



RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

Wednesday, 31 August 2022

Subject	Page
PRESENTATION OF APPROPRIATION BILLS	2321
ASSENT TO BILLS	2321
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Letter, dated 29 August 2022, from Her Excellency the Governor to the Speaker advising of assent to certain bills on 29 August 2022.	2321
SPEAKER'S STATEMENTS	2321
Parliamentary Friends of Tennis	2321
School Group Tours.....	2322
PETITIONS.....	2322
TABLED PAPERS.....	2322
MINISTERIAL PAPER.....	2323
Ministerial Expenses.....	2323
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Public Report of Ministerial Expenses for the period 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022.	2323
MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS	2323
Workforce Strategy	2323
Cross River Rail	2323
Cost-of-Living Rebate	2324
Cabinet, Torres Strait.....	2324
Disaster Recovery	2324
Resources Industries.....	2325
Education, Investment.....	2326
Workforce Strategy	2326
LEGAL AFFAIRS AND SAFETY COMMITTEE.....	2327
Report	2327
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Legal Affairs and Safety Committee: Report No. 33, 57th Parliament—Inquiry into matters relating to donor conception information.....	2327


Table of Contents – Wednesday, 31 August 2022

PARLIAMENTARY CRIME AND CORRUPTION COMMITTEE	2327
Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Commissioner, Report	2327
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Commissioner: Report on the results of the inspection of the records of the Crime and Corruption Commission pursuant to section 362 of the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000, May 2022.....	2327
NOTICE OF MOTION	2327
Australian South Sea Islanders	2327
SPEAKER'S STATEMENT	2327
Member for Redlands	2327
QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE	2328
CFMEU	2328
CFMEU	2328
Regional Queensland, Workforce Strategy	2329
CFMEU	2329
Skills and Training	2330
CFMEU	2331
Disaster Recovery	2331
CFMEU	2331
Private Sector Average Weekly Earnings	2332
Ingham, Mr J	2333
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Australian Electoral Commission Form, dated 29 January 2013, titled 'Donor to political party disclosure return—Organisations: Financial year 2010-2011'	2333
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Australian Electoral Commission Form, dated 26 February 2013, titled 'Request for Amendment—Political Party Disclosure Return: Financial year 2011-12'	2333
Workforce Strategy	2334
Minister for Transport and Main Roads	2334
West Moreton, Health Services	2335
Gaming Machines	2336
Railways, Investment	2336
North Queensland, Youth Crime	2337
Queensland Corrective Services, Personnel	2337
Casinos	2338
Innovation	2339
TRANSPORT LEGISLATION (ROAD SAFETY AND OTHER MATTERS) AMENDMENT BILL	2339
Second Reading	2339
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Article from the <i>Sunday Mail</i> , dated 28 August 2022, titled 'Register call for electric scooters'.....	2351
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Transport Legislation (Road Safety and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2022, amendments to be moved by Mr Michael Berkman MP.	2354
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Transport Legislation (Road Safety and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2022, explanatory notes to Mr Michael Berkman's amendments.....	2354
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Transport Legislation (Road Safety and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2022, statement of compatibility with human rights contained in Mr Michael Berkman's amendments.	2354
RESIDENTIAL TENANCIES AND ROOMING ACCOMMODATION (RENT FREEZE) AMENDMENT BILL	2355
Introduction	2355
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation (Rent Freeze) Amendment Bill 2022.....	2355
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation (Rent Freeze) Amendment Bill 2022, explanatory notes.	2355
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation (Rent Freeze) Amendment Bill 2022, statement of compatibility with human rights.....	2355
First Reading	2359
Referral to Community Support and Services Committee	2359
Leave to Move Motion	2359
Division: Question put—That leave be granted.	2359
Resolved in the negative in accordance with special sessional orders.	2359
TRANSPORT LEGISLATION (ROAD SAFETY AND OTHER MATTERS) AMENDMENT BILL	2359
Second Reading	2359
SPEAKER'S STATEMENT	2360
Error in Division	2360
PRIVILEGE	2360
Correction to Record of Proceedings	2360
TRANSPORT LEGISLATION (ROAD SAFETY AND OTHER MATTERS) AMENDMENT BILL	2360
Second Reading	2360
Consideration in Detail	2373
Clauses 1 to 13, as read, agreed to.	2373
Division: Question put—That leave be granted.	2373
Resolved in the negative in accordance with special sessional orders.	2373
Clauses 14 to 25, as read, agreed to.	2373
Clause 26, as read, agreed to.....	2373
Clauses 27 to 54, as read, agreed to.	2373
Schedule, as read, agreed to.....	2373
Third Reading	2373
Long Title	2373

Table of Contents – Wednesday, 31 August 2022

NATURE CONSERVATION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL	2373
Second Reading	2373
MOTION	2390
Australian South Sea Islanders	2390
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Document, dated August 2022, titled ‘South Sea Islander Mortality in Mackay’	2394
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Bundle of documents relating to South Sea islander peoples’ history in Queensland	2394
NATURE CONSERVATION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL	2400
Second Reading	2400
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Media articles relating to beekeeping	2401
ADJOURNMENT	2411
My Berries; Ghost Soldiers; PIEEC	2411
Currumbin Electorate, Flood Mitigation	2412
Mount Cotton State School, Upgrade	2412
WindsorFest	2413
Historic Leyburn Sprints; Lakeside Raceway	2414
Project Red Socks	2414
Great Keppel Island	2415
Mudgeeraba Electorate, Roads	2415
New Acland Coal Mine	2416
Bruce Highway Connection Road, Palmview	2417
DEPUTY SPEAKER’S STATEMENT	2418
Radio 4MBS, Evening of Classics	2418
ATTENDANCE	2418


WEDNESDAY, 31 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.

PRESENTATION OF APPROPRIATION BILLS

 **Mr SPEAKER:** I have to report that on Monday, 29 August, I presented to Her Excellency the Governor the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill and the Appropriation Bill for royal assent, and Her Excellency was pleased to subscribe her assent in the name and on behalf of Her Majesty.

ASSENT TO BILLS

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I have to report that I have received from Her Excellency the Governor a letter in respect of assent to certain bills. The contents of the letter will be incorporated in the *Record of Proceedings*. I table the letter for the information of members.

The Honourable C.W. Pitt MP
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Speaker

I hereby acquaint the Legislative Assembly that the following Appropriation Bills and a Bill, having been passed by the Legislative Assembly and having been presented for the Royal Assent, were assented to in the name of Her Majesty The Queen on the date shown:

Date of Assent: 29 August 2022

A bill for an Act authorising the Treasurer to pay amounts from the consolidated fund for the Legislative Assembly and parliamentary service for the financial years starting 1 July 2022 and 1 July 2023

A bill for an Act authorising the Treasurer to pay amounts from the consolidated fund for departments for the financial years starting 1 July 2022 and 1 July 2023

A bill for an Act to amend the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006, the Education (Queensland College of Teachers) Act 2005 and the Trading (Allowable Hours) Act 1990 for particular purposes

These Bills are hereby transmitted to the Legislative Assembly, to be numbered and forwarded to the proper Officer for enrolment, in the manner required by law.

Yours sincerely


Governor

29 August 2022

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 29 August 2022, from Her Excellency the Governor to the Speaker advising of assent to certain bills on 29 August 2022 [[1232](#)].

SPEAKER'S STATEMENTS

Parliamentary Friends of Tennis

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, it is time for tennis on the Speaker's Green, parliament's annual celebration of tennis, which will take place at 1 pm today. I am sure that I do not need to remind members about what this event entails; however, the weather gods may not permit us to have our

annual hit of tennis on the Speaker's Green. If it is not raining, I invite all members to the Speaker's Green for a game of tennis and to meet our special guests. Should it be raining, members are invited to the Speaker's Courtyard, where under cover we will hear from our special guests.

A government member interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you very much. Yes, we have closed the roof due to conditions. Special guests include John Fitzgerald OAM, doubles grand slam champion and former Australian Davis Cup captain. We are also proud to host four Australian tennis gold medal winners from the 2022 Virtus European Summer Games recently held in Poland. The Virtus Games are dedicated to athletes with an intellectual impairment. I wish to place on record my appreciation to Tennis Queensland for supporting Tennis on the Green for many years. I also wish to thank Parliamentary Friends of Tennis and their co-chairs, the members for Oodgeroo and Bundamba.

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 Emmanuel College in the electorate of Gaven, the Hall State School in the electorate of Rockhampton and Dayboro State School in the electorate of Pine Rivers.

PETITIONS

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

Treaty

Mr Andrew, from 23,420 petitioners, requesting the House to submit a formal request to the Australian Prime Minister and Federal Cabinet, that no treaty, amendment, or any other binding documents be signed until a fully informed public debate and National Referendum has been held [[1233](#)].

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

Coronavirus, Vaccination

2,096 petitioners, requesting the House to provide a detailed and factual account of the impacts of vaccinations against COVID-19 in the community [[1234](#)].

Coronavirus, Masks

1,642 petitioners, requesting the House to seek the latest medical advice being relied upon about mask-wearing to limit the transmission of COVID-19 [[1235](#)].

Weather, Manipulation

2,136 petitioners, requesting the House to confirm that the Queensland Cloud Seeding Research Project concluded in 2012; advise of any other cloud seeding and/or weather manipulation projects/research carried out since 2012; and that there is no current cloud seeding or any other weather manipulation activity being conducted by any agency or organisation in the skies over Queensland [[1236](#)].

Petitions received.

