about donations. Does the member for Pumicestone think the CFMEU, which has donated over \$400,000 to the Labor Party, is not a big corporate giant? The minister does not want me to talk about it, but I took the interjection from the Labor member who was talking about big corporates, and I am talking about the big corporate donors to the Labor Party. Let's not forget the big super funds that are owned by the union movement. The member for Pumicestone has a hide to lecture us on big corporates. What about the dodgy deals that Anacta has got for people and businesses in Queensland? Do we want to talk about the gaming tax reform that Anacta just got? I would advise the member for Pumicestone, before she opens her mouth to interject on the party of small business, to check the facts. It is the modern-day Labor Party that is the party for big corporate giants. The facts speak for themselves: it is the Labor Party that is the party for big corporate business.

I am proud to come from a small business background. I am proud that my mum and dad had a little camping store on Caloundra Road in Caloundra for many years. I am proud that they fought every day of the week against the regulation and red tape that Labor governments were imposing on them. I

am proud of my small business background and I am proud of every small business in my electorate, just as every Liberal National Party member on this side is proud of the small businesses in their electorates—the billions of dollars they bring to the economy and the thousands of people they employ across the state. If the member for Pumicestone has an issue with small businesses and attacking small business—

Ms King: I have a small business!

Mr BLEIJIE: If you were a small business operator you would not have made the ridiculous interjection that you did before, trying to be smart.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Member for Kawana, I ask you to direct your comments through the chair.

Mr BLEIJIE: There are over 700 independent and family owned community food and grocery retailers that trade under brand names such as Drake, FoodWorks, Friendly Grocer, IGA, Richie's and SPAR. I will back them any day of the week. That is why we are going to support them in the amendments that we will move later in this debate.

The minister also made amendments to the education general provisions legislation dealing with attendance at P&C meetings. We support that. The shadow education minister will talk to those particular amendments in more detail.

I draw attention to the main element of the bill, which is trading hours. As I said to the House, we will take the views of the statement of reservation put in by our committee members and we will look at it through the lens of a small business owner-operator in Queensland. All of the amendments that I propose to move in consideration in detail are about small businesses. The small businesses that I have mentioned—the over 700 Richie's, IGA, Drake and FoodWorks stores—have retail sales in Queensland of \$2.8 billion; they employ over 21,000 Queenslanders; they support our local communities.

How fantastic is it when you go to your local sporting match and see the sponsors? You can guarantee that the sponsors are always our local supermarkets—independent, family owned, mum-and-dad small business operators. They are the ones who put their hand in their pocket and give back to the community. A lot of the time they cannot afford it. They are not giants; they are not big corporate multinational supermarkets. They cannot afford it, but when the community comes to them for support—like the Kawana Surf Club—they put their hand in their pocket and sponsor. They sponsor the nippers, the gymnastics class, the football, the soccer, the Rugby, the union, the league—everything. They are our local champions. During COVID, when they had a particularly tough 2½ years, it did not stop them opening their doors or feeding, fighting for and supporting our communities.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Members on my right, there is a high level of conversation. In the interests of allowing the member for Kawana to be heard, please keep it quiet.

Mr BLEIJIE: Those opposite do not support small business. That is why they keep chatting amongst themselves talking about all of the corporate giants that donate to the Labor Party. Master Grocers advised in its submission to the committee that its members'—I indicated before who its members are such as the IGAs of the world and so forth—market share is at an all-time low of seven per cent, and this is distressing and concerning for many of our small business owners and operators in our electorates across the state. Yes, a lot of that is COVID in terms of the challenges that the minister talked about—food supply and getting product—but do members know what? I remember that in this place during COVID I heard the Treasurer, the Minister for State Development and the Minister for Manufacturing talk about the chain supply and lack of supply, toilet paper and all of that sort of stuff. Do members know that the IGAs—our local supermarkets—were going above and beyond to make sure local product and produce was sold so people could get their local fruit and vegetable from the Sunshine Coast, for instance? I am biased because I represent an area on the Sunshine Coast, but it would be the local IGA that would go to the local farmers—hobby farmers—to try to get whatever produce and product they could to put in their supermarket to make sure that our communities were fed.

A lot of the time they had product that the major chains could not get, but our small independent family owned operators could get it because they have the relationships with our local farmers and our producers. It is the IGAs and so forth that sell the local cheese made across Queensland and all of that sort of stuff. They have the relationships with our community and that is what stands them out as opposed to the big guys. That is why we support all of these small guys. I would hate to see a further erosion of the market share of small independent operators. The more the government amends the legislation to restrict or allow more trading—

Ms Richards: Do you want to deregulate?

Mr BLEIJIE: No, I did not say that at all; I take the interjection. I said the more the government looks at allowing the big companies to trade more often it will squeeze our small independent operators more. I would hate to see the market share—I will repeat it for the member for Redlands—of these small and independent operators dwindle further than it currently has at seven per cent. I am really concerned at some of the elements of this bill.

The moratorium is being extended by 12 months in this bill. As you know, Mr Deputy Speaker Krause, it was a moratorium of five years. The minister rightly points out that it was in 2017 that the review took place, but half of the moratorium has been during the COVID pandemic. Even Mr Mickel in the committee report said that there essentially has not been enough time or not enough sufficient time has passed to see what the actual outcomes would be of the moratorium because it has effectively only operated for half the amount of time it was given because of COVID. I do not think any proper assessment could be done with respect to the circumstances because no-one anticipated COVID. No-one anticipated the pandemic. No-one anticipated the lockdowns and all of the restrictions put in place on our small businesses. These small businesses struggled just like our communities struggled.

I want to go through a couple of the submissions in particular that we have drawn strength from in terms of the amendments that I am proposing to move. I turn to the submission from Master Grocers first. As I said, Master Grocers represents Drakes, FoodWorks, Friendly Grocers, IGA, Ritchies, SPAR and others in our local communities. It lodged a submission and went through all of the committee recommendations. The committee made nine recommendations. Master Grocers expressed support for recommendations 1, 5 and 6. It expressed limited support for the committee's recommendation with respect to the moratorium—that is, it supports the 12-month moratorium to be extended.

To remind members, the moratorium was put in place to essentially say that applications could not be made to the QIRC during the moratorium to extend the trading hours in various locations, so Coles, Woolies or Aldi could not run off to the QIRC and put in an application to extend the trading hours. It was meant to be a basis of everyone being able to get their acts together over the five-year period, but no-one anticipated COVID. That is why I do not think it is right and proper to say that everyone has had the right time and our small businesses have had enough time to get their business practices in order. Because of COVID, it pushed everything out.

With respect to recommendation 8, Master Grocers recommended to the committee that the one-year extension of the moratorium be a five-year extension of the section 59 moratorium. I completely support that alternate recommendation with regard to the committee's recommendation 8. The committee recommended 12 months. One of my amendments that I will be moving in consideration in detail will propose the moratorium be extended from 12 months to another five years. That way it will give proper economic scrutiny of the impact of the trading hours legislation. It will be a vote of confidence in our small independent retail operators across the state.

I note that there were crossbench members who also talked about that. I have had a chat to some on the crossbench and they are supportive of the moratorium being extended for five years and not the 12 months as the committee recommended. I would have loved the committee chair to use the numbers on the committee to accept that recommendation from Master Grocers and in fact do it for a five-year extension rather than the 12-month extension. Master Grocers says that the five-year extension is also important in providing continued business certainty to family owned independent community food and grocery retailers, which we absolutely support.

Master Grocers set out strong opposition to recommendations 2, 7 and 9. It says in its submission to the committee with regard to recommendation 2—

MGA strongly opposes this recommendation as reducing existing categories for non-exempt shop trading hours to merely four categories will effectively result in currently non-exempt retailers to operate on public holidays in 21 currently non-exempt areas, and will be of particular detriment to independent community retailers in the Mossman and Port Douglas Tourist Area as permissible trading hours for non-exempt retailers in these areas will be expanded ...

I completely support the objection to recommendation 2 from Master Grocers Australia. Again, one of the amendments I will be moving will be to oppose those particular clauses of the legislation which deal with recommendation 2 of the committee. With regard to recommendation 7 that Master Grocers opposes, it says in its submission to the committee—

MGA opposes this recommendation as removal of sections 21(3)(a) and 21(3)(c)(i) of the Act will permit non-exempt shops to open within the same permissible hours as exempt shops in the event that the QIRC makes a determination in respect of trading hours for a non-exempt shop, and prevent the QIRC particularising trading hours dependent on distinct classes of non-exempt shops ...

The LNP supports the objection to recommendation 7 of the committee. Finally, with regard to recommendation 9 the MGA says in its submission to the committee—

MGA strongly opposes this recommendation to permit exempt retailers in the Mossman and Port Douglas Tourist Area to operate in accordance with the same trading hours as exempt shops in those areas and to adjust the section 16A definition of 'tourist area'. If adopted, this means that small independent community retailers in that region will have to continue competing with their national chain counterparts on an uneven playing field, considering the enormous competitive advantage that the national chains possess.

The LNP also supports the objection that Master Grocers Australia has, and that is reflected in the amendments that I propose to move.

Master Grocers Australia, to be completely clear with the House, strongly opposes recommendations 2, 7 and 9. I will be moving amendments to oppose those particular provisions and clauses of the legislation because we are going to, on this occasion, back the small business community of Queensland. As I said, being the LNP, we are the party of small business for small business. We still understand that small business is the backbone of our economy, and that is why we are going to back Master Grocers Australia and the IGAs of the world in their submissions to the committee. It also says in its submission to the committee—

In addition to the above views, MGA submits that the definition of 'independent retail shop' outlined in section 6 of the Act must be amended so that the requisite threshold is 40 employees on the shop floor at any one time, or 150—200 employees where a number of shops are operated throughout Queensland.

It continues—

If this submission is adopted, this will assist to drive employment, particularly of young people, and assist in small business growth.

Five years have passed since the review in 2017 and so too has business in the state. One of the amendments that I will be moving in consideration in detail is my amendment No. 1, which will propose to increase that threshold on the floor at any given time from 30 to 40 employees and across Queensland if the owner owns a couple of stores from 100 to 150.

Ms Richards: That is not small!

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection from the member for Redlands yelling out that 40 employees is not a small business. I think that the member for Redlands contradicts the Queensland government's definition of small business. We will see about that. I would trust Master Grocers Australia and the IGA Queensland and Northern New South Wales Board more than I would trust the Labor Party any day of the week. If Master Grocers Australia submit to the committee as they did and the IGA Queensland and Northern New South Wales Boards submit as they did, then I would absolutely take their advice over the anti small business Labor Party any day of the week. It is no secret that the Labor Party do not support small business. They have been eroding small business confidence in this state for years, particularly under Premier Palaszczuk. They have increased taxation for small business, they have increased energy costs, they have increased costs of living. Energy costs to run a small business are now some of the worst in the country. The Labor Party will never be the party of small business.

Ms Grace interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: I would plead with the minister, because she wants to debate me on the definition of small business now, which is fine, to allow me to move my amendment No. 1, which is an amendment outside the long title and I will have to seek leave to move it. I would say to the minister, if she wants to have a debate with me about the definition of a small business then allow me to move that amendment. I take the thumbs down interjection from the minister where she is saying she is going to oppose the Master Grocers Australia submission to the committee. They do not care about small business. The minister does not even have the courage to allow the amendment outside the long title and have a proper debate.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: Minister, do not debate them; debate me right now. I call on the minister to debate me on this, but she has already indicated that that she is not going to vote—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Direct your comments through the chair.

Mr Power interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Pause the clock. Member for Logan, you are warned.

Mr BLEIJIE: The minister has indicated she does not have the courage to allow the amendment outside the long title to even go to a debate. Those opposite are already saying to Master Grocers Australia and the IGA Queensland and Northern New South Wales Board, 'You mean nothing!' Master Grocers Australia conclude their submission to the committee by saying—

Ms Grace interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: The minister has already debated her point. If she missed stuff, let her do it in consideration in detail, but she is interrupting the proceedings, I put to you.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Kawana, direct your comments through the chair, please.

Mr BLEIJIE: The minister is annoying me. That is what I was trying to say, through you.

Ms GRACE: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. There are more untruths in this place than that.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: What is your point of order, Minister?

Ms GRACE: I take offence and I ask that it be withdrawn. If there is anyone who is annoying, I know who it is.

Mr BLEIJIE: I withdraw. The MGA conclude in their submission to the committee on behalf of small business in Queensland—

MGA foresees that many small family owned community food and grocery retailers in Queensland will have to cease operations should recommendations 2—

Mr Mellish interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection from the member for Aspley. He said 'rubbish'.

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

Mr BLEIJIE: Did you not say 'rubbish'?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Kawana, resume your seat, please. I have a point of order.

Mr MELLISH: I take offence at that. I said nothing of the sort.

Mr BLEIJIE: You said 'rubbish'.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am just going to take some advice on that. Member for Kawana, would you withdraw, please?

Mr BLEIJIE: I withdraw. To continue with the quote—

MGA foresees that many small family owned community food and grocery retailers in Queensland will have to cease operations should recommendations 2, 7 and 9 be adopted, or if the section 59 moratorium is not extended for a meaningful length of time, due to inability to compete with the large national chain retailers.

Should this occur, this will not only result in depriving Queensland consumers of food and grocery retailer and supermarket choice, but also weaken the competition in the independent sector of the Queensland grocery industry to the extent where it may no longer be commercially feasible for new independent supermarket competitors to enter the market or expand the number of stores they own. For these reasons, MGA strongly opposes recommendations 2, 7 and 9 and submits that recommendation 8 be reconsidered.

Ms Grace interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: As I was quoting the Master Grocers Australia, the minister was chiming in there. I take it from that, and minister can correct the record, that she does not agree with Master Grocers Australia's submission to the committee. I think they would know how their members operate and the impact that this bill will have on their particular members. The IGA Queensland and Northern New South Wales Board also submitted to the committee. They make similar recommendations to Master Grocers Australia. They say with respect to recommendation 8—

There has not yet been a return to normalised market conditions after the issues faced by our members in the last two years. The economic fallout from the pandemic, natural disasters (floods) and international crises like Ukraine have led to a myriad of issues that have negatively affected the retail industry,

...

The Board submits that there is little evidence that would suggest that an extension of trading hours provides any great economic benefit or creates actual employment growth in the retail industry. However, it can be argued that the moratorium provides economic certainty for our members' businesses who in turn make greater contributions to their local communities through employment opportunities and support of local businesses/suppliers and community groups. If the moratorium is not extended past August 2023, then there is the possibility that the sustainability of independent retailers is at risk.