TABLED PAPERS

TABLING OF DOCUMENTS (SO 32)

STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

The following statutory instruments were tabled by the Clerk—

Legal Profession Act 2007:

[1237](#) Legal Profession (Australian Solicitors Conduct Rules) Notice 2022, No. 117

[1238](#) Legal Profession (Australian Solicitors Conduct Rules) Notice 2022, No. 117, explanatory notes

[1239](#) Legal Profession (Australian Solicitors Conduct Rules) Notice 2022, No. 117, human rights certificate

REPORT BY THE CLERK

The following report was tabled by the Clerk—

[1240](#) Report pursuant to Standing Order 169 (Acts to be numbered by the Clerk) and Standing Order 165 (Clerical errors or formal changes to any bill) detailing amendments to certain Bills, made by the Clerk, prior to assent by His Excellency the Governor, viz—

Inspector of Detention Services Bill 2021

Amendments made to Bill


Short title and consequential references to short title—*Omit—*

'Inspector of Detention Services Bill 2021'

Insert—


'Inspector of Detention Services Bill 2022'

MINISTERIAL PAPER**Ministerial Expenses**

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympics) (9.35 am): I lay upon the table of the House the public report of ministerial expenses for the period 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022.

Tabled paper: Public Report of Ministerial Expenses for the period 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022 [[1241](#)].


MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS**Workforce Strategy**

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympics) (9.35 am): This afternoon I will be attending the National Cabinet meeting in Sydney. This will be followed by the national Skills and Jobs Summit in Canberra. Both are vital; both are connected. The COVID pandemic is by no means over. Let me repeat that we are still in the grip of this pandemic, and National Cabinet was formed to confront it. So far Queensland has managed better than most. Almost alone in the world our people were able to be vaccinated before the virus arrived. Thanks to the people of Queensland, our lockdowns were limited. That strong health response led to our very strong economic recovery.

There are 213,000 more people in work today than there were before COVID. In fact, we have more jobs than people to fill them, but the gaps in our workforce mean gaps in our recovery—hotels that cannot capitalise on the resurgent tourism industry because they do not have enough cleaners to open more rooms and gaps on supermarket shelves because their suppliers cannot find staff. Just as we did during the pandemic, we summoned employers, unions, workers and educators. They helped draft the Workforce Strategy that I will take to Canberra.

At the launch of this strategy yesterday I met Nick Lindsay. His company, Gilmour Space, builds and launches satellite-bearing rockets from the Bowen space facility. He told me that the biggest obstacle to finding his staff is young people who do not believe in themselves, so they no longer set prerequisites for job applicants. 'Just give me good people who build things, who try and fail and learn,' he said. They pay their employees bonuses for recruiting like-minded friends. They have grown from a couple of dozen employees to now over 140. Belief is everything. I believe we will overcome this challenge just like all the rest and Queensland will be better as a result.


Cross River Rail

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympics) (9.37 am): A great example of what we are doing in Queensland to provide skills and training on government projects is Cross River Rail. This is Queensland's largest infrastructure project being built for Queenslanders by Queenslanders—2,700 at the moment—and young Queenslanders. So far 342 apprentice and trainee opportunities have been generated by the project. Our target is 450. The project alone has more than 1.3 million training hours clocked up already. That is because we have required each contractor to develop and implement plans that involve training and upskilling the local workforce, including people like Brock, a first year apprentice carpenter who has been developing skills, demolishing concrete and building wooden structures. Bayley, an apprentice with a background in construction, is expanding his knowledge base through undertaking a certificate III with BE Steel Fixing.


Today I can advise the House that Queensland Rail is now hiring 86 new graduates, apprentices and trainees in the next 12 months as part of Queensland's rail revolution. In one of the largest graduate intakes in Queensland Rail's history, 31 engineering, IT and business graduates will join the team.

Better yet, as many as 55 apprentice and traineeship opportunities will be offered across a number of trades to build a new generation of railway workers. That is a total of 86 new apprentices and graduates across the whole of Queensland to boost the technical and trade workforce as we deliver major rail projects from the Gold Coast right through to Mount Isa.

Cost-of-Living Rebate


 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympics) (9.39 am): Queenslanders know and trust our government's priorities, which are focused on them, for good jobs, better services and a great lifestyle. Our policies are based on core principles, which include addressing the cost of living and keeping public assets in public hands. Together, these two fundamentals have enabled us to deliver \$175 in cost-of-living relief from the electricity bills of all Queenslanders. I can advise that households will start getting the benefit of that rebate from today. The rebate will be automatically credited to bills which include 31 August and will appear on residential bills over the next quarter. This is good policy helping people with the cost of living.

Cabinet, Torres Strait

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympics) (9.39 am): As I announced last sitting, the entire cabinet is heading to the Torres Strait next week. I want to thank the member for Cook for lobbying the cabinet to visit this very special part of Queensland. It is the first time a state government cabinet has met there in 11 years. Ministers will start travelling up over the weekend and begin engaging with the community as soon as they can. I will meet with councils and mayors as well as inspect the \$46 million Thursday Island Hospital redevelopment—an important investment from my government which is supporting around 50 jobs.

The cabinet will hold deputations for any issues the community would like to raise. We will also hold a traditional community reception at the cultural centre. I am excited to see the students at Tagai State College on Tuesday with Minister Grace and also our investment there. I understand some students will go through the Youfor2032 training to see if they are on the starting line for the Olympic and Paralympic Games. I will also visit the cape for a significant land handback ceremony and my ministers will travel over the rest of the Torres Strait during the week. We are looking forward to travelling up to the Torres Strait. It is very important to engage across Queensland. I am grateful that the ministers will be attending this significant event for the member for Cook.

Disaster 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): This year's disaster season saw multiple catastrophic events impact Queenslanders. Many communities were hit with two or three events, one after the other. It is now six months on from the start of the extraordinary floods that hit South-East Queensland in February. To date, more than \$33.4 million in emergency hardship financial assistance has been provided to Queenslanders impacted by this recent flooding and severe weather, benefitting more than 106,400 people.


I can advise that 5,093 grants of up to \$75,000 for primary producers and up to \$50,000 for affected small businesses and not-for-profit organisations, valued at \$77 million, have been approved. More than \$6.3 million in Structural Assistance Grants have been approved, assisting more than 600 people. We also secured more than \$2 billion in extraordinary assistance to provide support to communities in need. I note that 23 affected councils each received \$1 million to assist with urgent recovery and clean-up works, with Goondiwindi receiving \$2 million due to the severe impacts in that region from multiple events. We will reimburse councils and agencies for costs, including sandbagging and the restoration of essential public assets including roads and bridges. More than \$224 million in disaster recovery and resilience grants has been paid to councils, state agencies and non-government organisations in response to the 2021-22 disaster season events.

The Resilient Homes Fund is the largest resilience program of its kind in Australia's history. The Resilient Homes Fund is equivalent to rebuilding a town the size of Beaudesert. So far, 4,572 affected homeowners have registered interest in the fund. This includes: 1,355 homeowners interested in raising their home; 1,639 homeowners who want to retrofit to make their home more resilient; and 509 people who are interested in the Voluntary Home Buy-Back Program. There have been 740 floor level surveys completed and over 2,760 are in progress. Over 520 home assessments have been completed so far, prioritising the homeowners in some of the most heavily impacted areas with the greatest need. There

have been 122 homeowners approved to have their homes purchased back through the program, including in Ipswich and Logan. I can advise that \$50 million from the fund has now been paid to Brisbane City Council to purchase properties in the Brisbane local government area.

While we still have a way to go, I am proud of the work we have done and the resilience of Queenslanders over the last six months. We are here with them every step of the way. We are committed to ensuring our communities recover and can build back better and stronger after these catastrophic events.

Resources Industries

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (9.44 am): The resources sector has long been one of the mainstays of the Queensland economy, and the resources sector will continue to be a mainstay of the Queensland economy as we see more investment in mines for traditional and new economy minerals. The strength of the resources sector is reflected in recent results reported by miners operating in Queensland. Yancoal, which operates mines at Middlemount, Yarrabee and Cameby Downs amongst others, recently reported revenue of—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members to my left, the Treasurer is providing a report to the parliament. I ask you to cease your interjections.

Mr DICK: I take the interjection from the member for Toowoomba South. I hope he asks me a question in question time for once.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DICK: It is okay from the cheap seats, member for Toowoomba South. Ask me a question in question time. Yancoal, which operates mines at Middlemount, Yarrabee and Cameby Downs amongst others, recently reported revenue of \$4.8 billion—

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Kawana.

Ms Grace interjected.

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

Mr DICK: That revenue was for just the first six months of 2022. That is an increase of \$3 billion on a year earlier. Yancoal reported that a 234 per cent increase in the average coal price to \$314 per tonne was the driver of this increased revenue. Very pleasingly, the *Australian Financial Review* has reported that Yancoal is a potential buyer of some of BHP's existing mines as BHP continues to wind back its coal portfolio.

Last week, Whitehaven Coal released its 2021-22 full year results. The company, which is the proponent of the Winchester South mine, reported record earnings and shareholder returns driven by record coal prices. For the year ended 30 June 2022, Whitehaven Coal reported record revenue of \$4.9 billion, up from \$1.56 billion a year earlier. That is a revenue increase of \$3.34 billion, or 314 per cent, in just 12 months. This surge in revenue was underpinned by Whitehaven's reported average—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members to my left! The last time I checked this was ministerial statements. The Treasurer is providing a statement to the House. I ask you to cease your interjections. I would like to hear what the Treasurer has to say.

Mr DICK: This surge in revenue was underpinned by Whitehaven's reported average coal price of \$325 per tonne, compared with only \$95 per tonne in 2020-21. Stanmore, which recently bought BHP's stake in the South Walker Creek and Poitrel mines, recorded revenue of US\$1.1 billion in just the first six months of 2022. That was a fifteenfold increase on the US\$71.8 million revenue Stanmore reported for the first six months of 2021.

Honourable members interjected.


Ms Boyd interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members! The member for Pine Rivers will cease her interjections.

Mr DICK: Coronado, which operates the Curragh mine near Blackwater, enjoyed record revenue of almost US\$2 billion in just the first half of 2022, up 147 per cent from the same period in 2021. Queensland's coal industry is in good health, with strong profits being made as a result of supernormal

coal prices. I do not begrudge these companies their windfall profits. They are entitled to reap their fair share of reward from the investments they make. In exactly the same way, the people of Queensland are entitled to receive an appropriate return for the non-renewable resources they own.

Education, Investment

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (9.49 am): The Palaszczuk government is committed to ensuring our students get the skills they need to thrive in their local industries and local communities. Yesterday I advised the House that the Palaszczuk government is investing \$10 million in our new Trade to Teach pilot program as part of our Workforce Strategy.

Tradies will receive extensive support while completing their full teaching degree and students will get the opportunity to specialise in the skills that will set them up for good, secure jobs in the industries local to them. Industry, union and school peak bodies have welcomed this fantastic announcement. Queensland Resources Council policy director Katrina-Lee Jones, who was instrumental in establishing the working group, said—

With plenty of jobs in trades, we want to provide students with an interest in becoming trades qualified, an opportunity to build up their skills in the classroom.

Mark Breckenridge, President of the Queensland Secondary Principals' Association, said—


This will make a significant difference across regional Queensland, enabling students to pursue industry pathways at school and then transition into employment within their local area.

In addition, our Contemporary Specialist Spaces program is a four-year, \$180 million funding boost for 36 schools which will focus on learning spaces for the delivery of specialist subjects. For example, the \$13 million ITD precinct at Gladstone State High School will help support students transition from school to local jobs. There are upgrades like this throughout the state, including a \$16 million upgrade of manual arts facilities at Holland Park State High School in Greenslopes and a \$6.5 million refurbishment of the manual arts space at Kenmore State High School in Moggill.

We know that facilities are important, but the links with local industries are vital. That is why, as part of the Queensland Workforce strategy, we are strengthening school-to-work transition with a regional school industry partnership manager appointed in each region and expanding our successful Gateway to Industry Schools program as well.

Our Careers Capability Development Grants Program is also helping schools prepare our students for the workplaces of the future. This program has provided grants to 25 Queensland state schools, such as Marsden State High School which is providing a taste of different workplaces using virtual reality. Under the Palaszczuk government, we want students to have access to good jobs, better services and a great lifestyle in whichever part of our great state they call home.

Workforce Strategy

 **Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development) (9.52 am): Yesterday the Palaszczuk government launched *Good people good jobs: Queensland Workforce Strategy 2022-2032* to ensure we have the workers needed for the enormous opportunity that is ahead of us in the next decade and beyond. The feedback has been great. National Retail Association CEO Dominique Lamb said—

The Queensland Workforce Strategy recognises the need to create policy settings that make it easier for all those groups (eg mothers returning from maternity leave, school leavers ...) to participate in work and to gain access to training where appropriate.


Paul Sloman from Cotton Australia said—

The Workforce Strategy will be the roadmap to guide all of Queensland through the workforce and skills shortage that is being experienced by all industries across all of Queensland.

A key component of the \$70 million package of initiatives in the strategy's first action plan is our new Workforce Connect Fund. Through this fund we will invest \$20 million over two years into industry and community-led projects that address attraction, retention and participation issues within the workforce. Through this fund, we are asking peak bodies to think outside the square about low participation groups, about people who could work more to develop the solutions that are needed to connect good people to good jobs, and it goes without saying that the needs of small business will be in sharp focus under this program. The Workforce Connect Fund is one of the many initiatives we are running under this strategy which will set Queensland up for the future.

LEGAL AFFAIRS AND SAFETY COMMITTEE


Report

 **Mr RUSSO** (Toohey—ALP) (9.53 am): I lay upon the table of the House Legal Affairs and Safety Committee report No. 33, 57th Parliament titled *Inquiry into matters relating to donor conception information*. I commend the report to the House.

Tabled paper: Legal Affairs and Safety Committee: Report No. 33, 57th Parliament—Inquiry into matters relating to donor conception information [[1242](#)].

PARLIAMENTARY CRIME AND CORRUPTION COMMITTEE


Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Commissioner, Report

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Scenic Rim—LNP) (9.54 am): As chair of the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee, I lay upon the table of the House the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Commissioner's report titled *Report on the results of the inspection of the records of the Crime and Corruption Commission pursuant to section 362 of the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000*, dated May 2022. The committee received the report on 25 May 2022 and, as required, is tabling the report within 14 sitting days of receipt.

Tabled paper: Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Commissioner: Report on the results of the inspection of the records of the Crime and Corruption Commission pursuant to section 362 of the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000, May 2022 [[1243](#)].

NOTICE OF MOTION

Australian South Sea Islanders

 **Mr ANDREW** (Mirani—PHON) (9.54 am): I give notice that I will move—

That the House:

- (a) acknowledges that next week marks the 22nd anniversary of the Queensland Recognition Statement, in which certain undertakings were made to the ASSI community;
- (b) acknowledges that most of those undertakings were never fulfilled;
- (c) acknowledges that ASSI people continue to suffer a level of disadvantage on par with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, who many ASSIs share a common ancestry with;
- (d) expresses sincere regret for:
 - (i) the cruel deportation of ASSIs in 1906, the only group ever forcibly deported from Australia;
 - (ii) the raft of discriminatory laws passed in this House against ASSIs; and
 - (iii) the misappropriation of monies from the Queensland Pacific Islanders' Fund, containing the wages of 15,000 men who died while indentured in Queensland.
- (e) acknowledges that researchers recently discovered ASSIs had been victims of the same human trafficking and trade in body parts as ATSIIs;
- (f) seeks that an expression of regret be made for this inhumane practice and that the government assist the community in the repatriation of those remains for respectful burial; and
- (g) notes that the member for Mirani proposes to table a bill for the implementation of special measures to reduce ASSI disadvantage in Queensland.


Mr ANDREW: I will table a document outlining the skeletal remains that have been found. I also table the supporting information that was handed to us by Professor Clive Moore and prepared by Australian South Sea islanders Dr Francis Bobongie-Harris and Zia Youse from QUASSIC.

Mr SPEAKER: It is not possible to table that during the notice of motion. You will need to do that during debate of the motion itself later on today.

Mr ANDREW: Thank you for the advice.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT


Member for Redlands

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, before going to question time, I understand it is the member for Redlands' birthday today. I understand she is turning 21. Congratulations! Well done!

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Mr SPEAKER: Question time will conclude today at 10.57 am.

CFMEU

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (9.57 am): My question is to the Premier. The Premier described the CFMEU actions at the TMR head office as 'disgraceful', making staff feel unsafe and threatened. The CFMEU is one of the biggest contributors to Queensland Labor. Will the Premier legislate if necessary to force the ALP to give the militant union money to an anti-bullying organisation?

Mr Dick interjected.

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

Ms PALASZCZUK: With regard to the events which happened last week, I have been on the public record as saying that they are absolutely disgraceful, that—

Mr Crisafulli: So give it back.

Mr SPEAKER: Members to my left, the Premier is answering the question. There is no need for interjections. I will listen to the answer as the Premier is giving it.

Ms PALASZCZUK:—people should not be made to feel unsafe in their workplace. The Minister for Transport has also condemned these actions. As the member is well aware, these matters are currently before police and we will await the outcome of that police investigation.

CFMEU

Mr CRISAFULLI: My question is to the Premier. Later today, the Premier will sit with the South Australian Labor Premier. He returned \$125,000 to the CFMEU after they put stickers on a Master Builders' car. Will the Premier follow the example of the South Australian Labor leader and legislate, if necessary, for the ALP to forgo the more than \$400,000 in donations?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I have commented on that in my previous answer. I will say this. I am looking forward to going to National Cabinet, because it was formed to deal with the pandemic. Those opposite wanted our borders open and it would have been catastrophic—

Mr Dick interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right. I will get to that.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Treasurer, I do not need any assistance. Members to my left, the Premier is responding. I need to hear the answer as does Hansard. I cannot hear the Premier's response.

Ms PALASZCZUK: One of the significant issues we will be discussing today is that isolation period decreasing from seven days to five days to actually assist workers. Secondly, on this side of the House we have introduced a range of integrity reforms including real-time disclosure—

Opposition members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right; they are against it. They include real-time disclosure so people can actually see the donations.

Mr O'Connor interjected.

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

Ms PALASZCZUK: Then we banned developer donations. What was the response of those opposite? They fought it all the way to the High Court. They like fighting things in the High Court.

Mrs D'Ath: Everything possible to hide those donations.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right; they did everything possible to hide those political donations.

Mr Watts interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Toowoomba South.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Outside they talk about integrity but they vote against our integrity reforms.

Mr Watts interjected.

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

Ms PALASZCZUK: They have voted against every single integrity reform we have introduced into this House.

National Cabinet is a serious body and it discusses serious issues. The biggest issue at the moment facing Australia is the issue of skills shortages but there has been not one word from those opposite. There has not been one word about the single biggest issue facing Queensland and Australia at the moment. Here is a strategy; we have actually done the work and produced a strategy. On that side there are no new policy ideas. They are the laziest opposition. Have there been any private members' bills from the opposition this week? Nothing! We did more work in this House with seven members when we were in opposition, and Mr Speaker might remember that.

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

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

Ms PALASZCZUK: We have introduced real-time disclosure, banning developer donations, the cap on donations so there are no secret donations—

(Time expired)

Regional Queensland, Workforce Strategy

Mr O'ROURKE: My question is of the Premier and the Minister for the Olympics. Will the Premier update the House on the Queensland Workforce Strategy, particularly when it comes to Regional Queensland?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Rockhampton for the question because he knows that a whole range of skills are needed for his community, especially over the next 10 years, and we need 280,000 new workers over the next couple of years. What we have done—and the minister has been excellent in this—is made sure that the regions were consulted as part of our skills summit but also as part of our strategy.