The Board believes that an extension of the moratorium for at least another 5 years would provide time for independent food and grocery retailers to continue to develop 'a unique point of difference' in the form of family and privately owned food and grocery businesses that support local suppliers, industry and agriculture for the benefit of their local communities and Queensland as a whole.

It is signed by the IGA Queensland and the Northern New South Wales Board retail chairman. Does the Labor Party not believe that? We know that they do not believe in the submission from Master Grocers Australia. Do they not accept the submission from the IGA, who I think would have—

Ms Lauga: How much did they pay you?

Mr BLEIJIE: Did she say 'how much did they pay me'?

Ms Lauga: How much did the IGA donate to you?

Mr BLEIJIE: Is the member for Keppel is asking me how much the IGA paid me to say what I am saying. If you are alleging some form of corruption then I challenge you to say it. If you are alleging some form of corruption on behalf of the IGA Queensland and Northern New South Wales Board then have the courage to say it outside this place.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Member, you will put your comments through the chair.

Mr BLEIJIE: Is the member for Keppel seriously saying that the IGA has paid me as a spokesperson? No, I am sticking up for the small business community in Queensland— something the Labor Party has not done under the Palaszczuk government. If the local member does not support the local IGAs in her community, we will grab a copy of these interjections and send it to every independent grocery retailer in the member for Keppel's electorate. They would be fascinated to see that the member for Keppel alleges the only reason the LNP is sticking up for our small business community is donations. What absolute rubbish. That is outrageous. The member for Keppel should withdraw.

Debate, on motion of Mr Bleijie, adjourned.

MOTION

Hervey Bay, Youth Crime



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

That this House recognises the devastating impacts of youth crime on the people of Hervey Bay and notes:

1. the terrible toll on business owners and their staff under siege from this crime wave;
2. the state government's failure to increase police numbers in the face of increasing crime and population growth;
3. the added burden on the community from the failing health system which has seen police across Queensland drafted in because of record ambulance ramping; and
4. money wasted on the Palaszczuk government's Wellcamp fiasco could have been better invested combating serious issues facing regional Queenslanders

And calls on the member for Hervey Bay to admit he has got it wrong on breach of bail, police numbers and ambulance ramping.

Many times I have stood in this place and talked about the juvenile crime epidemic that is gripping this state from Cairns and Townsville to the Gold Coast, Toowoomba and Rockhampton, to name a few. Tonight we can add another name to that list: Hervey Bay. The picturesque and idyllic town of Hervey Bay has joined that list and become crime central. Members may well ask: where is the member for Hervey Bay? He is MIA! He might be over there waving his hand but, as we will be reminding the community, very shortly I will outline what his contribution has been in this chamber and to the parliament on the crime wave that is gripping the Hervey Bay community. I want to share these words with the chamber—

It just breaks my heart so much. I'm a single mother just running a business to look after my son and put a plate on our table.

Those are the words of Daisy Owen, who owns a phone repair business in Hervey Bay. Sadly, Daisy is not the only resident who has had her heart ripped out by the escalating crime problem in that community.

To the end of July 2022, like a number of centres throughout the state, Hervey Bay saw increases in unlawful entry and unlawful use of a motor vehicle charges of 20 per cent and 81 per cent respectively. Under this Labor government, when crime increases in Hervey Bay the number of police officers is cut. That is right: in the period from the end of November 2021 to 22 April 2022, the approved strength for the Hervey Bay police division decreased to its lowest level in five years. Given that, the


Hervey Bay community could expect uproar from their local member. They could expect their local member to be on his feet in this place, banging on the table and demanding more police officers and resources for his community. In his maiden speech in this place he said they would 'deliver the services and programs' that Hervey Bay needs. What have we heard from the member for Hervey Bay? Absolutely nothing! He has not stood up for his community.

Whilst delivering a reduction in services, can members believe that the member for Hervey Bay has uttered the word 'crime' only four times in this place, although not in relation to crime in his community. He has said it in reference to the Crime and Corruption Commission. How many times has he mentioned just the word 'crime' in this chamber? That is zero as well! Not once has the member for Hervey Bay stood in this chamber and talked about the crime epidemic that is gripping his community.

I have no doubt that shortly we are going to hear from the police minister about all of the additional police resources that he is putting in place in the state, including an extra 150 officers in the Hervey Bay region. We now know that their commitment to 1,450 extra officers is in tatters. We have gone from the commissioner being 'extraordinarily confident', at the estimates hearing on 14 December 2020, to the commissioner stating, 'We are doing everything we possibly can' to honour that commitment on 3 August this year. We know that that target for additional officers is now in tatters because attrition rates are through the roof. Is it any wonder that the numbers in Hervey Bay have been cut?

I visited Hervey Bay on 31 May this year. I met with residents and I met with business owners. I met with business owners who are sick and tired of having their shop windows kicked in night after night and their premises broken into. They are frustrated and they are angry. They are angry because they are not getting any support from their local member. Their local member is mute when it comes to talking about and addressing this issue in their community. They want to see a police vehicle available 24 hours a day in their local community. They do not want to have to rely on a police vehicle that is on call from Maryborough and does not arrive until after midnight.

The member for Hervey Bay might be mute in this place but I gave a commitment and I know the leader gave a commitment when he was there that we will be the voice for that community in this parliament. We will stand up for that community in this place. We will demand that those opposite provide the resources that the community needs in terms of policing numbers to ensure that they get this crime problem under control. We owe it people such as Daisy Owen and we owe it to the residents of Hervey Bay.

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

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

notes

- (a) the importance of community safety and the impact it has on victims of crime;
- (b) the record investment by the Palaszczuk government in community safety measures;
- (c) that our emergency service workers work in collaboration with each other on behalf of Queenslanders;
- (d) the government's strong actions during the pandemic which has kept Queenslanders safe; and

acknowledges the strong advocacy of the member for Hervey Bay in support of his community.

This government will always do whatever it can to support victims and will always condemn the perpetrators of crime. We know that criminal offending is complex, but that does not mean that the government's resolve is any less when it comes to doing everything we can to support community safety and deliver better outcomes for community. Our record is strong on that through investments in emergency services and police and strengthening laws to ensure that perpetrators are held to account.

The member for Burdekin likes to talk big. He is very good at writing motions but he is not very good at writing plans. This is now about the fourth or fifth time I have had to stand in this chamber and say how many days it has been since the member for Burdekin promised to deliver a crime plan. He promised. He said he would deliver it. The update for the House is that it has been 586 days or 83.7 weeks or 19.3 months since the member for Burdekin promised to deliver a crime plan. He is big on words and little on delivery.

In fact, before my estimates hearing the LNP said that they were going to turn up and ask the minister questions on youth crime. How many questions on youth crime did they ask the commissioner? Zero! How many questions on youth crime did they ask me as police minister? Zero! Again, they were misleading the community. They talk big in the regions but when they get to Brisbane they squib it. The

member for Burdekin loves running around the regions, talking big: 'We're going to ask the police minister some questions in estimates on youth crime.' Zero! He squibs it every single time. They like to misrepresent every single fact when it comes to not only the government's efforts on keeping the community safe but also our investment in the front line.

The member for Hervey Bay has been in this chamber for less than two years but already he is a strong deliverer for his community. The former member for Hervey Bay was here for almost a decade.


Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): I am about to start issuing warnings. The level of interjection is well beyond anything that could be considered reasonable.

Mr RYAN: Did he get a commitment from his side of politics to deliver any new police infrastructure for his community? He was here from 2009 to 2020. Did he get a single commitment? Did he convince his colleagues to make a commitment to any new police infrastructure in Hervey Bay? No! The current member for Hervey Bay has been in this chamber for less than two years and already has a commitment from this government to deliver a new \$14 million police facility in Hervey Bay. Why do we need a new facility in Hervey Bay? It is because more police are on the way.

It is because of our record investment in the Queensland Police Service that the Queensland Police Service is growing by 2,025 extra police personnel by the year 2025. To allay the member for Burdekin's concerns, the Queensland Police Service has once again confirmed to me that both the approved strength of the Hervey Bay police division and the actual headcount of sworn officers at the Hervey Bay Police Station has increased under the Palaszczuk government. When the member for Burdekin comes in and says, 'Oh, it's less,' he is misleading the House. It has increased, and that is the advice from the Queensland Police Service. Is there any doubt when it comes to the LNP's commitment to the police? At the last election, this is what they committed to the Queensland Police Service and the Queensland community. Ian Leavers said, 'What I did get out of the LNP was a commitment of nearly 400.' Out of Labor he got 1,450—1,000 more.

(Time expired)

 **Mr HEAD** (Callide—LNP) (5.10 pm): I rise to speak to the motion moved by the member for Burdekin. I do this for the people of Hervey Bay who are going through the same struggles as many businesses in my own community. Imagine having someone knock on your door in the middle of the night because the business you have built up over decades has been broken into. You would just think to yourself: why bother? This is what one of my constituents in Chinchilla said to me the other day after their jewellery business was smashed up by juveniles. Chinchilla has had five businesses broken into in a matter of weeks. That has taken an horrific toll on my community.

Imagine what the community of Hervey Bay is feeling. They have had 40 unlawful entries in the last month. That is more than one a day. That is happening under the watch of the member for Hervey Bay and the Palaszczuk government. Maybe—just maybe—if the member for Hervey Bay and his government supported the introduction of breach of bail offences the people of Hervey Bay could live in a peaceful community once again. Maybe—just maybe—the people of Callide could too.

We keep hearing about staff shortages in the police force. Imagine the pay rise that \$220 million could give our hardworking police officers. Think about the number of police stations this could build. That \$220 million could have ensured that many more police stations across the Wide Bay and further afield were adequately staffed. My community in Jandowae might not be without their own police station, which is currently unstaffed, if the government spent this money in the right way. That \$220 million could have gone to things like this, but it did not; it built the biggest white elephant this House has seen. By 'built' I mean wasted. It was wasted on none other than Wellcamp. Think for a moment about the pressure this money could have eased on the health system so that those of the Wide Bay did not have police officers spending their time sitting on hospital ramps with patients because the ambulances are unable to unload their own patients.


The Palaszczuk government has a generation of failure behind it when it comes to youth crime. They have tried GPS trackers and failed. They repeal laws that work, remove systems that are delivering change and ignore vulnerable and at-risk youth. They only ever respond in a moment of overwhelming crisis. They have changed the law. They have commissioned review after review. They have ignored findings and redacted recommendations. Well, the time is here for a comprehensive crime plan. The government must have the courage to admit that it is wrong. I support the motion moved by the member for Burdekin because the people of Hervey Bay, the Wide Bay and all of Queensland deserve better.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Order! The House will come to order before I call the next speaker.

Mr Butcher interjected.

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

 **Mr TANTARI** (Hervey Bay—ALP) (5.14 pm): I support the amendment moved by the minister. What a pathetic motion moved by the member for Burdekin—absolutely pathetic! All the motion shows is the level to which those opposite will stoop to create fear and spread misinformation in our regions, including my own, for their own political gain. They do not really care about what they have raised in their motion. We on this side know what they are really about: only the politics.

It is very disappointing for the people of Hervey Bay to hear those opposite talk down the great work being done by our nurses, doctors, paramedics, police officers and the many hardworking public servants who provide great services for the people of Hervey Bay. Particularly disappointing is the behaviour of the member for Burdekin, who blows into town, talks to no-one other than his LNP mates, proceeds to find a camera to stare into and in a forlorn manner stands there to rehash the same old Newman government mantra, like a broken record: boot camps, blah, blah; lock them up, blah, blah; throw away the keys, blah, blah—the same tired old garbage and the same lazy, unproven policy.

I am surprised that the member for Mudgeeraba even has the gall to turn up at our great hospital, given the disgraceful mess the member and her LNP mates left the Hervey Bay Hospital in the last time they were in power. I say to those opposite: the people of Hervey Bay will never forget the cutting of services, the sacking of our doctors and nurses and the shameful plans to sell off anything that was not bolted down. For the record, this government has proven to be a champion for the people of Hervey Bay.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Order! Member for Nanango, you are warned.

Mr TANTARI: We on this side of the House know that by providing new and enhanced services we are keeping the people of Hervey Bay safe. We have increased police numbers. We have increased our hospital services. We have increased the number of paramedics. We have new facilities including \$40 million for the Hervey Bay Hospital—a 35-bed expansion; \$39 million for our 22-bed mental health unit; and our new ambulance station. These expanded and new facilities are part of the excellent Health and Hospitals Plan that is at the forefront of the Palaszczuk government's detailed plan for improving healthcare services for Hervey Bay residents.


We on this side of the House acknowledge that there will always be amongst us those who do not want to follow the law and commit crimes that have a devastating effect on victims. We understand that. We on this side also know that youth misbehaviour and crime—I said it: 'crime'—is a complex issue that requires the attention of all levels of government. That is why at my instigation a couple of months ago I invited every member of my local council to a meeting with the Minister for Youth Justice and me to discuss this very serious matter with our local community leaders. I table a copy of that letter.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 9 June 2022, from the member for Hervey Bay, Mr Adrian Tantari MP, to Fraser Coast Regional Council, Councillor David Lee, regarding a meeting to discuss youth antisocial behaviours in Hervey Bay [\[1167\]](#).

I thank the minister for her attendance. All concerned local councillors representing divisions overlaying the electorate of Hervey Bay accepted the invitation. The minister and I spoke to them about the policy suite that is in place to address these issues. We heard feedback from each individual councillor who attended. It is interesting to note for the House that, of all the councillors present, not one raised the issue of youth crime as a concern to their constituencies.

This does not underplay the impacts on victims of the actions of individuals, but for the member for Burdekin to cry LNP tears about how much they care about youth crime and for one of their own LNP councillors, Councillor David Lee, to not even bother to turn up to talk to the Minister for Youth Justice about solutions to its so-called devastating impacts clearly shows how concerned the LNP really are about these issues. It is all just about the politics to them—nothing more.

If those opposite would like to hear what we on this side of the House are doing to address this behaviour, maybe they should tell their own side to turn up. We on this side know that it is nothing but a game to them. They are not serious about real solutions or about caring for the people of Hervey Bay. All they care about is their desperate attempt to claw back Hervey Bay.

 **Mr MINNIKIN** (Chatsworth—LNP) (5.19 pm): I am very pleased to make a small contribution to the original motion as moved by my colleague the shadow minister for police, the member for Burdekin. When I have done road trips with the member for Burdekin and we talk about his portfolio and he has gone through the different hotspots of Queensland it has come about more than once that Hervey Bay is on his radar.