Our strategy involved looking at what skills and training are needed for particular regions across our state. In Wide Bay, Rockhampton, Mackay and Townsville the demand is for health care and social assistance; retail, accommodation and food services; and mining, education and training. Where are we going to get all of these new workers from? There are a couple of options. The first option is to train them in schools and get them into the workforce and be innovative like, as I mentioned, Gilmour Space Technologies, which is really encouraging and driving new ways of attracting good people to its workforce and keeping them there.

It is not going to happen overnight. Also we need to be looking very carefully at how we can increase our skilled migration. I am absolutely encouraged that our low unemployment rate and our high jobs growth mean that Queensland is an incredibly attractive place for families to come to our state. Regional Queensland is also a great place to live, with strong communities and large infrastructure investment by our government into regional Queensland. Every time I travel around regional Queensland I am so proud of the investment that our government is making through the strong advocacy of our local members including the member for Rockhampton when it comes to new areas of industry such as hydrogen and also assisting the supply chain with our train manufacturing. Our manufacturing hubs across Queensland are also providing dividends and giving people another option to grow their businesses and their economies.

We also know that there are going to be demands in agriculture, forestry and fishing. I have had the opportunity to speak to many businesses recently about the workforce they need into the future. It was great to speak with the Queensland Farmers' Federation—

An honourable member interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK:—that is right; Jo, who was talking about the need for more skilled workforces in her industries. We also heard that from Cotton Australia. We will continue to drive our workforce. We will continue to put in place measures such as—

(Time expired)

CFMEU

Mr BLEIJIE: My question is to the Minister for Industrial Relations. As industrial relations minister, will the minister and her whole department stand in solidarity with the Transport and Main Roads workers who were put in harm's way by the CFMEU and now refuse to meet with the CFMEU members?

Mr Bailey interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Miller, you will keep your interjections to a minimum.

Ms GRACE: Of course the answer is an absolute and complete yes. On this side of the House we always stand with workers, unlike those opposite, who sack them, vote down everything we put in place in this House to assist them and do nothing when it comes to ensuring the occupational health and safety of workplaces. Then they turn around and ask us if we stand in solidarity. There is one thing that is absolutely a definitive yes and that is that we stand with them—no problems at all.

What is interesting is that those opposite talk about two things; they have an absolute obsession with the CFMEU and they have absolutely no policies or integrity when it comes to industrial relations, occupational health and safety and WorkCover. However I ask: how can they now have the policies when there is one thing the electorate does not like and that is hypocrisy? We have the Leader of the Opposition running around claiming the government grinds to a halt when cabinet does not meet and that nothing happens in government—a misrepresentation of course. There is nothing further from the truth when they suggest that government grinds to a halt. The hypocrisy is that in the next breath they reveal they do not even meet as a shadow cabinet to develop one policy. That is what they do not—

Mr POWELL: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order under standing order 118(b). The question was calling on the minister to refuse to meet with CFMEU members.

Mr SPEAKER: Manager of Opposition Business, the minister had strayed for about five seconds. I think she is entitled to a little bit more than five seconds of straying, but I will ask her to come back to the question as asked.

Ms GRACE: When we are talking about solidarity with workers, it is not just about the small niche that they asked me about. I am referring to the solidarity of good policymaking. It is not good policymaking when the Leader of the Opposition sat around the cabinet table sacking workers—there was not a public servant they did not want to sack—not employing the teachers we needed and sacking the nurses when health obviously now needs them. We need to support them in every single stand we take.

Their other obsession is with the fake unions that are supporting all of the anti-vaxxers out there and threatening and harassing our public servants. They are outside addressing their rallies, supporting the anti-vaxxers. They have an obsession with the fake unions and an obsession with the CFMEU. The answer is: we will stand in solidarity with workers.

Skills and Training

Ms BUSH: My question is to the Premier and Minister for the Olympics. As the state and federal Labor governments work to fill more jobs, will the Premier tell the House what more is being done to increase skills and qualifications in Queensland?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Cooper for her question. She is aware, because she has been out talking to her community, of the need for more skills and training as we tackle the need to grow our workforce by 280,000. On top of that, we have the Olympics in 10 years. The new workforce that will be attracted to Queensland—from our school system, through our TAFE system or coming from interstate or overseas—will be able to live and raise their family here because the jobs will be here. There will be good, secure jobs.

Just last week I was pleased to see that the University of Queensland had opened a new building in the CBD. One of UQ's philosophies is to help those from disadvantaged backgrounds. Having met a couple of the students there, I respect and thank the University of Queensland for growing this cohort and giving young people an opportunity to gain a degree and a qualification. Our universities are central to the conversation about skills and training.

Once again, we hear crickets from those opposite. There is absolute silence when it comes to the major issues that are facing our economy. We have a low unemployment rate and we are growing jobs. Our Workforce Strategy sets out our plan for the future, giving our young people hope.

Mr Mickelberg interjected.

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

Mr Mander interjected.

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

Ms PALASZCZUK: This House should be well aware, and I think Queenslanders were aware, that at the start of the pandemic we were very worried that our unemployment rate would head in the wrong direction, but because of Queensland's strong health response our economy is booming. Our economy in Queensland did not suffer from the severe lockdowns experienced in other states. That is

why Queensland is in the best position to attract the workforce that we need to our state. If the borders had been opened, as was called for by those opposite on many occasions, Queensland would not be in the enviable position that it is in today. I thank every single Queenslanders for the great job they did.

(Time expired)

CFMEU

Ms CAMM: My question is to the Attorney-General. The Premier said that it would be up to other ministers to decide if they continue to meet with CFMEU members. As the state's first law officer and someone who has personally thanked CFMEU boss Michael Ravbar for his support, will the Attorney no longer meet with CFMEU members?

Ms FENTIMAN: I thank the member for the question. As the Premier has said, this government has been very clear that the actions of the CFMEU were appalling. I understand that the police are still reviewing the matter and I do not have anything further to say.

Disaster Recovery

Mr POWER: My question is for the Deputy Premier. Can the Deputy Premier explain how the Palaszczuk government is supporting Queenslanders to build back better from this year's disaster season, and can the Deputy Premier outline to the House any alternatives or different approaches?

Dr MILES: I thank the member for Logan for his question. I know that he continues to work closely with Logan home owners who were affected by the floods, along with other MPs in the Logan area. The Resilient Homes Fund is a \$741 million fund—the first of its kind and scale—designed to assist home owners to retrofit their homes so they can move back in more quickly, raise their homes above flood levels or buy back their homes if those alternatives are not possible.

To give members some sense of the size and scale of this program, it is roughly five times the relocation of Grantham that we undertook post those floods, and we know how successful that program has been. Some 122 properties have now been approved for buyback: 32 in Ipswich; 21 in Logan, the member for Logan will be interested to know; 16 in Brisbane; 25 in Moreton Bay; eight in Gympie; 16 in the Fraser Coast; and four on the Sunshine Coast. We have now paid \$50 million from the fund to the Brisbane City Council to facilitate the buyback of properties. We expect offers to start next month.

The valuers have started their work in Goodna; they are now in Logan. There is a process to allow us to agree a buyback value with those home owners. We will provide a valuation both pre and post the floods so that the home owner is well informed about the value of their property. We expect the first purchases to be concluded by Christmas. Understandably for these home owners, it is a big decision. It is their home. What they want to do with their property is a big decision, but we will support them through that process every single day.

The Resilient Homes Fund is new but I can tell you what is not new—that is, the LNP's parliamentary strategy. It is Wednesday. What do we do on Wednesday? Wednesday is union day. Tuesday is personal attacks on the Premier day; Wednesday is union day. Keep an eye out: Thursday is QBCC day, so stand by for that. Maybe if they had a meeting they could think of something new. As they cannot have a meeting, they cannot think of something new. They are interested in whether we meet with unions; they cannot even meet with each other! The shadow cabinet is so 'shadow' they do not even meet, or if they do meet they keep it secret. The question is: why would they hide from Queenslanders when they met? There are serious questions to be asked of the so-called Leader of the Opposition.

CFMEU

Ms SIMPSON: My question is to the Premier. The parliamentary register of interests shows that two members of the government caucus remain card-carrying members of the CFMEU. Will the Premier show leadership and demand that these MPs, including the Assistant Minister for Education, resign from the militant union?

Dr Miles: Resign from the fake union that's anti-vax.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right, member for Mudgeeraba. For those opposite, let me say it again: the matter is before the police. I am going to let the police do their job.

Opposition members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Those opposite do not understand how the police operate, how government operates or how cabinet operates. They are very good at picking fights and alienating every interest group.

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

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

Ms PALASZCZUK: One of the reasons that those opposite have been over there for a lengthy period of time is their lack of consultation with a whole range of sectors including business, community and unions. I am attending a skills summit attended by business, community and the unions. It is actually called working together. During COVID we did see business and the unions working very collaboratively together and I am very pleased to see the Prime Minister continue on in this vein.

Whilst on my feet I will say that we still have not heard from the Leader of the Opposition when it comes to whether or not they are going to cancel their business partnership program.

Mr POWELL: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance with regard to 118(b). The question was about the CFMEU membership of the assistant minister for education.

Mr SPEAKER: In terms of the point of order, Premier, the question was relatively specific in terms of a particular union and a particular set of circumstances, so if you could come back to the question as asked.

Ms PALASZCZUK: We have disclosure laws that we passed here so we can see the disclosure of business and unions, but we still have the opposition doing cash for access and its failure to respond to this letter that the Attorney-General sent in July.

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

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

Ms PALASZCZUK: The Leader of the Opposition needs to say today whether or not his party is still doing cash-for-access fundraisers and whether or not he still has his cash-for-access business partnership program and is the shadow cabinet participating, or are they secret meetings as well? The Leader of the Opposition can come in here and talk the talk but go outside and walk the walk.

Mr Saunders: They'd be very small steps.

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: I will wait for silence, members, and it is only jokes that come from me!

Private Sector Average Weekly Earnings

Ms McMILLAN: My question is to the Treasurer and Minister for Investment. Will the Treasurer update the House on private sector average weekly earnings in Queensland?

Mr DICK: I thank the member for Mansfield for her question. As the member for Mansfield knows, along with so many other Queenslanders, our state's economic recovery is leading the nation. The 213,000 jobs created in Queensland since the start of the pandemic represent the strongest jobs growth of any state or territory. As unemployment falls, we have also seen pleasing signs of growth in average weekly earnings. In the latest ABS data for May 2022, average private sector earnings rose to \$1,234.20 a week. That is a 3.9 per cent increase on a year earlier. Annualised to a 52-week year, that comes to just over \$64,000.

That also means that now in Queensland the average private sector weekly earnings have risen ever so slightly to above the \$62,794 annual supplement paid to members of the LNP shadow cabinet—a supplement for meetings that they cannot even be bothered recording; the most important meeting that they go to but they do not record them. They recorded them for a while. For a six-month period of hectic nonstop activity between May and November last year, the Leader of the Opposition recorded a total of 10 shadow cabinet meetings. That is one shadow cabinet meeting for every 2½ weeks. I do not know what the shadow cabinet secretary does. He must be writing something down, but I am not sure. How could they not have more meetings? How could they possibly run out of ways of resurrecting the Bruce Highway hoax and the fake Bradfield scheme—the two most significant contributions to public policy by the LNP in living memory?

Speaking of taking money under false pretences, let us talk about taking money from people you should not take money from. On Monday *Four Corners* ran a story about the dodgy business practices of investment company Greywolf—a company that ran fraudulent mining operations and ripped off huge

amounts of money from pensioners not earning the average weekly wage, not earning the supplement that those people opposite earn and mum-and-dad investors. It of course has a close association with federal LNP member Stuart Robert and that company has made two donations to the Queensland LNP totalling \$32,000—\$15,000 in 2010 and \$17,640. Leader of the Opposition, this side of the House is not going to be lectured by you on donations. I will lecture to you: when you give back \$32,000, you can lecture to us on donations from trade unions.

(Time expired)

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: I will wait for silence, members!

Mr Bleijie interjected.

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

Ingham, Mr J

Mr MANDER: My question is to the Premier. I refer to the national divisional president of the CFMEU, Jade Ingham, and his admission that he participated in the storming of TMR and ask: is Mr Ingham fit and proper to sit on the QBCC board being paid \$27,000 per year by Queensland taxpayers?

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Before calling the Premier, members to my right, questions will be heard in silence. Members who are interrupting the question will be named under the standing orders.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I will be waiting to see the police review of this incident, and if further action is warranted to be taken it will be taken.

Mr Crisafulli: Is that the threshold?

Ms PALASZCZUK: Let me say that—

Mr Crisafulli: The Premier said it was appalling.

Ms PALASZCZUK: My question to the Leader of the Opposition is—

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition is warned under the standing orders.

Ms Enoch interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Yes, that is right: the board that the Leader of the Opposition sits on does not meet often. The board those opposite sit on does not meet. Like I said, when we had seven members we were able to meet every single day and we worked harder than the total of the LNP who are there today. Honestly, it is beyond comprehension.

Further to what the Treasurer was saying, this is a serious issue about this investment company Greywolf. In fact, I have the two political disclosure forms here from the AEC which show that both were made to the LNP—\$15,000 and \$17,640 from pensioners and mum-and-dad investors as reviewed on *Four Corners*.

Tabled paper: Australian Electoral Commission Form, dated 29 January 2013, titled 'Donor to political party disclosure return—Organisations: Financial year 2010-2011' [[1244](#)].

Tabled paper: Australian Electoral Commission Form, dated 26 February 2013, titled 'Request for Amendment—Political Party Disclosure Return: Financial year 2011-12' [[1245](#)].

Mr POWELL: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order with regard to relevance under standing order 118(b). It was a very specific question about a QBCC board member.

Mr SPEAKER: Premier, the question does certainly relate to a particular element of government. I would ask you to come back to the question as asked.

Ms PALASZCZUK: As I said, these matters are currently being reviewed by police and we will await that outcome.

Mr Mickelberg interjected.

Mr Dick interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I find that offensive—

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Pause the clock. The Treasurer will cease his interjections. The member for Buderim will cease his interjections. Premier, you are the only person in the chamber who has the call.

Ms PALASZCZUK: You either respect the process of the police review of the incident or you do not, and we on this side actually respect those processes. We know those opposite do not. Heaven forbid—

Government members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right: always prepared to go off and make up stuff. Let the process run its course.

Workforce Strategy

Mr RUSSO: My question is to the Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing. Can the minister advise the House what role skills investment in schools has in the Queensland workforce strategy and is the minister aware of any alternative approaches?

Ms GRACE: I thank the member for the question. I know he is very excited about the \$3.8 million ITD lab we are building at Sunnybank High. This lab will have the latest technologies for students such as laser cutters, 3D printers and computer generated design equipment. We are delivering to the students in schools the tools that they need to get the skills to go on to TAFE—free TAFE, I might add—or to university so they can work in their local industries and local communities. That is what this side of the House is concentrating on. Yesterday we launched a workforce strategy. We are here talking about good policy decisions and great pieces of infrastructure that we are putting into schools and we are making sure that we have those gateways to industries for students.

When I look at alternative approaches, there is absolutely nothing from those opposite. We had 10 years of wasted time with the previous government. This morning was really interesting. The more things change, the more they stay the same. I was watching the news and Peter Dutton, the opposition leader, come on. He was saying, 'I'm not going to go to the jobs summit because there's too many unions there.' Obviously the Leader of the Opposition got the text: 'I'm talking about unions today. Make sure in question time you raise the question of unions'—yet again. It is incredible.

I have been in this place since 2007 and at every single opportunity there is an anti-union hysterical diatribe from those opposite. They are not talking about skills, they are not talking about jobs, they are not talking about how we can complete apprenticeships—which in the last 10 years went down to their worst—they are not talking about how we create well-paying jobs—we have had no wages growth in Australia over the last 10 years—and they are not talking about or developing policy.

Those opposite have a leader who has no followers. They will not turn up to any meetings. They have an empty cabinet room. As we know, the Leader of the Opposition was running around the parliament saying, 'Where do we meet again? Where was it?' 'Oh yes, it is in the Speaker's Dining Room. That is where we meet.' They are so devoid of a strategy or a plan he actually puts it on Twitter. He shows the Speaker's Dining Room as their possible meeting room—not sure whether they turn up or not—on Twitter.

This government is delivering jobs, skills and strategy. Those opposite are hypocrites. They support fake unions. They support no policy initiatives. You cannot cry 'chicken' and then not meet. They have egg on their faces. They should do their job.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Theodore, member for Moggill, you are both warned under the standing orders.

Minister for Transport and Main Roads

Mr MINNIKIN: My question is to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. On Monday, a last-minute welcome video was cut. On Wednesday, the minister said he was never scheduled to attend last week's TMR contractors events. Then on Thursday, following the leaking of the program, the minister said he was attending but had to cancel at the 11th hour. If the minister was always scheduled to attend, why did he not just say so on Wednesday?

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members. The minister has not yet begun his contribution. I can hardly hear him.

Mr BAILEY: I thank the honourable member for the question, although I find it pretty amazing that he would feign concern for TMR staff when he was the assistant minister for public transport who sacked 2,800 staff in Transport and Main Roads and 1,700 Queensland Rail workers. The Newman era members are all still there: Broadwater, Glass House, Kawana, Mudgeeraba, Chatsworth, Clayfield.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr BAILEY: The treasurer in the Newman era government is interjecting the loudest. There is Everton down the back.

Mr Nicholls interjected.

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

Mr BAILEY: All we have is a Newman era government controlled LNP that have learned nothing in seven and a half years. I have been very clear on this matter. I back our staff 100 per cent. I did a number of different prerecords for a number of different reasons.

Mr Crandon interjected.

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

Mr BAILEY: Let me make it very clear: I back our staff 100 per cent. I do not sack them. When it comes to a shadow cabinet meeting, whenever it does occur, I guess when you only have three items—how do we sack people, how do we sell assets and how do we cut—you do not need a meeting when you have that kind of agenda.

Mr Nicholls interjected.

Mr BAILEY: Let us not have this puerile, pathetic pretence that they care about staff when we know that if they got back into power they would sack them again.

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

Mr BAILEY: They have a pathological hatred for the Public Service. The member for Clayfield is interjecting the most because he knows he stuffed it up the most, as well as the Leader of the Opposition who deserted his home town after he lost.

Mr POWELL: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance. All morning ministers have been asked questions about their links to the CFMEU and none of them have answered the specific questions.

Mr SPEAKER: In fairness, Manager of Opposition Business, there are ministers who are replying in a context that relates to their portfolio responsibilities. That is what I am hearing. I will ask the minister to come back to the direct question as asked.

Mr BAILEY: I am happy to do so. I made it very clear that the email that was released showed—

Mr Crandon interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Coomera, you are warned under the standing orders. I just called the House to order.

Mr BAILEY: The email that was released showed very clearly that I was called to a CBRC meeting on Monday morning and it was actioned from there. It is very, very clear. I will not put up with those opposite feigning concern for staff when we know they sacked them. They sacked 14,000 of them after they said they would be safe. Remember? They will do it again if they get the chance.

West Moreton, Health Services

Ms HOWARD: My question is to the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services. Can the minister outline what the Palaszczuk government is doing to improve health services in the West Moreton region and beyond?