I was doing a bit of preparation for this speech and I have to confess to the House that I do not know the member for Hervey Bay anywhere near as well as I know other members on the opposite side of the chamber. I have to declare that I owe a great deal of thanks to the parliamentary attendants because outside the chamber they have a sheet with little photos on it and people's names. I could go and have a look there. I found out which of the backbenchers the member for Hervey Bay is. As I will reveal a little later on, when it comes to his particular contribution to parliament let alone youth crime it is virtually invisible. I will go into that in a bit more detail later.

From what I have read and from what I have been told, there seems to be a little bit of argy-bargy between the member for Hervey Bay and the member for Maryborough who seems to get more of the limelight in the local area—much to the chagrin of the member for Hervey Bay. It is all right, there are always silver linings. We will keep on going.

Interestingly, if one google searches 'Adrian Tantari MP youth crime' all one gets is an article about the new police station for Hervey Bay but no acknowledgement of the magnitude of crime as an issue. There do not appear to be any specific media articles of the member for Hervey Bay talking about crime issues. I am not easily distracted so I thought surely there must be something on his social media platforms. There appears to be few if any media or news articles on his website talking about crime or youth crime.

This was not going to put me off, so I kept on looking. On his Twitter account, where he has an audience of 27 followers, there was no mention of youth crime. So I thought, you know what, there is more than one way to skin a cat, so I will keep on looking. I went to Instagram and—I am certain of this—there is absolutely no mention of youth crime because, and I will not table it, the link from his website is broken. Bing bong; no good there.


Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Are you tabling that document?

Mr MINNIKIN: No, Mr Deputy Speaker. I have many weaknesses, but one thing I am good at is a challenge, so I thought I am going to keep going. I did a key word search on the official parliamentary website. Surely that doyen of record keeping must have something in the member for Hervey Bay's favour. I typed in 'youth crime'. For all of the thousands following us at home, guess what? No search document was found. That is another bing bong. My colleagues can add to the sound effects.

It is almost as though the member for Hervey Bay thinks that if he does not talk about it there is no crime. It is a bit like the member for Miller wishing one of his infrastructure projects would be on time and on budget—fanciful thinking. In the member for Hervey Bay's first speech he committed to 'deliver the services and programs Hervey Bay needs'. Further on in his first speech he said 'where we put people first by keeping them safe'. Good on him for this noble cause.

We need to ask ourselves, in the interests of the motion as moved by the shadow minister: what is going on in Hervey Bay when it comes to crime? Here is a table that I prepared earlier. Let me reiterate what has been said already. In the last month—17 July to 16 August—there have been 14 cars stolen. There have been 40 unlawful entries—more than one a day. There have been 103 other thefts—more than three a day. There have been 40 assaults—more than one a day.

Let us have a look at this chart I have here. It is not the top 40; it is sad reading. Unauthorised motor vehicle offences are up 81 per cent from August 2020 to August 2021. Unlawful entries are up 20 per cent. Other thefts are up 16 per cent. Drum roll because we keep going: assaults are up 42 per cent. Stealing from vehicles is up 57 per cent. It is a bit like New Orleans when small shopkeepers have to board up their small business windows with wooden boards. It is disgusting.

 **Ms LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (5.24 pm): It is all well and good for those opposite to come in here and fearmonger and talk about statistics, but I have not heard a single proposal, suggestion or plan that those opposite have to help keep our community safe. They come in here all high and mighty—

Opposition members interjected.

Ms LAUGA: We know that breach of bail does not work. Please, can you give us something new! They come in here all high and mighty, they are all talk and no action, but mostly they are all care and no responsibility. It is incredibly frustrating—

Ms PEASE: Fearmongers.

Ms LAUGA: They are fearmongerers. I will take the interjection from the member for Lytton.

I rise to speak against the motion moved by the member for Burdekin and in support of the government's amendment. The LNP simply cannot help themselves when it comes to cheap political stunts and attacks. That is why I support the minister's amended motion in respect of the importance of community safety. There are two words that those opposite do not talk about. They do not talk about community safety. They like to talk about crime. It is all part of the fearmongering process they go through to scare our community when we should be talking about positive solutions—

Opposition members interjected.

Ms LAUGA: Solutions that work and not just solutions that you have already been through and we had 90 per cent recidivism as a result of.

I support the record investment by the Palaszczuk government in community safety measures and acknowledge the strong advocacy of the member for Hervey Bay in support of his community. Rather than political stunts, the Palaszczuk government is focused on improving community safety. These are tough, complex issues that require multiagency approaches and some of those approaches do not see immediate results. They take commitment. Our focus remains resolute to reduce crime, to keep our community safe and to ensure young offenders are held to account for their actions.

Let me be clear: perpetrators are caught, brought before the courts and sentenced to prison if they are a risk to community safety. Community service, curfews and other sentences can also be imposed by the courts. Like everyone on this side of the parliament, I would prefer to see young people supported to make better choices and live happy and healthy lives, which is why prevention is paramount. Those opposite want to lock kids up and throw away the key. They have been promising for months to deliver a crime plan, but still it has not seen the light of day. Those opposite love generating fear but have absolutely no plan other than to lock kids up and throw away the key.

It is a fact that we will not and cannot ever stop youth crime altogether, but we can all work together as a community to improve community safety and help support families to give our kids a great start to life. We will not hear those opposite talking about working together to improve community safety. No, they prefer to fearmonger. Those opposite continually call for a breach of bail offence in Queensland. Their finding of guilt while on bail, which is what the opposition now refer to as their breach of bail law, was in operation in Queensland in 2014 and 2016. We know that it failed. Why can those opposite not just admit that this policy failed?

Mr Crandon interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Member for Coomera, your interjections are not being taken.

Ms LAUGA: Of the 185 young people convicted under the LNP's furphy offence, over 90 per cent reoffended within 12 months.

Mr Lister interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member for Southern Downs.

Ms LAUGA: Of the 185 young people convicted under these breach of bail laws, over 90 per cent reoffended within 12 months and 94 per cent reoffended in two years. Do they call that a success? The LNP's offence carried with it no actual punishment, applied to a very small number of young people and had no appreciable impact on reoffending. Surely those opposite can come up with something better than that—something that has already been proven to fail. We on this side of the House repealed that offence because it simply did not reduce youth crime and could not be used to hold offenders to account. It rarely influenced the decision at the point of arrest or subsequent court appearances because the offence could not be used until after the finding of guilt, which could be weeks or even months after the second instance.

I will use my remaining time to lend my support to the great member for Hervey Bay. He is a wonderful member who stands up for his community. He fought for and is delivering a brand new fire and rescue station in Hervey Bay, a new school hall at Urangan and new classrooms at Pialba. He has delivered a new creative arts centre at Hervey Bay State High School. He has fought for and is delivering a brand new \$34 million mental health unit in Hervey Bay.

(Time expired)



Mr BENNETT (Burnett—LNP) (5.29 pm): I will spend my time debating this motion talking about the issue of police being taken away to deal with the failing health system. This is a big issue right across the Wide Bay as well as in Hervey Bay.

The House must recognise that the member for Hervey Bay does share our concerns about the Wide Bay Hospital and Health Service. We remember when he backed the unanimous vote of no confidence in the management of the Wide Bay HHS. I think it is important that we get this on the record because in his contribution this evening the member for Hervey Bay was praising the Wide Bay Hospital and Health Service but, more importantly, was not acknowledging the issues that he has previously acknowledged and backed.

We cannot continue to take police resources off the front line to deal with the failing health system. This is a huge issue that is not being addressed in the Wide Bay. More importantly, we have heard about issues in the ICU at the Hervey Bay Hospital—the leaked letters. In the Wide Bay region, 26 per cent of people are over 65 and a lot of those are in Hervey Bay. They have a lot to be fearful of and a lot to be disappointed about in their representation with issues not being raised. Those issues are about not only health and law and order but also many other things.

I want to go on record this evening because the issues with culture and service delivery in the Wide Bay Hospital and Health Service are issues that we should be disturbed by. I have been called out in this place for talking about the issues in our hospitals. I want to make it clear that we now have an independent inquiry into the mismanagement of medications at the Hervey Bay Hospital and across the Wide Bay. I take this time to remind members that on 22, 23 and 24 of this month the clinical review team will finally be there to have an independent inquiry and people can make their submissions anonymously.

I think it is important that whistleblowers finally get their just deserts because we want whistleblowers not to be scared, not to be bullied and not to have the issues that they want to raise jeopardised by fear of reprisal. We have to acknowledge the bravery of the staff, the patients and their advocates—it is absolutely admirable. It takes great strength to stand up to this government, particularly to government members, and, more importantly, to have their voices heard. The number of whistleblowers in this space has to be acknowledged. We want to make sure that they feel comfortable to reach out and share their experiences with investigators. At the end of this though not only should we acknowledge them but it is important to remember that when we asked about this issue we now know that one nurse has been sacked and we know that another nurse has been disciplined. More importantly—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Member, I fear that you are straying a long way from either the motion as presented or the amendment. I ask you to come back to the motion as presented.

Mr BENNETT: The failing health service is part of the motion. I am talking about the failing health service. I will continue.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I do not wish to argue with you. I believe you are straying from the motion. I ask you to come back.

Mr BENNETT: I want to acknowledge them and their information because we need to make sure that in Hervey Bay and across the Wide Bay we do start to make cultural and practical changes—to make sure that issues with the Police Service, youth crime and the failing health service are addressed. I am looking forward to meeting with more people who come into my office to tell me their stories, to talk to me about the issues and to take the time to talk about the lack of representation in Hervey Bay. It is important that we continue to turn a spotlight on this very important seat. More importantly, it is part of the Wide Bay. To have our neighbouring electorate completely underrepresented by the member is really disturbing.

I do acknowledge going forward that, if we are going to deal with things like youth crime, the Police Service and the failing health service, we have to have a whole-of-region approach. That means that members around the Wide Bay who represent the government need to have the courage to stand up to their government and call out the poor service delivery, or lack thereof, in the Wide Bay Hospital and Health Service. The hardworking police and staff in the hospitals all have compassion for their day-to-day work and they need to have decent members to represent them. I do not know how many times we have tried to get the issue of youth crime in particular on the agenda in the region only to have zero representation and support from the local member.

I find it really disappointing that the motion was amended straight up. We should have the courage in this place to debate important motions that represent our communities.

Mr Tantari: It's a rubbish motion.


Mr BENNETT: I take the interjection from the member for Hervey Bay. That proves one thing: you do not have to have a long neck to be a goose! I also want to take the time to reflect on other issues within the Wide Bay Hospital and Health Service.

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

Mr BENNETT: I withdraw. I have more if you want them.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, we don't.

Mr BENNETT: I have 23 seconds, so we will see how we go. I will get back to the motion. I commend the member for Burdekin for putting this issue on the agenda. It is important that we stand up for the Wide Bay communities. It is important that the opposition continues to shine a light on the issues surrounding us—that is, the lack of representation and the poor performance of the member for Hervey Bay.

 **Ms BUSH** (Cooper—ALP) (5.35 pm): I rise to speak against the original motion and I will be supporting the minister's amendment. Firstly, I do not actually disagree with some of the member for Burdekin's statements in his motion. I do agree that the impact of crime on individuals, home owners, parents, businesses and communities is absolutely devastating. Victims of crime often are left feeling violated, they feel angry, they feel anxious and they have a heightened sense of victimisation. That is why I find the approach of the LNP, in taking advantage of that very valid fear around community safety, to be completely irresponsible.

I am also surprised by this motion from the member for Burdekin. The member has just sat with us during the estimates process where we scrutinised the expenditure in the areas of police, corrective services and emergency services. What we heard in estimates is that this year's budget for the Queensland Police Service exceeds \$3 billion for the first time ever.

I will touch on police numbers in a moment, but I want to highlight that the Commissioner of Police is on the record having committed to a minimum of an extra 150 police officers for every region. Further, the Queensland Police Service has increased its vehicle fleet by 129 vehicles since 2019-20, with a further increase of 50 vehicles expected for this financial year.

We are seeing not only the increased numbers but also the shift in policing approaches in the regions and in the suburbs in areas like Ashgrove, Barton and Paddington, which do unfortunately have crime episodes—like all cities and like all suburbs—and we are seeing real responsiveness from police.

I have to commend particularly our new Inspector Corey Allen in my electorate. Corey will be known to many people who work not only in police but also community services. If you speak to Corey, you will quickly understand that you cannot simply arrest your way out of crime. Reducing crime takes a holistic approach and it takes a community approach.

There is a lot that cohesive and informed communities can do to build their community safety capacity—which is why I cannot defend the actions of the LNP who come into town with the intended purpose to add to a community's fears. For the record, I do appreciate their role in opposition is to gather and highlight the gaps and issues, but to do that in a way that generates fear and then to simply decamp without putting any kind of supports in place, particularly for those in community who are victims of crime, is deplorable.


Let me again put on record my admiration and respect for members of the Queensland Police Service. The work they do is incredibly challenging. While I appreciate that the LNP think that with this motion and their continued focus on law and order they are hurting the government, what they are really doing is impacting on the morale of officers and they are making the role of attracting and retaining staff even harder.

All Queenslanders deserve to be safe in their homes and in their communities. We have heard in estimates from the minister how Queensland has received the biggest boost in police numbers in 30 years. Despite nationwide workforce shortages, the government's commitment to deliver more than 2,000 extra police personnel by the year 2025 remains on track. More than 1,000 new police officers have graduated from Queensland's two police academies since 1 July 2020 and the commissioner is determined to attract more people to this career.

On a final note I will say this: I wish the LNP would approach the issue of domestic and family violence or sexual violence against women with the same enthusiasm in the same way as they do on youth crime. Each sitting week since I have been elected they come in here and move a motion in relation to youth crime. They travel around the state talking about youth crime. Reducing youth crime

and reducing the number of young offenders ought to be a priority, absolutely, but for context there are 372 repeat youth offenders in Queensland—many of whom are quite vulnerable in their own right. Compare that to the 28,500 DVOs that were taken out last year in Queensland.

I would love to see the LNP conduct a town hall event with the perpetrators of domestic and family violence. I would love to see them as leaders in their communities talk directly to perpetrators to call out violence, to not condone their behaviours and to condemn the violence. A member of the LNP spoke to me recently about how we could potentially make it more difficult for victims to take out DVOs. Jesus, take the wheel! This is why I will not be supporting the member for Burdekin's motion.

 **Mr McDONALD** (Lockyer—LNP) (5.40 pm): This government is very good at blaming others, this government is very good at hiding the truth and this government is very good at denying they have done anything wrong. Let's have a look at the situation with the police. The minister comes in here and brags about a record \$3 billion budget, but let's look into the truth. An answer to a question on notice about police numbers reported that back in 2015 there were five more police per 100,000 than there are now in Queensland. Those are their own numbers.