Mrs D'ATH: I thank the member for Ipswich for her question. I know she is just as excited as I am about the Palaszczuk government's investment in health and capital infrastructure across this state. It is an exciting time to be talking about health in Queensland—unlike those on the opposite side—with a record capital investment and strategies to recruit and retain the highest quality staff in the country. Ipswich and its surrounds are one of the fastest growing regions in our state. The Palaszczuk government is planning for future population growth by expanding health services and employment opportunities. In the \$9.78 billion Health and Hospitals Plan we are committed to investing \$710 million into expanding Ipswich Hospital with 200 additional beds.

I can also advise the member that construction on the new Ripley Satellite Hospital is nearing a point where the roof will be going on. When complete, it will add an important layer to healthcare delivery in that region. We are also heavily investing in the region just west of Ipswich. Last week I was fortunate enough to visit the Toowoomba Hospital and the site where the new hospital facilities are going to be built. It is a \$1.3 billion investment which is going to see a spectacular health facility built on the historical Baillie Henderson site. It will be offering lots of services that will not only benefit Toowoomba but also the whole region. It will benefit Ipswich because people in the Toowoomba region will not have to travel to Ipswich for specialist services.

I am really proud that, from the moment this government was elected, for us it has been about putting money back into the community, including into the health system. What we saw from the previous government was money coming in. We saw lots of money coming in, including \$50,000 from Scott Driscoll, the former member for Redcliffe, which was ripped out of community groups and the old Retail Traders and Shopkeepers Association. We know he went to prison for some of his conduct in relation to that. Was that \$50,000 ever repaid? No! Was it forwarded to a not-for-profit organisation in our community to deliver services for our youth? No! Where did it go? It stayed in the pockets of the LNP, which I am sure helped with future campaigns—although not very successfully in Redcliffe.

While we know that plenty of money was coming in, no-one knew how much. Why? Because the moment they were elected they lifted the disclosure threshold. If that disclosure threshold was the same today, over \$14,000 could be donated from any one donor. They could walk in and give that money to any candidate or member and no-one would know about it. Compare that to the transparency of this government. I will stand on our record any day when it comes to what—

(Time expired)

Gaming Machines

Mr BERKMAN: My question is to the Attorney-General. Last month Queenslanders lost a record \$301.8 million on pokies in pubs and clubs. How much more will people need to lose and how many more lives will be ruined by gambling addiction before the government acts on gambling advocates' calls to get pokies out of pubs and clubs?

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Mermaid Beach will cease his interjections.

Ms FENTIMAN: I thank the member for the question. Gambling harm is a very serious issue. While we know that a lot of gambling that happens in our clubs and pubs is very safe, a small percentage of people are addicted. We do have programs in place to help problem gamblers, we have counselling available and we have \$7 million for our gambling harm strategy.

The commissioner for gambling and our responsible gambling committee provide us with advice about what more we can do to support people who have a gambling addiction. There is further reform before the House with the Casino Control and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, which I will not comment on. We are very focused on making sure that people who are addicted to gambling get the help they need. There are significant resources available. Recently we launched a wonderful campaign where people tell their stories. This is not just about the person who has the addiction; often their family and their community are also affected.

This is a very serious issue and we take it seriously. We work with industry to make sure that we have campaigns and that people know where to go to seek help. I am very proud of the government's gambling harm policy. Towards the end of the year we will also be releasing a new gambling harm household survey, which will be the first survey since 2017. It will give us a better picture of what more we can do to support people who are addicted to gambling.

Railways, Investment

Mr SULLIVAN: My question is of the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. Can the minister update the House on the jobs supported through the Palaszczuk government's investment in rail and is the minister aware of any alternative approaches?

Mr BAILEY: I thank the member for the question. He is a strong supporter of investment in rail right across the state and particularly in South-East Queensland. We have seen a \$3.5 billion commitment to our rail revolution in this year's state budget. We have Cross River Rail, the Gold Coast

Light Rail, the Sunshine Coast light rail and the Kuraby-Beenleigh double track duplication. Of course, last week the Premier, the Assistant Minister for Train Manufacturing and I were in Torbanlea to turn the first sod for early works to build trains in Queensland. That is what this government stands for.

We saw the botch-ups when those opposite were in power. They had our trains made overseas, gutting Maryborough's workers by denying them that work. Those trains were not disability compliant. When the Premier, the assistant minister and I were at the sod turn, not far away at Downer workers were fixing those dodgy trains that were ordered by the LNP. They are up to the 28th train and they have 75 to do. They are fixing seven trains at a time so that we can still run the system. It is costing \$335 million of taxpayer funds and it is because of the incompetence and the botch-ups of the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Clayfield, the member for Chatsworth, the member for Everton, the member for Glass House and the member for Mudgeeraba. They are all still there and they had made the same mistakes before.

We are investing in training. There are hundreds of trainees on our different rail projects. Eighty-six new graduates, apprentices and trainees will be employed by Queensland Rail and that is boosted by our free TAFE. We are seeing investments in rail, in apprenticeships and in jobs. Let us compare that to the record of those opposite. They did not start the training of a single train driver for the past year they were in office, that is, 2014—zero. We had 48 fewer train drivers at the end of the Newman government than at the beginning. They cut, they sack and they sell. A whole new rail line was opened in 2016 and they cut train driver numbers. That shows their incompetence and we have not seen any change.

To this very day we see the same arrogant approach from those opposite. We see no integrity on the laptop issue. They will not admit their mistake there. They will not apologise for telling porky pies for five months about that. The same lack of integrity includes accepting donations from convicted fraudsters such as Eddy Andrews, who donated almost \$60,000 to the LNP for their last state campaign. Are they going to pay back that money from a convicted fraudster who donated heavily to the LNP? I bet we get radio silence on that one.

North Queensland, Youth Crime

Mr KATTER: My question is to the Premier and Minister for the Olympics. Violent and destructive youth crime is tearing North Queensland communities apart and they are crying out for help. Mount Isa now has multiple businesses boarded up and Tripadvisor recommends that people do not stay for safety reasons. Given the inaction by the relevant ministers, will the Premier show leadership and step in to ensure that alternative tools, such as relocation sentencing, are delivered?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Mount Isa for the question. I do acknowledge that this is a serious issues in many communities across our state. I know that the member for Mount Isa is a strong advocate for his community. I also recognise that our government has made the largest ever investment in youth crime, with over \$500 million committed to a range of programs. Assistant Commissioner Scanlon has been going from community to community and is working very closely with not just the Minister for Police but also the Minister for Youth Justice.

These are very complex issues. Unfortunately, some young children who are involved in youth crime do not have safe and secure homes. We need to continue to grow our foster care system and we must recognise that that needs to be culturally appropriate as well. I am sure that the Minister for Police would be more than happy to speak to the member about any particular local issues. Alternatively, I am happy to chat with the member on further matters.

Queensland Corrective Services, Personnel

Mr SKELTON: My question is of the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services. Can the minister please update the House on what the Palaszczuk government is doing to help QCS staff better their skills and how this is contributing to good jobs for Queenslanders?

Mr RYAN: I thank the member for his support of Queensland Corrective Services officers. I also note that in the House we have two former custodial officers, the member for Mundingburra and the member for Caloundra. We are very proud to have them on our team because we are very proud of the work that custodial officers do every single day on our behalf to keep the community safe.

One reason we are very proud of their efforts is that they are contributing to community safety and they are doing so in a very professional way. We show our support for them by investing in them through training, resources and, of course, remuneration. I am informed by Queensland Corrective

Services that Queensland's custodial officers are now amongst the best trained, best resourced and best paid in Australasia. That is a very proud record that we have. Of course, those opposite—the privateers who want to put all custodial officers into the hands of private operators; they actually went to the last election with a policy to privatise prisons—are not showing appreciation for Queensland's custodial officers, those people working so hard on our behalf. We are very proud that public servants—professional custodial officers—are in our prisons keeping our community safe.

We are also very proud of the plan that we have around investing in community safety and in our custodial system—and of course across the state in all of our emergency services and police agencies—to make sure we are supporting them and they are best resourced to keep the community safe.

I was a bit taken aback yesterday when I heard about how many shadow cabinet meetings were held. I was a bit taken aback when the Leader of the Opposition turned up to the shadow cabinet meeting and no-one was there! It sort of made sense to me, because today marks 600 days since the member for Burdekin said that the LNP would release a crime plan. When you turn up to meeting rooms and there is no-one there, there is nothing on the agenda and you are not recording the meetings—I guess that explains why they have no plan for crime and no plan for youth justice in our community. It is an indictment on the member for Burdekin that he can go around communities, gaslighting them about a plan, but take no action for 600 days. Those opposite need to get serious about these things. They need to get on board with the government's plan, because we are contributing and making a difference.

(Time expired)

Casinos

Mr NICHOLLS: My question is to the Attorney-General. Given reports of allegations of illegal and improper conduct, will the government expand the terms of reference and powers of the Gotterson inquiry to allow a full public investigation of operations of all Queensland casinos plus the Office of Liquor and Gaming Regulation?

Ms FENTIMAN: I thank the member for the question. The allegations in relation to Lawrence Fu and the Ville and Reef casinos were raised with the Office of Liquor and Gaming Regulation earlier this year. They have commenced an investigation and that investigation is ongoing. As the regulator of Queensland casinos, they work closely and continue to liaise with the Queensland police and Austrac in relation to the regulation of all Queensland casinos when investigating licensees. Of course, we have also had an independent expert review that had public hearings last week, led by the Hon. Robert Gotterson AO and being assisted by Mr Jonathan Horton QC.

We are determined to make sure that Queensland casinos operate lawfully, ethically and in a way that maintains the highest standards of integrity and public confidence. The review is incredibly broad. Not only will they look into the operations of Star Entertainment Group where they will continue to advise on the suitability of Star Queensland; under part C they will also consider any further improvements to casino procedures, regulations and legislation to enhance integrity, minimise the potential for harm, ensure probity and restore public confidence in casino operations. That is far broader than what we have seen in the Bell inquiry in New South Wales.

This review will make strong recommendations to ensure the public has confidence in our casinos and to strengthen regulation. Of course, we have not waited for this review. There is already a bill before the House around strengthening casino regulation. I am sure there will be further recommendations from Mr Gotterson and Mr Horton about what more we can do here in Queensland to make sure our casinos are operating ethically and lawfully. That is what we all want to see.

If you listened to any of the public hearings last week you would be absolutely convinced that Mr Horton will leave no stone unturned when it comes to ensuring that Star Entertainment Group is operating lawfully. They have already flagged, in the opening and closing submissions, further reform for the regulator and for all Queensland casinos. The terms of reference are very broad. I think we have two very experienced people leading this independent external review. It has all of the powers under the Casino Control Act of a commission of inquiry. They have all of the powers—

Mr Nicholls: It cannot compel evidence.

Ms FENTIMAN: I take that interjection from the shadow minister. They have all of the powers under the act of a commission of inquiry. I think Queenslanders can absolutely have confidence that they will leave no stone unturned.

Innovation

Mr TANTARI: My question is of the Minister for Tourism, Innovation and Sport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics and Paralympics Sport and Engagement. Can the minister inform the House how the Palaszczuk government is supporting Queenslanders to build the new innovation economy, and is the minister aware of any other approaches?

Mr HINCHLIFFE: I thank the member for Hervey Bay for his question. I know how committed he is to good policy settings that provide opportunities for Queenslanders into the future and he knows how important the new innovation economy is in that space. Since 2015 the Palaszczuk government's Advance Queensland innovation initiative has supported over 28,000 jobs being created and many upskilling opportunities. That is why last month the Palaszczuk government launched a new 10-year \$142 million Advance Queensland Innovation for a Future Economy road map.

Today I can announce an important component of our future economy road map. We are now taking nominations for the next round of Advance Queensland Industry Research Fellowships for Queensland based PhD qualified researchers. Our \$12 million investment over three years in industry research fellowships is backing research projects with real-world potential to move out of the lab and down the commercialisation pipeline. To do that, researchers will need to secure an industry partner to help translate groundbreaking work into practical industry applications. On average, each research project generates three jobs and up to 12 additional jobs post completion. There are great opportunities there.

Further, according to the Association of Australian Medical Research Institutes, every dollar spent on medical research alone delivers a \$3.90 return on investment. Queensland fellowship innovations are reducing plastic in landfill, creating better ways of extracting new technology minerals like cobalt from mine tailings and ensuring accurate prostate cancer testing. There are so many good things we are seeing in this space and there is so much good work that this government has done over a long period of time, led by the Premier and her commitment to Advance Queensland.

Unfortunately, those opposite do not value innovative Queenslanders in the same way. That is why we saw the LNP, the last time they were in government, cutting \$70 million from the Smart State grants program. They took us backwards. I am sorry, but I want to correct something the Minister for Transport said earlier in question time. He said that he did not think those opposite had learned anything in the past seven years. I do not think they have learned anything in the past 30 years! It is evidenced in so many instances and on so many occasions—the lack of innovation, forethought and thinking about the future. It is demonstrated absolutely in the DNA of the structures of those conservative parties here in Queensland. They have failed to modernise Queensland in the way that Labor has modernised Queensland over a generation. We look forward to continuing that work and continuing to see innovation develop. We see the failure to innovate demonstrated by the opposition.

(Time expired)


Mr SPEAKER: The period for question time has expired.

TRANSPORT LEGISLATION (ROAD SAFETY AND OTHER MATTERS) AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from 30 August (see p. 2297), on motion of Mr Bailey—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (10.58 am), continuing: Under this legislation, projects just like the Jindalee bridge can be funded to reduce the number of road crashes in black spots. In addition to saving lives, of course, these safety upgrades will also save hours on the road and deliver economic and social wellbeing benefits as people spend less time in their cars and more time with their families or at work.

It is important to note that the Jindalee bridge project differs from other key upgrades we have seen in my electorate since I was elected in 2017. The Ipswich Motorway upgrade, while a busy motorway, is not a known black spot. The amazing Sumners Road overpass named after Len Waters is a game-changing piece of infrastructure that frees up capacity for 35,000 vehicles a day to get moving

around Brisbane, but it was not a black spot. I take a moment to acknowledge the recent passing of Len Waters' widow, Gladys, in the previous month. Gladys attended the opening of the Len Waters Overpass last year alongside me, the minister and the Premier. Her passing is very sad and deeply felt in my community.

Black spots are a unique and special challenge for Transport and Main Roads because they have a deleterious effect on traffic moving around our city. Accidents make travel times unpredictable at best. Some mornings it can take 45 minutes to get into the city from Riverhills, but if there is an accident it can be well over an hour. People never know if today will be the unlucky day that they will be rear-ended by somebody tailgating them.

While I am on the subject of tailgating, I will take a moment to talk about this incredibly dangerous driver behaviour. As our cameras become more advanced and sophisticated I am very hopeful—and I know many people in my community are too—that tailgating is the kind of driver behaviour that we will be able to target using this kind of sophisticated technology. Tailgating is the kind of intimidating behaviour that can lead to changed driver behaviour by the drivers of the cars around that vehicle and by the people being tailgated, which can result in those drivers making unsafe driving decisions. It is bullying behaviour on our roads and it needs to stop.

All drivers need to remember that they are behind the wheel of a lethal weapon and when they wield that weapon in a dangerous way they are responsible for the consequences. That is why I support the minister's proposal to change the word 'accident' to 'crash'. Behaviours like tailgating are responsible for a large number of road crashes and they are no accident.

I often say to my son, who is 10 years old, 'If you do something silly and something bad happens, like you ride your bike at a wall at high speed and you hit it'—which is a thing he likes to do—'it is not an accident, Heath; it is a consequence of a choice you made.' It is the same with dangerous behaviours like tailgating. If someone crashes while exhibiting dangerous driving behaviour that is not an accident, that is a consequence. There is only one way to stop that. That is a change of driver behaviour. That is exactly the kind of education program we are going to see funded under this legislation.

I used to be a very proud member of the Transport and Resources Committee. During a committee hearing a few years ago I was struck by a statistic that was provided by a departmental representative that about 20 per cent of our road fatalities still involve drink driving. When members of this House reflect on the vast amount of community education over a long period of time—and I have spoken before about the highly effective advertising campaigns that have been run; they do use unparliamentary language so I will not repeat the slogans here today—we should note that the advertising campaigns were incredibly effective. It is concerning that the rate of drink driving is still so high.

In that hearing with the department I asked why we continue to see such a high rate of fatalities involving drink driving despite the hugely changed social mores. The response of the staff member stayed with me. They comment that people who drink and drive in this day and age are not acting logically and they are probably in the throes of addiction. This program will target those people and work with them. There will be rehabilitation programs. We have already had legislation passed around alcohol interlock devices. With 20 per cent of fatalities involving alcohol we still have a long way to go to stamp out this scourge in our community.


Finally, I would like to speak about the legal protections that will be provided for doctors who report on those who will no longer be driving or should no longer be driving. I am not sure about other members of the House—it might be particular to my community—but I often have people come into my electorate office who have had their driver's licence taken away by their doctor. It is often well overdue. They ask if there is anything I can do to help.

I know it is a hard decision for a GP or practitioner to take away what for a person can feel like a big piece of their freedom, independence and their ability to get around in their community. That is a huge decision for a doctor or physician to make. We all know just how dependent a lot of us in Queensland are on having a driver's licence. We also know that road safety has to come first so I support the measures that we are putting in place to ensure that doctors can make those decisions without fear of recourse or repercussion.

I would say to drivers that it is good to think ahead and think about the time when they will not be driving anymore. For most of us that day will come. It is a hard day. It is a day that we have to plan for. I would encourage all drivers—even ones as young as I—to have a think about when that day comes what their plan is, how they are going to move and how they are going to stay engaged with their community. We need to ensure that the roads are a safe place for each and every one of us. The best

way to do that is for people to make sure they have a plan B for getting around their community when they no longer have a licence. I encourage everybody to think about that so it is not such a hard thing when the time comes.

In closing, again I say what a huge supporter I am of this bill and how excited I am to see some of the funding that will be quarantined for road specific projects aimed at projects in my community like our much awaited Jindalee bridge. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (11.06 am): Before moving to the details of the bill, I would like to offer some words of condolence in relation to Monday's plane crash. I wish to express my sincere condolences to the family and friends of the late Tom Strachan and his son Noah and senior pilot Gary Liehm. To all those associated with Tom, Noah and Gary through the agricultural and aviation industries, you have my deepest sympathy and support during this difficult time. This loss is truly devastating and very hard to come to terms with.

I wish to contribute to the debate on the Transport Legislation (Road Safety and Other Matters) Amendment Bill. I thank the members of the Transport and Resources Committee and their staff for their consideration of the bill. The bill mainly amends transport related legislation. However, it also amends housing legislation to correct numerical drafting errors in the Housing Legislation Amendment Act 2021.

The policy objectives of the bill are to: improve road safety; increase the range of allowable motorised mobility devices; make improvements to court and other processes; and make minor enhancements to transport and other legislation. Currently, all revenue from camera detected offences must be used for road safety education, road accident rehabilitation and safety improvements on state controlled roads where accidents most frequently happen. It is proposed by the legislation to broaden where the revenue can be spent to include: collaborating with organisations and local communities to develop and implement safer practices; enabling vulnerable road users to participate in programs to improve their safety on the road; and proactively researching innovative solutions to existing or emerging problems.

Changes are also proposed as to where funding can be used for infrastructure safety improvements. I do have a great interest in that. Currently, the state legislation limits this to state controlled roads where accidents most frequently happen. The bill will broaden this to fund any safety improvements on state controlled roads, prioritised to maximise the reduction in the frequency and severity of road crashes.