I thought that might be wrong, so I went back and had a look at the report on government statistics in 2021. In 2012 there were five more police per 100,000. This is the guts of the policing problem. Do not come in here and brag about record budgets: it is about police on the streets delivering services to the community of Queensland. Five fewer police per 100,000 equates to 262 additional police, which equals 520,000 man-hours of pro-active policing to get youth off the streets, put recidivist offenders behind bars and catch domestic violence offenders. That is something I know intimately. Have a look at the discretionary police statistics—proactive crime, we used to call it. Discretionary policing, going out and catching baddies, is down by 40 per cent across the state. That is your No. 1 tactic when it comes to combating crime. Do not come in here and brag about record budgets when you are delivering fewer services to Queensland.

Let's have a look at what is happening in Hervey Bay: property crime and unlawful use—up; unlawful entry of a motor vehicle—up; other assaults—up; other theft—up; steal from vehicle—up. Why? Because there are fewer police across the state delivering services. Sure, there are priority policing models occurring between Maryborough and Hervey Bay, but have a look at additional policing to resolve that problem. What about the \$237 million wasted on the Wellcamp facility? Throw that towards policing to deliver those additional 262 police. An additional 262 police would just keep up with parity. If you look at the statistical report, guess what has happened in New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania and the Northern Territory? They have all gone up while Queensland has gone backwards.

Mr Saunders interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Order, member for Maryborough!

Mr McDONALD: It has nothing to do with modern policing—

Mr Saunders interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, member for Maryborough!


Mr McDONALD: The people of Hervey Bay deserve better. Have a look at the cost of crime—

Mr Saunders interjected.

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

Mr McDONALD: Let's have a look at the cost of crime. We recognise there is an additional financial cost in security and repair, but it is also the personal trauma that people experience and the reputational damage the town sustains. I have over 23 years close experience with the Hervey Bay community. Worst of all is the fear of crime. There are people—grandparents, families—who are prisoners in their own homes. They deserve better. Studies show that the impacts of crime are not as bad as the fear of crime.

Minister, get around the cabinet table and get additional resources because the people of Hervey Bay and the people of Queensland deserve improved policing. That \$237 million waste would provide flood mitigation right across the Lockyer Valley. That is what my community is worried about. The Warrego Highway at Glenore Grove could be flood-proofed all the way to Toowoomba. Mitigation projects across Withcott, Grantham and Laidley are our priorities, not the waste of this government.

 **Mr SMITH** (Bundaberg—ALP) (5.44 pm): It is good to be back on my feet in a five o'clock scream, let me tell you. I am looking forward to this one, because any chance I get to speak against a motion of the LNP is a chance that I revel in, let me absolutely tell you that. I am especially glad today because I

notice they have gone into a community Facebook page to tell everyone in Hervey Bay to watch live. Let me tell you, I hope they are all watching because we are going to talk about the LNP. Hello, Hervey Bay! Just wait until you hear about this LNP and what their record is.

Let's have a look at what they said in their motion. No. 2 is the state government's failure to increase police numbers. Let's have a look at the facts here. I really want to bring my good friend the member for Toohey into this, because he made a fantastic contribution, as he always does. They could learn a lot from him over there. This year for the first time ever in Queensland the budget for the QPS exceeds \$3 billion. We will deliver the biggest boost in police numbers in 30 years. Thirty years ago, do you remember that? That is when the Nationals existed in Queensland.

This financial year it is expected there will be a further 1,200 positions with more to come. How fantastic is that! More police on the beat on the streets of Queensland; that is what it is all about. What do we have here? As the member for Toohey said, since 1 July 2020 more than 1,000 new police officers have graduated from Queensland's two police academies. This is a government that is investing more in the front line, investing in police and making sure our communities are strong and safe. The member for Hervey Bay stands up for them every single day. This record \$3 billion police budget supports the rollout of state-of-the-art police equipment over the next five years, including more than 12,000 new integrated load-bearing ballistic vests, an additional 5,000 new QLITE tablet devices, an additional 4,500 new body worn cameras and an additional 250 new police vehicles.

I do recognise that, even though it was only his second contribution, the member for Callide ran out with over a minute left. Let me tell you that I will fill him in with about a minute of speaking points on the LNP's record. Let's speak about the 2020 election. They committed—get ready, Hervey Bay community—fewer than 600 police under the LNP's election commitment. What about their time in government? In their time in government they sacked 110 senior police all up. In fact, they sacked more than 300 police personnel. Can you believe that, community of Hervey Bay? The member for Broadwater asked you to watch today. They wanted you to watch us talk about how they sacked police personnel and police officers. Talk about an own goal!

I thought the member for Callide's inaugural speech yesterday was an own goal, but this is even bigger. What about how they cut police training? What about how they reduced firearms training? They forced police to pay for their own body worn video cameras. They do not respect our police on the front line. They wasted millions of taxpayers' dollars on failed boot camps. They cut police monitoring of more than 1,700 sex offenders. They think they are tough on youth offenders, but when it comes to those who offend against youth they are soft on them. That is their record! Cutting funding to monitor 1,700 sex offenders is their record over there. How many of those were walking around Hervey Bay when the LNP were in charge? That is the question you need to ask. What about funding for new police equipment? It fell from \$77.5 million to \$53.8 million. That is their record.

This motion talks about health, so let's talk about health. Let's talk about the fact that it is the member for Hervey Bay and the Palaszczuk government that are delivering health outcomes for Hervey Bay. We can talk about the Urraween Ambulance Station. We can talk about \$39 million for the mental health unit and 22 inpatient beds. This one is very good—I was living in Hervey Bay at the time—\$44 million for emergency department upgrades at the hospital. That was so good the former member for Hervey Bay, Ted Sorensen, tried to claim it on a big billboard—


Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Member, you will not use that as a prop.

Mr SMITH: I will not table that because I might use it in the future again.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member, you will not use props when you are delivering speeches.

Mr SMITH: Absolutely, Mr Deputy Speaker, just like the LNP should not use a prop by Ted Sorensen claiming money that is Labor money for the hospital. Member for Callide, this is how it goes—look, there are still seven seconds to go. The member for Hervey Bay is a fantastic local member. Long may he be allowed to represent his local community.

(Time expired)

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (5.50 pm): The hallmark of a government losing its grip on power is a government which is losing control of basic services. Here in Queensland in those who occupy the seats opposite we have a case in point. They are so obsessed with how things look, not with how they really are. Those opposite are so mired in hubris, sneakiness and arrogance, so shackled by paralysis and incompetence, and so riddled by integrity woes that they just do not govern Queensland anymore. Those opposite govern for themselves.

Mr Bailey interjected.

Ms BATES: The member for Miller should know how to wear a mask. You do not wear it like a chaff bag.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Order! Comments will come through the chair.

Ms BATES: Those opposite govern for themselves. Those opposite govern for their mates. Those opposite do not govern for you, the people of Queensland. That is the current state of play here in Queensland. It has been felt up and down this great state or ours and the good people of Hervey Bay are not immune to it. They feel every bit of it because basic services in Hervey Bay are broken—services that Queenslanders expect the state government to deliver, like law and order and health.

Make no mistake, it is not the fault of the police on the beat or the doctors and nurses in the hospital. They are doing all they can with what they have got. It is those opposite who are hopelessly letting them down. I want to thank the member for Burdekin for moving this motion—for standing up for the people of Hervey Bay. I want to thank him for giving them a voice—a voice to tell the truth about what is going on here in this place.

Mr Bailey interjected.

Mr Minnikin interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The members for Miller and Chatsworth will cease their quarrelling across the chamber.

Ms BATES: If the member for Burdekin does not do this, if my colleagues in the opposition and I do not do this, then who will? Sadly, not the current member for Hervey Bay. If he were honest, he could level with his colleagues. He could tell them and this chamber that state government-run services in Hervey Bay are in dire trouble. The member would talk about repeat young offenders smashing shopfront windows to raid stores and collect their loot. The member would talk about the break and enters, with people's homes being turned upside down and inside out—so too their lives. The member would also talk about the health system in Hervey Bay and the dire state it is in because of this government's underinvestment in the region for year after year after year.

At the Hervey Bay Hospital, the second storey of the ED block has been an empty pigeon coop for years. To hide it, the HHS put up curtains when they realised you could see into the empty ward at night time. The member for Hervey Bay is preaching to me about health; he reminds me of a little boil that needs to be lanced.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Pause the clock.

Mr TANTARI: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take offence at that.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Hervey Bay, if you are taking offence, you need to ask for it to be withdrawn. Before you get to that, that language was unparliamentary and I ask the member for Mudgeeraba to withdraw.

Ms BATES: I withdraw. Things are at crisis point. I have spoken with police and paramedics at length about it. I have spoken with them in Hervey Bay and right across Queensland. They tell a story of night after night not being able to do their jobs properly because the youth justice system is a joke and our health system is buckling under immense strain.


Picture this: both the ambulance and the police are called to a mental health job. It is pretty urgent. The police arrive on the scene but the ambos still are not there. Why not? Because they are ramped at Hervey Bay Hospital. The police are left to deal with the job until the QAS can get to their own job. While the police are waiting, there is a call over the radio—a known youth offender has broken into a local business but the police are stuck. They cannot leave the mental health patient, so what happens? Are the police left to transfer the mental health patient to hospital? Do they wait? Do they leave? It is an unthinkable situation, but it is unfolding across Queensland every night in places like Hervey Bay. The paramedics want to offload their patient at the hospital so they can get back on the road. The nurses and the doctors at the hospital just want a bed for the patient in the overcrowded ED. And the police want to do the job they signed up to do—to uphold law and order in this state. It is a vicious cycle and I feel for every one of them. They are giving it their all, but they are doing their job with one hand tied behind their back.

Let me rattle off some figures behind this horrible mess. At Hervey Bay, ramping is at 45 per cent. That is uncharted waters. In the ED at Hervey Bay, 47 per cent of patients are not seen on time. That is the fourth worst in the state. There is a problem. To the member for Hervey Bay, you have a

problem. To the Minister for Health, you have a problem. To those opposite, you have a problem and you must start listening to the cries for help which are coming from communities like Hervey Bay. The government are losing control of basic health services.

Mr Bailey interjected.

Ms BATES: Put your mask on. The government are losing control of basic services like health and basic services like law and order. It is happening because they are focused on everything but delivering for Queenslanders and delivering for the residents of Hervey Bay.

 **Hon. LM LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (5.55 pm): I rise to speak in support of the amended motion as put forward by my colleague the Minister for Police and against the motion moved by those opposite. From the outset, I would like to acknowledge, as I always do, that one victim of crime is one too many, and that includes the small business owners of Hervey Bay who have raised issues recently regarding antisocial behaviour. Every Queenslander has a right to feel safe in their homes, in their businesses and in their communities. Whether it is offending by young people or adults, public safety is paramount and community confidence essential. That is what our government, our frontline police and our youth justice workers are focused on each and every day.

While we focus on holding offenders to account and intervening to try to stop the cycle of crime to keep the community safe, those opposite play politics with this serious issue, over and over again. A press conference does not a plan make. Those opposite repeatedly stand up—whether in Hervey Bay, Cairns, Townsville or wherever else they can get a film crew assembled—to talk about the issue but they never actually articulate an alternative plan. It is now 586 days since the opposition said they were drafting their youth justice plan. Where is the plan? That was 586 days ago. They are all politics, with no plan, no policies and no idea. We know there is no silver bullet. There is no easy fix in respect of crime. We are honest with the community about that, but we do have a plan and we are putting that plan into action—more police on the beat and investing in more diversionary services and intensive interventions—because we have listened to the community and that is what they want to see.

Enough about those opposite, I want to now turn to the member for Hervey Bay. He is someone who advocates strongly on behalf of his local community and his local business owners. When concerns were raised with him recently, he did not call the cameras in and he did not play politics. He picked up the phone and he asked me to come to Hervey Bay, to his city, to meet with local stakeholders on the ground, and that is what I did—because a strong local member actually did something practical and picked up the phone. He asked me to come.

I met with my department and people on the ground, I met with police and I met with the mayor, councillors and the CEO. At the meeting, I listened to the concerns being raised by local stakeholders and the issues being raised by the local community. We know that local communities are often the first to see young people disengaged from school and disengaged from prosocial behaviours and that local communities want to be a part of the solution. Local place based solutions are often the most powerful. The member for Hervey Bay knows that. That is why he did the job of an active, connected and strong local member. He is an excellent local member and I am sure the community are noticing the energy that he brings to the role.

In Hervey Bay, the local youth justice service centre is investing in a range of programs to deter young people from offending and reoffending, and it will keep doing that important work. These programs are about addressing the criminogenic factors that often lead to offending because we want to stop the cycle. That is what the community wants to see. The member for Hervey Bay has advocated for some additional investment in his community, as good local members do. I have given him the commitment, and I do so again tonight, that I have taken away those concerns, as has my department, and I will come back to him in due course.

While those opposite play politics, they present no policy and no meaningful ideas to address these issues: curfew—rejected; boot camps—failed; breach of bail—absolute FOGWOB. This government's local members are doing the hard yards on the ground to represent the community, while those opposite are just in front of a camera.

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

AYES, 50:

ALP, 50—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Hunt, Kelly, A. King, S. King, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Madden, Martin, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.

NOES, 35:

LNP, 31—Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Crandon, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Gerber, Hart, Head, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister, Mander, McDonald, Mickelberg, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, O'Connor, Perrett, Powell, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Stevens, Watts, Weir.

KAP, 3—Dametto, Katter, Knuth.

PHON, 1—Andrew.

Pair: Howard; Purdie.

Resolved in the affirmative.

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

AYES, 50:

ALP, 50—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Hunt, Kelly, A. King, S. King, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Madden, Martin, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.

NOES, 35:

LNP, 31—Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Crandon, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Gerber, Hart, Head, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister, Mander, McDonald, Mickelberg, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, O'Connor, Perrett, Powell, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Stevens, Watts, Weir.

KAP, 3—Dametto, Katter, Knuth.

PHON, 1—Andrew.

Pair: Howard; Purdie.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Motion, as agreed—

That this House notes

- (a) the importance of community safety and the impact it has on victims of crime;
- (b) the record investment by the Palaszczuk government in community safety measures;
- (c) that our emergency service workers work in collaboration with each other on behalf of Queenslanders;
- (d) the government's strong actions during the pandemic which has kept Queenslanders safe; and


acknowledges the strong advocacy of the member for Hervey Bay in support of his community.

TRADING (ALLOWABLE HOURS) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from p. 2104, on motion of Ms Grace—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Ms RICHARDS** (Redlands—ALP) (6.08 pm): What a delight it is to follow the member for Kawana's contribution to this bill. I rise to speak in support of this bill. I am really quite curious. I saw LNP members of my committee scratching their heads a little bit going, 'What's this all about?' Whether you read the statement of reservation in our inquiry report or whether you read the statement of reservation in relation to this amendment bill, I am not sure where the member for Kawana was coming from. As far as I am aware, we were on a bipartisan ticket on this. I will read the conclusion from the inquiry and then I will share the conclusion in the amendment bill. It says—

The LNP Opposition members of the committee understand that small businesses, including small independent and family-owned retailers, are the powerhouse of our economy ...

which we all agree—

... employing a significant proportion of the nation's workforce, and generating prosperity for owners and staff alike. In doing so, tax revenue is generated which funds the social security, infrastructure and services upon which our society depends. Such small businesses and their staff work very hard and strive to serve and support their local communities, customers and suppliers. We believe that there is a need in such environments to ensure that the institutionalised power imbalances between small independent retailers and large chain supermarkets are not left unchecked, and that the preservation of competition depends upon a degree of retained retail trading hours regulation ...

which is what both the inquiry found and the bill is delivering on. It goes on to say—

We believe that this approach is essential in a large and decentralised state such as Queensland.

The LNP Opposition members of the committee generally support the committee reports' recommendations which have resulted from a thorough and searching engagement with interest groups, retailers and the public throughout the state. The recommendations seek not to deprive small family retail businesses and their staff of any existing trading hours protections, but rather to adjust and improve the workings of the Act.

I have absolutely no idea where the member for Kawana was coming from. With regard to cherry-picking submissions, in the inquiry we had 28 submissions, we travelled the state thoroughly, we met with all types of retailers, we met with unions and we met with employees. It was a comprehensive piece of work that we undertook in the inquiry. Similarly, in reviewing the bill itself we consulted well and received over 14 submissions. We had umpteen people come in to talk to us on both the inquiry and the bill, so I do not know where he was coming from.

When you think about it, the LNP had the chance when they were in government to look at this piece of legislation, which had over 99 trading hours orders that existed across Queensland. The Palaszczuk government commissioned the review by John Mickel. The reference group did a fantastic job in unscrambling an egg. They brought it down from 99 different sets of trading hours to five. What this bill seeks to do is refine that a little further—and that is based on the feedback that we received throughout the inquiry process—to bring it down to four sets of trading hours.

Again, I am not sure where the member for Kawana is coming from. There was no talk in the LNP's statement of reservation about extending the moratorium. I note that the member for Hinchinbrook did in his, but from the LNP side there was nothing. I am quite confused by his contribution, but there you go.

Mr Dametto interjected.

Ms RICHARDS: Possibly not. The legislation is in direct response to the committee's inquiry into the operation of the Trading (Allowable Hours) Act 1990. We tabled the report from the inquiry on 31 January 2022. As I said, during the inquiry the committee heard from key stakeholders representing retailers, retail workers, local governments, chambers of commerce, tourism groups and small business owners. I go back again to the member for Kawana. I think he quoted two submissions. Perhaps he was not listening to what the chamber of commerce had to say. Commerce North West in Mount Isa was certainly very clear about their point of view. CCIQ were pretty clear about their point of view as well.

As in the previous review undertaken by the Trading Hours Review Reference Group that, as I said, was chaired by Mr John Mickel, these stakeholders held quite divergent views. I think that was seen as we travelled across the state. It was very clear on the night that the views of many in the community in Mount Isa, which has a number of independent retailers, were extraordinarily divergent. The chamber of commerce, their local council and their tourism association were all seeking to have Sunday trading and trading on public holidays. As I said, there were divergent views on total deregulation of the industry and providing the opportunity in some of those regional areas to have Sunday trading in the case of the bigger retailers such as Woolies, Coles and Kmart.

As I said, 99 different trading hours arrangements were refined as a result of the Mickel review and the legislation that was introduced in 2017. In the inquiry into the operation of the legislation we made nine recommendations, and this amendment bill actually delivers on all of them. What we heard very loud and clear right the way across Queensland was that the moratorium that had existed for five years, which expires on 31 August, has served the Queensland retail sector well. It has provided stability and certainty across Queensland in how we shop. I note that we had to deal with COVID for two years of that time, but I do not think that detracted at all from that commentary around the stability that the 2017 legislation delivered.

With this bill we will be continuing to provide that stability and certainty for retailers. We will be providing the opportunity for the QIRC to look at those four categories in terms of where regions are represented but to do that in a rigorous and robust way. That will allow them to look at any future changes as an independent arbiter whilst maintaining the four categories of trading hours times. We certainly do not want to go back to 99 different sets of trading hours.

We spoke to the SDA and we heard from a number of people around being coerced into working these extended hours. This bill goes further to provide workers with protections. It ensures that if you are a single mum who cannot work those extended hours, under this legislation, even if you fall into that federal space, possibly under an EBA, you will still have those protections. It is a really good piece of work that has been done there.


Special events was something that was also highlighted throughout this process. Special events were really meant to be determined on the basis that they were a significant special event like the Commonwealth Games, for example. What we have seen transpire over the past five years is events like the Chinchilla Melon Festival were getting special event classification to allow trading. Through this legislation we are asking the QIRC to show some more rigour and robust and deeper criteria in terms of what is considered significant. I think that will be appropriate for events of the scale of the Olympics rather than melon festivals. The special events consideration is a good piece of work.

I have spoken about the workers and the SDA. In terms of the moratorium, the minister has touched on that. We have extended it by 12 months to continue to provide stability and certainty. Where there is that slight shift in category it will give those retailers time to manoeuvre and prepare. It also allows the QIRC time to prepare for the changes in this legislation. The extension of the moratorium will provide that opportunity. As I said, the moratorium worked well for the five years. It has demonstrated clearly that what we have in place is working well. I think that is really important for our retailers.

What was good to hear throughout that inquiry process is all the hard work the retail sector did during that COVID period. I think our retailers have pretty much been unsung heroes when it came to the pandemic and the work they did throughout the course of it. I will take this opportunity to thank all of our retail workers for the work they did to keep food on our tables and toilet paper in our toilets. They were working hard under difficult conditions.

The bill also makes some minor amendments to the Education (Queensland College of Teachers) Act 2005 and the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 around digital technology. I do not think there is a member in this chamber who has not attended a P&C meeting by Zoom over the last two years. I think this puts into legislation some pretty sensible provisions.

The inquiry process was excellent. I thank everybody who was involved in it. The deputy chair did a great job. The committee did a great job: the members for Stafford, Rockhampton, Hinchinbrook and Theodore. It was a good, rigorous process and I thank the minister for that opportunity.

 **Mr MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (6.18 pm): I rise to address the Trading (Allowable Hours) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill and to speak in support of the amendments to be moved by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. As we have heard, this bill seeks to implement the recommendations arising from the inquiry into the operation of the Trading (Allowable Hours) Act 1990, the report of which does not identify a need or a demand for substantial deregulation of trading hours arrangements following changes to the arrangements made by the state government in 2017. I note the committee has made nine recommendations in the inquiry report, which are reflected in the legislation before the House. As the Deputy Leader of the Opposition said, the LNP will be opposing the provisions implementing committee recommendations 2, 7 and 9.

Just about every member of this House speaks about the importance of small and family business on regular occasions. Unfortunately, too frequently the rhetoric we hear from those opposite does not match the reality. Too frequently small and family businesses are left hanging in the breeze by this Palaszczuk Labor government. Throughout 2020 and 2021 time and time again the government had to be dragged kicking and screaming to provide any meaningful support for small and family business during their hour of need.

I cannot count the number of press conferences where I stood alongside the Leader of the Opposition and the shadow minister for health calling on the government to not forget small and family business and to provide real support. That the state government provided any support for small and family business during the COVID pandemic is the result of advocacy from organisations like CCIQ, which fought alongside the LNP to get that essential support to keep small and family businesses afloat and their nearly one million employees in a job.

The simple fact is that small and family businesses are nothing more than an afterthought for this Labor state government. It does not understand small business and it does not care, and it is those same small and family businesses that this bill should protect. This bill should protect our local butchers, our bakers and our small independent grocers from the suffocating market power of large supermarket chains like Coles and Woolworths. Regardless of where they are located across Queensland, the importance of small and family businesses cannot be overstated. It is small and family businesses, as we heard from the deputy opposition leader, that sponsor the local footy club and increasingly it is the small and family businesses that employ our young locals, training them as apprentice butchers, bakers and the like.

During COVID when the supply chains of large supermarket chains crumbled, it was the local IGA or the local Spar or the other independent supermarkets that weathered the storm, providing a much needed source of critical products like fruit and veggies, meat, milk and, as the father of a toddler and baby, all too frequently nappies. This bill needs to strike a balance between protecting the little guys who simply cannot compete with the big guys on price and with providing consumers with choice and convenience. The LNP is the party of smaller government and less regulation, but there are times where I believe the government should seek to level the playing field.

Our communities are lesser if small independent retailers shut up shop because they are no longer viable. To level the playing field a little bit, the government should be protecting small retailers from the market power of huge businesses like Coles, Woolies and Aldi. That does not mean that big businesses like Coles and Woolies are not important parts of the community. They are. Big supermarkets employ many thousands of Queenslanders and, in fact, my first proper casual job was in a Coles supermarket and, like me, I am sure most Queenslanders get their weekly shopping from a big supermarket. However, the reality is that the market power big retailers like Coles and Woolies can wield is far greater than anything small and family businesses can compete with.

Submissions to the committee were diverse and a number of stakeholder groups, including the Australian Retailers Association and the Shopping Centre Council of Australia, advocated for complete deregulation of trading hours, which I do not agree with and I do not think such a course of action is in the best interests of all Queenslanders. Conversely, I note that the National Retail Association and the Queensland Small Business Commissioner were both broadly supportive of the bill in its current form. I want to address the CCIQ's submission that the committee chair spoke of which raises the fact that trading hours legislation in its current form is too complex. I agree that it is complex and I agree that we need to see a greater focus on reducing the regulatory burden right across government, but a solution that sees the removal of protections for small and family business is not the answer to that problem.

There are a multitude of other red-tape and regulatory barriers impacting small business that could be tackled if the state government had the inclination. The lack of focus on regulatory reform from this state government is disappointing given this is one of the greatest concerns raised by Queensland small business owners whom I speak to and who feel are being restricted by red-tape roadblocks. It is vital that the path to expand and grow as a business is made easier for small businesses.

During estimates I asked questions about what red-tape reduction initiatives have been established by the Palaszczuk government and the examples that were cited were the Business Launchpad and the Small Business Commissioner. Are they useful initiatives? Yes, but neither do anything to further regulatory reform. At best, the Business Launchpad identifies the multiple of redundant and duplicated regulatory requirements that businesses must satisfy just to trade and the Small Business Commissioner helps small business navigate a flawed system that is heaving under the weight of red tape. The Small Business Commissioner does a good job of that, but outside of her core role assisting to resolve tenancy disputes the Small Business Commissioner is not empowered to remove red tape. The body that was empowered to identify redundant processes and unnecessary red tape was the Queensland Productivity Commission, but it was cut by this state Labor government after one too many politically inconvenient reports.

Of all the submissions, perhaps the most significant for me was from Master Grocers Australia and it has shaped the amendments that the deputy opposition leader will bring into the House. Master Grocers Australia said that it believes that small and family grocery retailers will be forced to cease trading should committee recommendations 2, 7 and 9 be adopted or if the moratorium contained within section 59 is not extended for a meaningful period due to its inability to compete with major national supermarket chains. Twelve months is not a meaningful period. Twelve months is a year and it is far short of what Master Grocers Australia and the IGA representative bodies for northern New South Wales and Queensland have asked for. That is why the LNP will be opposing the provisions that implement committee recommendations 2, 7 and 9 and we will seek to extend the moratorium extension from the proposed one year to five years. This five-year moratorium is an acknowledgement that trading conditions over the last 2½ years have been significantly disrupted due to COVID—

Ms Richards interjected.

Mr MICKELBERG:—a point which the Labor committee chair acknowledged.

Ms Richards: Did you forget to put that in the statement of reservation?

Mr MICKELBERG: I did not write the statement of reservation, but I will respond to the interjection, Deputy Speaker—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Through the chair you will respond.

Mr MICKELBERG: I will respond to the interjection, Mr Deputy Speaker, from the committee chair. The LNP members of the committee submitted a statement of reservation. We read the committee report in its entirety, including all of the recommendations and the submissions, and that is how we arrive at the position that we are debating today. I know that those opposite like to come in here and things are a foregone conclusion and they run the talking points out because that is what they are told by their union masters and the front bench is made up of—

Mr Bailey interjected.

Mr MICKELBERG:—weak ministers like the member for Miller, owned by the union movement and incapable of independent thought.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member, I would ask you to withdraw that unparliamentary language.

Mr MICKELBERG: I withdraw. Getting back to the bill, this five-year moratorium is an acknowledgement, as I said, that trading conditions over the last 2½ years have been significantly disrupted due to COVID related impacts and they are likely to remain uncertain for the foreseeable future, so extending the moratorium by five years is a commonsense measure that removes uncertainty for small and family businesses at a time when they are just starting to get back on their feet.

The LNP, and only the LNP, is the party of small and family businesses. It is in our DNA. Many on this side, as has been noted, still run small and family businesses and we live the challenges day in and day out. Despite the calls from those opposite so far that we have heard and despite the fact that the minister has demonstrated that she is not prepared to engage in good faith and debate the issues that this bill contains, I call on those opposite to listen to the arguments raised in the debate today and listen to the voice of Master Grocers and the small independent grocery stores that are such an important part of our community. Listen to the Master Grocers and listen to your local IGA. Go and talk to your local IGA and see what they say this bill will do if it is enacted in its current form. Those opposite should support the amendments that will be moved by the deputy opposition leader which will provide certainty for small and family businesses.



Mr O'ROURKE (Rockhampton—ALP) (6.27 pm): I am—

Ms Richards: Shocked—shocked!

Mr O'ROURKE: Absolutely shocked! I actually do not think those opposite have read the report and definitely have not read the statement of reservation. When we look at the investment by the Palaszczuk government into the support of our small businesses, we know that small businesses are following us in Labor. We do way more than the LNP has ever done.

I rise to speak in support of the Trading (Allowable Hours) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. As a member of the Education, Employment and Training Committee, we reviewed the trading hours across the state. We received 28 submissions from retail and peak business bodies, unions and retailers. The committee understood the differences in every location and we went out there to actually listen to those communities. We held hearings across the state in Brisbane, Cairns, Mossman, Mount Isa and Townsville, with 47 witnesses giving evidence at seven public hearings, and going to these locations and speaking to people who lived and worked in the area gave us a real understanding of the difference in locations given the local impacts.

For example, when we were in Mossman we heard from Tara Bennett, the Chief Executive Officer of Tourism Port Douglas Daintree, in part, where she wanted to add on to some of the points that had already been covered by the mayor and the chamber of commerce. When the mayor opened, he spoke about the 600,000 visitors they had prior to COVID. Of that, 280,000 visitors were day visitors, which means they have one opportunity for them to come in and spend some money in the region. Also, bearing in mind that Port Douglas is world famous for its Sunday markets, they have the greatest influx of day visitors on Sundays. Not only are they attending the markets, they are shopping up and down the main street. If not, they are taking a family trip up to the Mossman Gorge. Coles and Woolworths play a critical role in delivering the necessary services for visitors.


In recent years, particularly this year, the drive market has gone gangbusters throughout Queensland. The Port Douglas region is one of the last stopping-off points for people heading up to the cape. They need those services open on a Sunday or on a public holiday because they are doing their \$300 or \$400 shop and it is probably one of the last big places they can shop for meat and vegetables

until they get to Coen. Ms Bennett also spoke on the self-catering nature of Port Douglas. There are a lot of strata title properties and, as such, people are coming in thinking that they will go out to the restaurants and cafes, but they are expecting to be able to cater for themselves for probably 1½ meals each day.

In the domestic visitor market, many arrive on Saturdays as they have just finished their work for the week. They may arrive late so they are looking to do their bulk shop on the Sunday. It was not necessarily about increasing visitation with what they are seeing; it was about meeting business expectations and also maximising their opportunity to spend visitor dollars in the region. Ms Bennett explained they are not built as a high-volume model; they are a high-yield destination, so they need to be able to maximise the opportunity for people to spend when they are there because that is the style of visitor that they have been attracting for decades now. She also spoke about the importance of the job opportunities that it provides to the local youth to make their own income and to get a start, particularly with Coles and Woolworths, and to learn through their programs. This is a really great opportunity for the youth of our region who do not have access to as many opportunities as are available in larger populations.

This visit to Mossman really demonstrated the importance of committee work and listening to the regions. There were also public briefings by the Office of Industrial Relations in the Department of Education. From the information that was provided through this consultation process we made nine recommendations. In part, the committee recommends the act be amended to refine the process for consideration of 'special event' applications by the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission. It also recommended, where there is a special event approved by the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission, that the commission has the power to make an order supporting staff voluntary work requirements. It recommended that the categories for non-exempt shops core trading hours be reduced to four: South-East Queensland area, which remained unchanged; tourism area amended to include Mossman and Port Douglas tourism areas; regional areas; and other areas. There was strong support from submitters for no changes to trading hours for hardware stores and those selling motor vehicles or caravans. Also, there was no change to the definition for independent retail shop. We also recommended that the Trading (Allowable Hours) Act 1990 be extended for an additional 12 months to 31 August 2023.

Across Queensland in 2021 there were approximately 266,000 retail employees, or 10.3 per cent of total employment. The retail industry is the second largest employer after health care. We need to ensure we balance the needs of retailers and that of their employees and I believe this bill addresses this. I would like to put on the record my thanks to all retail workers during the COVID period for providing food and other items for our communities. They have done an absolutely amazing job and I congratulate them on what they did during very difficult times. I would also like to thank my fellow committee members and our secretariat. It was great to travel around Queensland and understand what is happening in the regions and the impacts of this bill. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr LISTER** (Southern Downs—LNP) (6.35 pm): I rise to make my own contribution on the Trading (Allowable Hours) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, both in my capacity as the member for Southern Downs and as the deputy chair of the Education, Employment and Training Committee. I would like to thank the member for Redlands for her words. We did have a very good trip around Queensland investigating the operations of the existing act. As the member for Rockhampton just said, it was a great chance for us to get to know each other.

With your indulgence, Mr Deputy Speaker, I would like to say something I did not get a chance to say when I spoke earlier. I wanted to thank the member for Redlands for the way in which she chaired our estimates committee. I do not know whether saying so is the kiss of death. I do not intend it in that sense. It was done well and I thank her for her stewardship.

Getting back to the bill, I note that the member for Redlands is amazed that we have not telegraphed to the government in our statement of reservation what we would do. As the member for Buderim has said, with great gusto, we do things on an individualistic basis. We believe in proper process. When the opposition members of the committee come together to decide whether we will make a statement of reservation—

Ms Richards: I'm glad that you like the bill!

Mr LISTER: I take the interjection from the member for Redlands. I would ask her to consider listening to a bit more of what I have to say yet because her conclusion may be different after that.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Comments will come through the chair, please.

Mr LISTER: Yes, sorry, Mr Deputy Speaker. We came together to agree on a statement of reservation and the broader opposition have decided to do something more concrete about the concerns that we have expressed. I see nothing about the statement of reservation that we put in either the committee report on the investigation that the committee did late last year into the operations of the act nor in the statement of reservation which we tendered on this particular bill.

The minister said in her second reading speech that the arrangements prior to the 2017 act were quite complex and unwieldy. That was undoubtedly true. To a large extent the bill has provided certainty, particularly with the five-year moratorium on the extension of trading hours for small businesses like the many in my own electorate.

As the member for Redlands has said, there were a great diversity of views expressed whilst we were on the road and also during the hearing process here for both the investigation we did and the bill itself, but I would like to focus now, wearing my hat as the member for Southern Downs, on the small business aspects. To me and my communities, the small businesses who have most at stake in this particular bill are businesses such as the IGAs, the FoodWorks, the SPAR supermarket and the 5 Star Supermarket run by Chris and Gail Henry in Goondiwindi. As the member has said, and reading our statement of reservation into the parliamentary record, we get that small business is the powerhouse of employment and economic activity in this state.

To the regional businesses that are affected by this bill, I say this: I understand that our part of regional Queensland, the Southern Downs, has a unique set of circumstances and it is not always the right thing to allow the big players to have Sunday trading. One of the most compelling arguments that I came across in this process was from a good friend of mine, the owner of Spano's IGAs in Warwick and Stanthorpe—and they exist in other locations as well. Frank Spano also happens to be the chair of the Queensland state IGA board. To make myself rightly understood by the government, he has not paid me anything to say that I am his friend or to his read his contribution into the record. He said—

In the supermarket industry, employment is expressed as a percentage of turnover. IGA supermarkets typically employ staff at the rate of between 10-12%. The chains don't divulge their rate of employment, but industry intelligence estimates the major chains employ at the rate of less than 6.25% of turnover (Aldi is reputed to employ at the rate of less than 5% of turnover). Some of Coles' annual returns whilst not expressing an employment metric, do state total employment and turnover for the group, which is consistent with a rate of sub 6.25% of turnover. Our industry intelligence is gained in large part by the employment of ex-chain staff in IGA supermarkets, which is a common practice. If there be any doubt that the chains are not reducing overall employment levels in store, the IGA Board invites the Committee to inspect any newly opened Woolworths which have half self-serve checkouts, and rarely manned served checkouts.

In the context of a region like the Southern Downs, an IGA store such as those operated by Frank Spano will still employ an apprentice butcher and will still employ an apprentice baker. Those stores pour large amounts of money back into their communities. In the case of the Stanthorpe Agricultural Show Society, the IGA has been the main sponsor on a number of occasions. The case is quite clear that those businesses look after their communities and that they are in touch with their communities.

Mr Power interjected.

Mr LISTER: I am not taking interjections from the member for Logan, who I understand is on a warning. He may wish to restrain himself.

I am talking about the serious business of small businesses in my electorate. They have a stake in this and they want to have a voice. That is why I am fully supportive of the opposition's move to extend the moratorium beyond the one year that is proposed in the bill to a full five years. That will give certainty to many small businesses such as IGAs, 5 Star supermarkets, SPARs and FoodWorks, which fear being disadvantaged by the encroachment of the big chains.

I spoke to a prominent elected citizen in my electorate. I am not able to repeat what they said about the large chains for fear of transgressing standing orders. Suffice to say that their advice to me was to stand up for small business because the big players have dominated not only the retail side but also the purchasing side in terms of buying vegetable and fruit produce from small mum-and-dad farmers in my electorate of Southern Downs. It is important to give that certainty. Given that we have had COVID and difficult times with bushfires, floods and drought in my electorate, that would be very much appreciated, particularly in Goondiwindi where we do not have Sunday trading already.

I turn to the local produce angle. The member for Kawana mentioned that businesses such as IGAs and FoodWorks purchase their produce locally, which is great. For instance, in Stanthorpe we have an excellent product that is produced by a local grower. The Savio orchards produce Upple, which is an apple in a bottle. It is a fantastic product. It is difficult to produce in quantities needed to go to

market, which is a big step. As an initial step, the Stanthorpe IGA stocks it. When you cannot get fruit and vegies from other sources, you can bet that the local supermarket will have them because they have arrangements with the local suppliers. Those sorts of things make a real difference in our communities.

The amendments that the LNP opposition have put forward go to the heart of protecting vulnerable small businesses that do not have the ability to amortise freight costs across a giant organisation. They do not have the ability to engage in predatory pricing against their competitors, putting their prices up again once they have seen off those competitors. They do not have the ability to invest in automatic checkout machines and things like that, which take away jobs and give the big stores an unfair advantage.

I do concede that my view on this is not shared by everyone. I remember the member for Redlands said that in some areas some independent supermarkets have done very well in recent times. They have been able to adapt and grow the pie. In those contexts deregulation is a good thing, but I believe it is not in my neck of the woods. I fully support the amendments to the bill.



Mr SULLIVAN (Stafford—ALP) (6.45 pm): I rise to support the Trading (Allowable Hours) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. This legislation goes back to previous work undertaken last year; namely, the work referred to the Education, Employment and Training Committee, by motion of this House, covering portfolio work of the Minister for Industrial Relations. The report and this legislation are the product of an extensive and robust committee investigation and research.

In particular, given the specific relevance of the Trading (Allowable Hours) Act to certain regions and/or specific localities, I am glad that the committee was determined to get to the regions and speak to people on the ground. I thank the many stakeholders who participated throughout this process. It feels like a lifetime ago but at the end of last year the committee investigations included site visits and public hearings in Cairns, Mossman, Mount Isa and Townsville. I want to place on record the very strong community engagement throughout which included stakeholder peak bodies as well as local councils, individual businesses, tourist operators and service providers.

I also want to recognise the members of parliament who were able to be involved, including the member for Cairns, who joined us in his local patch, and the member for Cook, who joined the committee in Mossman. As an aside, it was great to join the member for Cook in that region again. As she knows, in my previous life I had the privilege of working for the then attorney who was the community champion for Mossman Gorge. I really enjoyed the occasions I was able to join the attorney-general in engaging with the member for Cook's community, getting to know the region and her people and really learning a lot. It was great to be back up that way.

The member for Traeger was able to attend the Mount Isa forum. I am not sure that the member for Hinchinbrook would have let us leave Brisbane if we did not head to Traeger. I also want to acknowledge on the record the Hon. Tony McGrady and Sandra—obviously, Tony McGrady is a former member, minister, Speaker and mayor—who joined us in Mount Isa. It was great to see them again and hear their views. Of course, when holding public hearings in Townsville we ensured that there were opportunities for stakeholders and businesses in the surrounding regions to participate, especially people who made the effort to come from Charters Towers. We thank them. I take the time to recognise those who participated because I know I am not the only member of the committee who recognised the very different issues—or at least the variety of issues—on which different submitters and witnesses placed their respective priorities. That informed our report and, in turn, this legislation.

The key three elements of this legislation aim to: simplify trading hours arrangements across the state; strengthen protections for employees in the retail sector; and ensure stability for stakeholders and industry by clarifying how the QIRC makes decisions on these issues. The new framework provides a clearer and more effective framework for trading hours across Queensland. It provides a sliding range of categories for trading hours arrangements that can suit regions or localities with a wide variety of character and needs. This provides clarity and stability for industry and business, retail workers, tourist operators, tourists themselves and retail customers.

This legislation also seeks to provide better protections for retail employees. Firstly, in relation to special event provisions, it ensures that the possible impact on employees is a factor that can be considered by the QIRC. Secondly, the worker protection provisions strengthen, or at least clarify or confirm, that working extended hours needs to be genuinely voluntary. There are examples, as the SDA provided, where goodwill handshake agreements between employers and unions, on behalf of workers, are hard to enforce when it comes to the very relationship based dynamics that exist on the shop floor.

I have already declared throughout the hearings on the bill—I am happy to do so again in this debate—that I was a proud member of the SDA when many years ago, in my student days, I worked in retail at the mighty Stafford City Shopping Centre, which is, of course, in the middle of what is now the beautiful electorate of Stafford. It is always a good reminder to me of how sometimes life can come full circle.

The SDA gave compelling submissions about the need for freely agreeing to working extended hours in what is often interrupting family time or, by definition when it comes to special event provisions, interrupting local events that people would otherwise wish to attend. We know in retail that there is a high percentage of students, women, shift workers and casual workers. In those circumstances, and the imbalance that comes with that, feeling pressure to work extended hours can often come with the fear of future loss of wages or future loss of shifts. That is the reality on the shop floor.

It was also discussed throughout the inquiry that there are already existing opportunities in retail for those Queenslanders for whom it actually suits to work what would be considered unsociable hours, whether overnight or very early mornings for example. Some in the industry continue to push for longer and longer hours to be considered standard hours but, as came out in the hearings and as discussed previously, people in retail have a variety of family, educational, sporting and personal commitments and deserve the right to be free from pressure at work to work, particularly outside of standard hours.

As the SDA submitted, there are already a range of roles in retail for those who genuinely want to work different hours such as night shelf stackers, warehouse roles, logistics or the very early morning shift that allows people to finish before school ends to look after their kids, for example. We need to recognise that it is not one-size-fits-all and that retail workers are regular people in our community—real people with their own personal and family priorities.

I also take this chance to thank the retail workers for the extraordinary role they played in getting us through the worst of the pandemic. In my local community of Stafford and right across the state, retail workers played a crucial role in quite literally making it possible for us to put food on the table. To those workers I say: I will continue to stand up for you. I thank those retail workers across the north side who do so much in helping me and my family every week of the year.


I would like to briefly touch on the education element of the bill, in particular the adjustments to arrangements for parent and citizen organisations. It is fair to say that I objectively spend a lot of time with local P&Cs—perhaps too much time. I know of their efforts to adjust during COVID to keep the important work of P&Cs going. My experience is that they have done it pretty well across a variety of models. There are now P&Cs—and P&Fs for that matter—that are back meeting in person, online via Zoom or Teams, or indeed a hybrid of in person and online. It appears to be working well and in many cases has allowed more parents to participate, allowed parents to participate in their preferred way or indeed, where relevant, allowed two parents more easily to participate. I have been in meetings, for example, where a mum was talking at the meeting in person while the dad was listening online at home with the kids in bed. It is just an example of the flexibility available. I thank the minister for bringing this small but important tweak to support the ongoing work of our P&Cs. I also give a shout-out to P&C Queensland, their peak body, based in Wilston in the wonderful electorate of Stafford. It does a great job supporting P&Cs right across the state. I wish them well for their upcoming conference.

In terms of this legislation I would like to thank a few people, because it has been quite a productive process but the committee cannot take full credit for the journey in this policy space. We should recognise the work of the Hon. John Mickel, whose report was sensible, thorough and provided a steady pathway for future reform. His work in 2016 led to the reforms in 2017. Those changes made a really big difference in getting us to where we are now, which I think is a really good place. The minister reflected in her contribution on how effective those changes have proven to be.

Likewise, I thank the departmental staff who have helped be the custodians of these reforms over many years. That goes back to those initial reforms and extends to managing and analysing the moratorium. The department provided detailed material for the committee through the initial inquiry and also through this legislative round of inquiry. I thank them for that. I also thank the departmental staff who ensured they participated in the regional forums and were on hand to provide support to the secretariat, to members and to the committee process more broadly out on the road.

I thank the chair for her hard work. I think she does a great job. I appreciate that other members of the committee have recognised her role and the great job she has done. I thank the deputy chair and other members for what I think was a pretty collegiate process—at least until we came to amendments. I also recognise the work of the secretariat, parliamentary staff and Hansard not just for the usual work they do through this legislative process but for the huge matrix they had to manage when it came to

trying to fit in an extensive travel, public hearing and submission process in the lead-up to Christmas last year. I think it paid off. The report is better for it. The legislation is better for it. Queensland industry and workers will be better for it. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr KATTER** (Traeger—KAP) (6.55 pm): I thank the member for Stafford for mentioning Mount Isa in his contribution. It is important that the committee went there. This is an issue that I find very important to debate in this House, because it represents that tension between economic rationalism and people who see some benefit in preserving small business and having regulation in place. I think it cuts to the heart of why we are here, because there has been such a large trend—a tidal wave—towards this free market ideology to let everything go and the big corporates take over. It is all about the consumers' convenience, their right to have the lowest prices and those sorts of virtues that sound good, but left in the wake is the destruction of small private enterprise in Australia. It is a massive problem, and no-one seems to want to own it.

We can talk about energy and insurance costs, which are important, but there are some economic and policy areas where it has been a case of 'hands off the wheel and let the market decide'. Guess what has happened? We have grown these enormous duopolies. There is a third player in the grocery market now.

Back in the day, the United States said that it is not healthy to have too much market dominance by any players. It is not an issue for any of the major parties in Australia. They have just said, 'We're okay with this.' Here is our one opportunity to provide a small remnant of regulation to protect the battlers out there. Small private enterprises are a dying industry. I did not move to Mount Isa because I just enjoyed living in the sunshine; I moved there to own a small business. It was my one opportunity in life to own a small business. There is not much opportunity to do that anymore in valuations. It has all been swallowed up by the big corporates.

We had some wonderful presenters in Mount Isa. Bob Burrow of Colonial Convenience said exactly that: 'I donate. I have coached boxing and Rugby League out here. I wouldn't have come out here if I didn't have the opportunity to own a small shop.' That is an important part of community fabric and economic fabric that is lost in the mix. If you do not nail your colours to the mast and protect—you need to regulate. That is why we are here: to discern and say, 'Hang on, there is a problem here. We had better step in.' Coles and Woolworths are doing pretty fine without us. They will keep growing their market share. If we are talking about convenience, in Cloncurry Woolies said, 'You know what? We're not making enough money here. Let's just shut down.' They do not have to stay open for seven days and provide this convenience. They will shut down.

Do members know what they did in Pioneer, in Mount Isa, where we have all the public housing and social problems? They just shut down their shop there and it became a lot worse: 'Let's force all the Mount Isa residents into one store.' Then all the advocates in Mount Isa were saying, 'We need more convenience stores because the lines are too big at Woolworths.' Is that the problem with the urban planning or is that Woolworths' problem for not building a bigger store or hiring more employees?

What else happened? Brumbies in Mount Isa, David Griffiths Pharmacy in Charters Towers and Lance and Danny Burkett love hiring people and being engaged in the community. Woolworths and Coles are getting more and more digital checkouts so they hire fewer people. The Labor Party had better acknowledge this, because I thought they were for the workers. I am for the workers. Let's do five years of blocking this off. These guys have had a good run at this. They have plenty of market share. Let's regulate it some more. The KAP flagged our intention very early to move amendments for a five-year moratorium, because that is what is needed. We need something stronger than this to send a signal to small business owners that we do look after them and we will try to protect them from the big guys.

One of the arguments put forward in Mount Isa—curiously, by the chamber of commerce and Mount Isa Tourism—is people out at Clem Walton Park, which is free camping, are not going to come the 50 kilometres into town because when they come into town the grocery store is not open on a Sunday. It was said that when they come in on a Sunday they would magically spend all this extra money buying dresses and shoes when they buy their groceries. I think that is funny. I think that is nonsense. There is no magical tourist dollar that comes into our town because they are going to spend an extra \$100. If they are at Clem Walton camping for free, I can guarantee that they are trying to save money. They are not out there to spend big dollars at the Coles shopping centre in Mount Isa.

This is not going to create additional economic activity that is going to help the other small retailers in the town that are already allowed to open. It does not work like that. It does enhance livability if people can shop—of course it does. Having 24-hour shopping would enhance livability and convenience, but we have to think of the counterpoint and the cost of these things.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Bush): Member, sorry to interrupt, but could I ask that you move that the debate be now adjourned.


Mr KNUTH: Madam Deputy Speaker, I move that the member for Traeger be further heard.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will take advice. Member, it is an automatic adjournment so there is no point of order. I ask the member again to adjourn the debate.

Debate, on motion of Mr Katter, adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

Price, Mr T

 **Mr MINNIKIN** (Chatsworth—LNP) (7.01 pm): I rise this evening to pay tribute to an inspiring young man from my electorate, Tom Price, whose powerful words have resonated with so many people from all walks of life in my local Chatsworth community. I am pleased to welcome Tom, who is in the public gallery this evening.

In 2021, Tom, then a year 11 student at Villanova College, successfully launched a youth mental health campaign in his school community. In September 2021, Tom came up with the idea to produce a video on youth mental health. Tom and fellow Villa seniors Riley Richards, the college captain; Cam Wallace, the vice captain; and Lachie Bremner worked together to script and produce a social media video featuring celebrities, community leaders and school students to raise awareness and promote a strong message, 'You are not alone'. Tom has told me that he reached out to celebrities mostly via social media and received overwhelming support. The video participants each read a line from the script and five different schools were involved in this process. The four-minute video highlighted issues faced by young people and has since been viewed thousands of times on YouTube.

'You are not alone' was established with an aim to change the statistics around youth mental health and suicide. Over 10 Brisbane high schools have now joined this project. Mental health is one of the leading problems facing young Australians today, particularly since COVID-19. Young people have experienced higher levels of stress and displacement compared to pre-pandemic levels. Statistics need to change. One in five are struggling with high or very high psychological distress, and only 13 per cent of those struggling actually speak up.


With widespread support, Tom and his team organised a 'You are not alone' fun run. The Story Bridge was lit up in yellow lights in the lead-up to this important event. On 25 June, the inaugural fun run was supported by over 2,500 participants, raising over \$37,000 for Lifeline Queensland and funded 955 life-saving phone calls. The Botanic Gardens was filled with people of all ages who had come together to talk, to mingle and to do as the motto implies, and that is to realise that you are indeed not alone.

Tom has updated me since the fun run advising that important initiatives will be developed from feedback received. A 12-month plan is underway to incorporate school based activities, along with two major community events. I quote Tom—

It is these events which will be designed to bring mental health out of the dark and into young people's lives to let the sunshine back in. Therefore, we feel an obligation to continue to be a voice. You don't know what storms young people are weathering.

These words in themselves speak volumes.

Jordan Electorate, Community Centres

 **Mrs MULLEN** (Jordan—ALP) (7.04 pm): On 2 July our Gailes community gathered, despite the rain, to celebrate 20 glorious years of the incredible Gailes Community House. Two decades ago, a small group of committed residents came together with the aim to provide events and activities to assist the community to band together, get to know their neighbours and encourage social connection, developing a positive and well connected suburb of Gailes. Through their work and persistence, Gailes Community House opened its doors to the community in July 2002—a fantastic neighbourhood centre operating from a decommissioned public housing property. Since that time, this little house in Karina Street has offered a safe and welcoming environment.

It was wonderful to catch up with some of the original residents at the 20th year celebration because, as the song says, 'from little things big things grow'. It was also lovely to see the former member for Inala, the Hon. Henry Palaszczuk, who was the local member at the time and was a strong supporter in the establishment of the centre under the Beattie Labor government.

As the state member representing this wonderful community, I am grateful for Gales Community House. Today, it is a thriving neighbourhood centre offering a range of important programs, services and social groups in the local community. I am also very proud that this year's state budget included a significant increase in funding for our neighbourhood centres and was so happy to share with the wonderful team at Gales Community House—Donna, Naomi, Leanne and Kelly-Ann—that they will see the centre's annual funding more than doubled. This is incredible news that will make a tangible difference for the Gales community.


Another organisation that is truly valued in the Jordan electorate is the Vedanta Centre in Springfield Lakes. The Vedanta Centre is a branch of the Ramakrishna Order in India. The centre runs a number of wonderful community and spiritual programs, including yoga, children's and school holiday programs and so much more.

Tonight, I would like to focus on the Maa Sarada's soup kitchen which has been running from the centre for a number of years. On a Saturday people can pop along to the community cafe and enjoy the most delicious food at an affordable price—dosa, samosas and, my new favourite, pani poori. The funds raised from the very popular community cafe are reinvested into running the soup kitchen.

During COVID-19 the amazing and dedicated volunteers—some of whom travel from Deception Bay to Springfield—went into overdrive, preparing ready-made meals for the local community members in need and those who were isolating. In fact, since 2020, the supporters of the centre have cooked and packed more than 10,000 meals for our local community and region.

It was wonderful a few weeks ago to attend a very special community event for the dedication of a brand new commercial kitchen for the centre. It is absolutely wonderful and I know the volunteers are excited about being able to use this new larger kitchen. They have said they are going to prepare even more meals—if that is even possible. I want to thank everyone involved at the Vedanta Centre and look forward to sharing a meal with them again very soon.

Wilkinson, Ms K

 **Mr O'CONNOR** (Bonney—LNP) (7.07 pm): Last April my community was shattered by the loss of local mum Kelly Wilkinson in the most horrific of ways. We hear about domestic violence incidents far too often, but when it happens in your suburb, on a street you drive past every day and to a mum who you see walking her kids to your local school, the impact of this kind of loss hits differently.

For so many people in Arundel and Parkwood, Kelly's death led to an outpouring of grief but also so much love towards her family from people who knew the beautiful person Kelly was or felt some connection to her through Arundel State School or our area more broadly. We came together as a community in Kelly's memory—around 1,000 people at a vigil just up the road from her house at the Parkwood golf course. That support and goodwill saw their GoFundMe reach nearly \$300,000 in donations.

The reality that Kelly's sister Danielle and her partner, Rhys, would have to take in Kelly's three children, along with the five they already had, meant that more was needed. Imagine that: eight kids under the age of 10 in one house! How do you deal with the practicalities of everyday life? How do you fit in that many beds? How do you handle it with just one bathroom? What sort of car do you need to transport that many kids? The answer to the last question is a mini bus, which is what they got. That is where the incredible efforts of Tamika Smith of My Bella Casa will make this family's life so much easier. I acknowledge her in the gallery tonight.


Tamika rallied her industry to build this family a new home. In the middle of a housing crisis, Tamika had that part sorted within 48 hours with the help of Metricon. Then she just need to find a block of land to put the house on that they were going to build. An exceptionally kind Gold Coaster, who must remain anonymous to protect the kids, donated the perfect site worth nearly a million dollars. Today we got to see the slab being poured and the very heavily customised house—Metricon do not normally build houses with seven bedrooms—will be finished by hopefully April next year.

The kids were there to see the start of construction today, in their little hard hats, already having figured out who was getting what bedroom, with the older siblings of course ensuring that the younger ones will be the ones who will have to share. I give a massive thank you to Tamika, to Metricon as well for bringing it altogether and to all of their suppliers from national brands to some of our local small businesses on the Gold Coast.

Finally, to my Gold Coast community: thank you for the support that you have shown and for how you stepped up to care for this family. I particularly want to acknowledge the work of Katie Omrod, from my office, who was instrumental in putting together that vigil and who felt this deeply as a fellow mum of Arundel State School. This house will never replace their loss or the grief that they feel, but it will make a huge impact to their life and the opportunities that they will have. Thank you, everyone.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Bush): Thank you, member for Bonney, for your important contribution.

Agriculture Industry, Biosecurity Threats

 **Mr SKELTON** (Nicklin—ALP) (7.10 pm): I rise to speak on the important issue of biosecurity for my electorate and for the state generally. Specifically, I want to talk about the threat of foot-and-mouth disease and lumpy skin disease to our agricultural sector.


I want to thank the farmers who alerted me immediately not long after the federal election and my staff of Dan, Jo and Lachlan who reacted immediately. We were able to pull up resources from key stakeholders and organise a meeting at the Belli hall to talk with biosecurity officers from DAF. The forum focused on the biosecurity challenges facing primary producers in my electorate of Nicklin—which are the current global outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease and lumpy skin disease, both of which remain so far undetected in the country thanks to the current response. I thank the federal government and DPI for getting into Indonesia, which is the source of the outbreak. I also welcome the quarantine measures that were implemented at points of entry around the country.

I was pleased to have in attendance multiple officers from Biosecurity Queensland. I urge all members in regions and rural areas to reach out to the department and arrange similar meetings in their electorates. I know how hard it is to get farmers together due to the nature of their business, but those who can attend will quickly pass the information on to their neighbours—the old ‘bush telegraph’. There are also great resources available online from the government and industry bodies. If people have some spare time, I highly recommend they check out Beef Central and Dairy Australia. They have some really interesting articles and resources people should have available in their homes.

I know that people in primary industry are not the only people affected in my electorate. There are a lot of hobby farmers who have cattle, goats, pigs, sheep and camelids such as alpacas. All of these animals are affected by this disease. I encourage them all to visit the DAF website. They have an eHub and resources on how to make a biosecurity plan. There are guidelines and you can also download the sign to have at the entrance to your property that says you have a biosecurity plan in place.

In summary, I want to thank the federal government in particular for containing it. There are seven strains of foot-and-mouth disease and the vaccines have to be appropriate to each strain. It is a little altruistic having teams of vets in Indonesia checking cattle just in case it crosses the border. We are concerned about lumpy skin because that is a vector-borne disease—that is, from mosquitoes, and someone referred to Japanese encephalitis. I am proud to be a representative of this government. I and my team will always be proactive in any instance that our community may be threatened.

Ferdinand, Mr R; Resilient Homes Fund

 **Mr McDONALD** (Lockyer—LNP) (7.13 pm): Rest in peace Ray Ferdinand—a great leader, community champion and gentleman of the Gatton and Lockyer communities. Born on 16 March 1956 to Roy and Esther Ferdinand, Ray was the younger brother of Dawn and older brother to Mervyn, Keith, Kay, Sandra and Sharyn. Ray married the love of his life, Jan, on 18 September 1982 and is proud of their five children—Rachel, Simon, Ben, Michael and Paul. Ray is also survived by one of the true matriarchs of the Gatton community, Esther—a beautiful lady who should not have had to bury her eldest son this week.

Ray attended the Lockyer District State High School from 1968 to 1974 and was the Apprentice of the Year as a registered builder before in 1976 establishing Ferdinand Constructions, which went on to employ many local families and many workers who went on to run their own successful businesses. Ferdinand Constructions was operating for 25 years and was great on our commercial landscape.

I knew Ray best while being his deputy mayor through his time in local government. Ray spent 16 years on the Gatton shire council—two as mayor and before that as deputy mayor and councillor from 1985 to 2001. Ray is remembered for many contributions to our community including his beloved

Apex, where he was a life member after having served as president and secretary. It was lovely to catch up with Ray and Jan recently when we unlocked the time capsule that was a very big part of the successful Apex fundraising efforts that built the barbecue and other infrastructure at Lake Apex.

Ray was the president of Anuha Services for nearly nine years, assisting the disadvantaged in our community. He was also the president of the Gatton Ratepayers for a number of years. Although Ray was a consultant for Main Roads for six years, he remained in the building services industry until the end.

Rest in peace, Ray Ferdinand—a great leader and community champion but most of all a gentleman, a friend and a great mate. Our love and sympathies to Esther, Jan and all of your family and friends.

In the short time I have remaining I want to make a plea to our Deputy Premier again to assist our 76 families in the Lockyer Valley and the 37 families in the Somerset Regional Council area who have made application for assistance from the Resilient Homes Fund. They have been waiting almost six months for a decision. They have insurance. They are waiting to get their lives back on track. Please, Deputy Premier, give our Lockyer and Somerset communities the assistance they need.

Hervey Bay Electorate, Budget



Mr TANTARI (Hervey Bay—ALP) (7.16 pm): I rise to speak about some of the many wins for the Hervey Bay electorate recently announced in the Palaszczuk Labor government's budget. I seek the indulgence of the House to speak on this given that I was not available during the budget session because I had COVID. The projects and services being funded are too numerous to mention in this short speech, so I will highlight just a few of the headline projects coming from the budget.

Hervey Bay Hospital is to undergo a major \$40 million expansion thanks to the latest investment of the Palaszczuk government. This funding will support improvements and fit-outs in the emergency department, medical inpatient ward and intensive care unit. The expansion will deliver 35 inpatient beds including 10 ICU beds plus a new rooftop helipad. This expansion is a part of the excellent Health and Hospitals Plan that is at the forefront of the Palaszczuk government's detailed budget for hospital and health facilities. While improving health care for Hervey Bay residents, the project will also create a further 100 local jobs, supporting our local community.

This work further complements the ever expanding suite of health facilities recently delivered by the Palaszczuk government in Hervey Bay. This includes a \$39 million mental health unit currently under construction, the \$44.6 million accident and emergency upgrade delivered in 2019 and the Urraween Ambulance Station delivered in 2021.

I am advised that the work on the new expansion is set to start in 2023 and locals can expect to welcome the completion of the new Hervey Bay Hospital expansion in 2024 and not by the misquoted, unfactual, exaggerated timeline spouted recently down a camera lens from Brisbane by the opposition health spokesperson—again, more mistruths and misinformation.

Our schools will be getting a boost, with the Urangan Point State School receiving a total of \$5.8 million towards their hall and the Urangan State High School will be receiving funds towards their \$10.7 million hall.

Other great announcements include funding towards the commencement of a new Hervey Bay fire station. With Hervey Bay continuing to grow, I have worked hard to secure the commitment for this new state-of-the-art fire station to protect and keep the people of Hervey Bay safe for decades to come.

Also, the budget commits \$14 million towards a new police station. This is a huge win for our community. When this new station comes online, Hervey Bay will have some of the newest multistream facilities available to help our hardworking police officers keep our community safe.

Community safety is a priority for our local community and, with the support of the Palaszczuk Labor government, we are committed to excellence in policing throughout our region. I want to thank the Minister for Police and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services for listening and acting to bring forward these two new stations for the people of Hervey Bay.

With our strong economic recovery, we are creating hundreds of local jobs, we will build our new police and fire stations, upgrade our major roads, build our new school classrooms and halls, and enhance our local TAFE. With these new facilities comes jobs for our tradies, apprentices, teachers, paramedics, police officers, nurses and doctors. These are only some of the highlights of another great Palaszczuk Labor government budget for Hervey Bay with more to come.

Path to Treaty



Mr DAMETTO (Hinchinbrook—KAP) (7.19 pm): I rise as a proud Australian. I am proud of my multicultural background. I am proud of our multicultural nation. I want to see our state and our country grow and prosper. Some have said that to do so we need to heal as a nation. For me, this means that healing involves an equal effort from each side and no more tokenistic, symbolic gestures.

This week we have seen the state government introduce their Path to Treaty, which will be enshrined in legislation. This process has been commenced without most Queenslanders understanding what their government has signed up for. Queenslanders are also concerned about the unintended consequences of the Albanese government's move to introduce an Indigenous voice into parliament. The proposed referendum question to be asked is—

Do you support an alteration to the Constitution that establishes an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voice?

First Nations people should be considered as important as everybody else. This is true equality. I believe that respect must be earned just like a seat at the table. My concern is that this simple yes or no question will be framed as, 'Are you a racist or not?' This will be a convenient way for the yes side to gain momentum.

Australians must be well-informed and aware as to what changes this will mean practically and legally for generations to come. Our First Nations people arguably already have a voice in parliament. According to Australian census data, 812,728 people identify as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin. This represents 3.2 per cent of the population. Federally there are 76 senators and 151 members of the House of Representatives. Eleven of those elected representatives identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, which represents five per cent of the federal parliament. Do you know what? I reckon that is something to be bloody proud of.

Mr McDonald: That's a good thing.

Mr DAMETTO: Absolutely. It would not be ignorant of me to say that Australia already has an Indigenous voice in parliament—or don't those people count? Do our First Nations people all think the same thing or think the same way? Several new members of the federal parliament were recently introduced: one from the Labor Party, one from the Country Liberal Party and one from the Greens. They all identify as Indigenous women. They were all elected on their own merit and have different political opinions. This is the beauty of living in a democratic country.

Treaty and an Indigenous voice in parliament may be the political tool federal and state Labor governments seek to use to mend the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians, but please do not let this become a distraction and a way for governments to avoid meaningful change for first Australians which seek to benefit all Australians.

(Time expired)

A government member interjected.

Mr Dametto interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Bush): Order! Member for Hinchinbrook, you did use unparliamentary language. I will ask you to withdraw.

Mr DAMETTO: I withdraw.

Stretton Electorate, Bus Services



Mr MARTIN (Stretton—ALP) (7.23 pm): It has been a big week in Stretton with the opening of a brand new bus stop outside Stretton State College. Stretton students can now jump on the 130 bus every 10 minutes from right outside the school. It was a pleasure to visit the new stop recently with the college captain, Fahima Ahmadi, former YMCA youth member for Stretton. The new stop on Gowan Road allows the 130 bus service to be extended and removes the old dangerous bus turnaround facility that was previously on school grounds.


The new bus stop follows the opening of another one across the road at the Stretton Gardens Retirement Estate. I campaigned for this with the late member for Stretton, our friend Duncan Pegg, along with many seniors of the Stretton Gardens community. The seniors at Stretton Gardens used to have to walk 180 metres to get the bus. It was very difficult for them and it discouraged the use of public transport. Unfortunately, the Brisbane City Council dragged their feet on the issue and approvals took far longer than they should have.

I also want to recognise the late Noel Vass, who campaigned for this. Noel spoke with me and residents at many morning teas at Stretton Gardens. He was concerned about the welfare of his fellow retirees and seniors. Thanks to his efforts and the efforts of me and the Palaszczuk government, Stretton Gardens residents can now catch the bus directly out the front of their estate.

I visited the estate on day one of the new bus service, and residents were ecstatic that the new stops and associated road upgrades were delivered. It was part of a \$4.8 million investment in my local area that has improved access to public transport. It has made their lives and those of other members of my community much easier. I would like to thank to Minister Mark Bailey for meeting me and local residents onsite to discuss these much needed upgrades. He came along during the Stretton by-election and I am pleased to be delivering on this election commitment today.

I also want to give a special mention to Cameron McAlpine, the manager of the retirement estate, who works tirelessly to provide residents with such a fantastic place to enjoy their retirement. I was proud to present Cameron with a Stretton Queensland Day award earlier this year. A pat on the back also needs to be given to Noel's wife, Betty Vass, and Neil Finlaysson, Kevin Slattery and Vic Borghero, who all played a big role in the campaign for this bus stop. Their efforts have now been rewarded. As part of the upgrades there will also be new signalised pedestrian crossings on Illaweenah Street, safety improvements to line markings and improved cycling facilities. Investments like this are vital for our growing Stretton community, and I will work hard to ensure they continue.

Mermaid Beach Electorate, Shark Net Removal


 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (7.26 pm): I rise to enforce the necessity of maintaining the shark-netting regime for the Gold Coast, in particular on Mermaid, Nobby, Miami and North Burleigh beaches in my area. There are strong indicators around that Labor Party minister Mark Furner is submitting to the left-wing demands of their Greens political partners—whom they cannot win an election without—to remove nets from Gold Coast beaches. Minister Furner has flagged smart drum line trials as his smokescreen for acquiescing to Greens' demands, but those of us who understand politics know that if the Greens demand the nets be removed then the Queensland Labor Party will massage the process about how the nets will be removed to satisfy their political partners.

The Gold Coast is first and foremost a tourist destination, and all measures to ensure the safety and reputation of the Gold Coast should be maintained and carnage stopped in the oceans. Yes, there are minor amounts of other sea life casualties as a result of protective netting measures, but these are insignificant compared to the damage that would be done to the Gold Coast if it became known as 'shark attack central' following the loss of human life.

The increased whale migration has obviously been a tourism boom, and when one whale out of the thousands that migrate gets caught in a net it is distressing viewing to all. However, Sea World has done a magnificent job on freeing those whales caught in the nets with minimal loss, so whale 'wailing' is no justification for putting marine life over human lives by the removal of the nets. Increased shark activity following whale migration is another reason to keep the nets in place across the Gold Coast. You only have to look at the voraciousness of great whites feeding on whale carcass blubber to understand how increased whale numbers would naturally attract more great whites following the whale migration.

There is a great maxim that 'if it ain't broke, don't try to fix it'. With the nets providing great safety and security since the 1960s, why would any responsible Queensland government kowtow to minority bleeding heart calls from green activists to remove those nets from Gold Coast beaches? The Gold Coast is a mecca for all Australians and international visitors who enjoy our beaches and beautiful ocean, and putting human life at risk by the removal of shark nets is a non-negotiable retrograde step that should not be entertained by any responsible Queensland government. The fact that the Queensland Labor Party holds no beachside seats on the Gold Coast worries me greatly. We all welcome increased protections such as SMART drum lines and any other modern technology.

McQuay, Ms T; Jackson, Mr B; Green, Mr P

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (7.29 pm): It has been a very sad week in the bayside. We have lost three very much loved community members. Whilst these three people probably never crossed paths with each other, they all shared a common love. They all loved their families and were loved in return, and each of them in their own ways have left a mark on me and on the bayside.

After the unexpected death of her beloved husband in the late 1970s, Thelma McQuay went back to work and raised their darling daughter, Michelle, on her own. Thelma worked hard to provide a great education and lifestyle, instilling in Michelle the importance of family, friends and community. Thelma was my very dear friend and mentor.

My friend and life member of the great Australian Labor Party, Bob Jackson, was a true believer. In the words of Paul Lucas, the former member for Lytton, he was a champion bloke who lived his values and did not just talk them. Bob was a dedicated family man who was so very proud of his darling wife, Alison, and their three children. Bob and Alison experienced great tragedy in their lives; however, this never stopped them from working to ensure that there was opportunity for all. The Bob Jackson Pontoon at Sailability Bayside is testament to that. Bob certainly kept us all on our toes and he was never afraid to call out wrongdoings.

Paul Green dedicated his life to his family. He also loved and excelled at the game of Rugby League as a player and a coach. This made him a household name from the bayside right across Queensland and Australia. However, Paul never forgot his roots. He loved the Wynnum Manly community and he loved the Wynnum Manly Seagulls. He has great Wynnum mates—mates that he played with from the under 7s right through to the under 18s at Wynnum Manly juniors and then went on to play with in the NRL. He also has his great mates from Wynnum State High School. Paul and his wife, Amanda, support Paul's old high school, Wynnum State High School, through a wonderful sponsorship program. To Amanda, Emerson and Jed, thank you for sharing Paul with the community. Paul, thank you for the many hours of Rugby League pleasure that you have given. You will be sadly missed.

Vale Thelma, Bob and Paul. Your legacies will live on.

The House adjourned at 7.32 pm.

ATTENDANCE

Andrew, Bailey, Bates, Bennett, Berkman, Bleijie, Bolton, Boothman, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Crandon, Crawford, Crisafulli, D'Ath, Dametto, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Frecklington, Furner, Gerber, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Hart, Head, Healy, Hinchliffe, Hunt, Janetzki, Katter, Kelly, King A, King S, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Lauga, Leahy, Linard, Lister, Lui, MacMahon, Madden, Mander, Martin, McCallum, McDonald, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Mickelberg, Miles, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Mullen, Nicholls, O'Connor, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pease, Perrett, Pitt, Powell, Power, Pugh, Richards, Robinson, Rowan, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Simpson, Skelton, Smith, Stevens, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Watts, Weir, Whiting