Another key factor in road crashes is either the local conditions or the design—or should I say sometimes the design that is not fit for purpose on roads. The design of the road has been raised with me in regard to the steepness of the batters along the Warrego Highway and also on the highways into Charters Towers. These highways carry a large proportion of road trains carrying livestock into the saleyards in Roma and Charters Towers. I thought that the data kept by the department of main roads would have drilled into the types of road trains and the freight being carried, particularly if the government want to fund safety improvements. I thought they would be looking for an evidence based solution.

I asked the question of the government about the number of accidents on the Warrego Highway from Toowoomba to Charleville. I asked for a breakdown of the number of accidents that involved heavy vehicle rollovers and specifically, of those rollovers, how many had been carrying livestock. The answer stated that between 1 July 2010 and 30 June 2020 there were 450 crashes along that section of the Warrego Highway. That is about three to four accidents a month. The government advised that the number of crashes involving heavy vehicle freight rollovers, or the cargo being carried, cannot be advised at this level of detail because it is not available in the Department of Transport and Main Roads' road crash database. In addition, TMR has not conducted any specific research to determine whether steep, unsealed shoulders and batters have been a contributor to any heavy vehicle rollover on this particular section of road.

If the government were serious about improving safety, surely they would collect as much data as possible. Maybe now—and I hope and I ask the minister—there could be some research: could there be some greater detail collected in relation to these heavy vehicle rollovers, particularly those vehicles that are carrying livestock?

It is the state government who do the road repairs, the safety upgrades and the design for both state and federal roads. It is the state government who do the business cases requesting funding from the federal government. It is the state government who do the specification and design to improve the safety of these roads. If there is no data collected by the Department of Transport and Main Roads as


to the heavy vehicle freight rollovers, how can safety improvements be evidenced based on either a state controlled road or a national highway? I am concerned that without a strong evidence base of accurate data on road accidents, particularly those road accidents involving heavy vehicles, the allocation of funding will be more about politics than road safety.

Fines for offences such as those for the use of seatbelts and mobile phones have recently increased. Over the next two financial years revenue from camera detected offences is expected to grow from approximately \$717 million to \$915 million. The other increase that is occurring in the Department of Transport and Main Roads is that of road maintenance backlog, and that is compromising safety. That was pointed out by the Auditor-General.

DTMR calculated that the renewal backlog on 30 June 2017 was \$4 billion. That backlog figure grew from \$4 billion to \$5.4 billion as at 30 June 2019. At 30 June 2021 it was reported at \$5.75 billion. In the Darling Downs south-west region, the deferred maintenance backlog for state controlled roads is sitting at \$1.3 billion—the highest of any of the regions. After seven years in government, this government has not addressed that ever-growing road maintenance backlog.

Outback roads have some of the highest deaths. That is where a lot of the road length is. They have some of the highest deaths. Unfortunately, my electorate is in the top 10 for road deaths on outback roads. That comes from the ABS statistics.

The Auditor-General said the deferred maintenance backlog gap will affect DTMR's ability to meet minimum performance targets, it will compromise service standards and it will require DTMR to reprioritise the safety related defects on its network at the expense of works to renew its assets. This government should be addressing that maintenance backlog as there will be more and more deaths as those safety related defects increase because they are not being addressed. Queenslanders deserve better and road users deserve better, be they in a metropolitan area or in outback Queensland.

 **Mrs McMAHON** (Macalister—ALP) (11.14 am): I rise to speak in support of the Transport Legislation (Road Safety and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2022. I note that the explanatory notes and the committee report both state that the first policy objective of this bill is to improve road safety. That is an object that I am sure all members of this House can support.

I spent a significant portion of my young adult life—a very formative part of it—on the front line of road safety in both proactive and reactive policing activities. When people think of police and the role that they play in traffic and road safety, it is primarily about the enforcement aspect. We see police out on the roads conducting enforcement activities, intercepting drivers and issuing tickets. I have certainly issued my fair share of traffic infringement notices. Can I just say that traffic enforcement is not for everyone. It requires a thick skin and a dedication to the task in the face of a slew of tears and excuses as to why a particular individual should be exempt from the rules that everyone else is expected to abide by. Every now and then a motorist will thank you for your work but that is few and far between.

I note that there have been many advancements to assist officers with evidentiary provisions around traffic enforcement, including some to be introduced in this bill. For every sorry tale of woe and exculpatory story provided by a driver that may cause an officer to exercise discretion, there is not an infringement notice that I had doubts in issuing. That is because the other aspect of road policing is responding to road trauma—the sights, the sounds, the visceral trauma on show when poor decisions on the road culminate in tragic consequences, the confusion, the dust, the smell, the sounds of crying, the sounds of pain, last breaths being taken.

Of interest in this bill which I do not think too many here will talk about is the clarification of the definition of 'road crash'. I know it is a little thing, but some 20-odd years ago there was a move away from the term 'traffic accident' to 'traffic crash'. It may not seem like much but this change foreshadows the belief that these are no accidents. They are not unforeseen events without an apparent cause but incidents that could have been prevented.

In conjunction with my policing work, I had the opportunity to study road trauma reduction strategies at university while completing my policing studies. Since that time there have been several studies which evaluate our camera detected offence program. For those who keep hearing that camera tickets are merely revenue raisers, I strongly recommend members read these evaluations. The most recent evaluation showed that the camera detected offence program contributed to an 11 per cent reduction in serious casualty crashes and a six per cent reduction in minor injury crashes in one year alone. This reduction represents 2,500 fewer crashes in one year. Considering the cost of road trauma on the community, this reduction alone represented a saving of at least \$700 million across the community.

This bill seeks to modernise and clarify how financial penalties collected by camera detected offences can be spent on road safety initiatives. The previous allocation of funds to targeted road safety programs was largely a reactive spend—that is, the money was allocated where there were frequent crashes recorded. The department explained that the new provisions in this bill will allow the department to be proactive in road safety initiatives. One should not have to wait for a crash to occur at an intersection where there is a crash risk to have money spent on it.

I know this was at the forefront of my mind when I campaigned last term for a road safety upgrade at an intersection outside a school in my electorate in Carbrook—a T-intersection on an 80-kilometre-an-hour road which serviced two schools and a childcare centre, vehicles turning and crossing in front of each other with poor visibility. I was told the data did not indicate that there were many crashes there but, speaking to parents who used it on a regular basis and watching it in action, I knew that it was only a matter of time. The element of proactive road safety extends to being able to invest in research and development so that technology of road safety can match the development in vehicle safety and road design and ever-changing driver behaviour and distractions.


The other aspect of the bill I would like to speak to are changes to the range of allowable motorised mobile devices. Travelling around Beenleigh, particularly in the CBD where many of our accessible social housing complexes are, the use of motorised mobility devices is quite ubiquitous. To allow MMDs to include devices up to an unladen mass of 170 kilograms and travel up to a maximum speed of 15 kilometres an hour means that a greater range of mobility devices will be available for Queenslanders as they will align with European standards and allow more imports. I note that, although the maximum allowable speed for devices will be increased to 15 kilometres an hour, it does not change the lawful speed limit on footpaths and other public spaces. This is for the safety of the MMD user and other pedestrians.

Another aspect I would like to touch on briefly is the improvement of evidentiary provisions to prosecute offences dealing with vehicle compliance and safety. For those who are not aware, the brief of evidence that may be required for prosecuting such an offence may require the state to present evidence which must be introduced or explained by an expert witness with respect to vehicle standards and compliance. A technical expert may be required to attend court to potentially answer questions around compliance plates and the like. This requires the state incurring expenses to secure these witnesses on top of a day of lost work for that individual. This may occur even if the particular matter of compliance is not contested. The arrangements in this bill ensure that appropriate evidence is presented and the onus of proof still maintained by the prosecution without financial and time burdens unless specifically raised by the defendant. Again this is another small amendment, but it will save police and prosecutors time and unnecessary court expenses.

The final aspect I would like to speak to relates to the extension of legal protections for health professionals who elect to notify the department of transport about a person's fitness or, more specifically, their inability to drive safely. Currently a health professional who elects to report a patient over concerns about their fitness to drive is protected against civil liability, but this protection only covers the situation where the driver being reported is a Queensland licence holder. This bill simply extends that protection to reporting non-Queensland licence holders.

I always take note around discussions concerning the reporting of drivers by medical professionals. I note that the committee did hear the submission from the RACQ which included a push to introduce mandatory medical condition reporting. Those who have been watching this debate unfold for many years know how contentious this issue is. I was a police officer in Logan when a deadly crash occurred in 2004, taking the life of two-year-old Jet Rowland and leaving his six-year-old brother Bailey a paraplegic for life. The driver who lost control of his vehicle, which then collided with the Rowlands' vehicle, had been experiencing frequent seizures leading up to the crash. Jet's mother, our colleague Anita Rowland, campaigned hard for the introduction of Jet's Law.

The law meant that the driver has the responsibility to report serious medical conditions to the department. This straddles the fine line between medical conditions being disclosed to licensing authorities and the second and third order consequences to community health if that responsibility were transferred to health professionals; that is, drivers who have serious health conditions would not go and see their doctor to report them and get them addressed if they knew that it was mandatory to report medical conditions. I note that this amendment does not change the reporting protocols; it merely extends the protections of the current protocols. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Theodore—LNP) (11.23 am): I too rise to make a contribution to the Transport Legislation (Road Safety and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2022. From the outset I would like to express my deep-seated gratitude to all of our police officers, ambulance officers, emergency service personnel, fire and first responders who turn up to these accidents. One of my old friends,

Gavin White, used to be a firey and he witnessed many scenes over the years. It certainly takes a very strong individual to do that type of work. I want to put on the record my thanks to those individuals for the service they give.

Road safety is obviously one of the most important aspects of modern society. When it comes to driving a vehicle it is a privilege. It is not a right; it is a privilege. We have to remember that. It is a privilege the state gives to individuals. It is a privilege to remember the rights of other motorists out there on the streets. I want to speak about some of the discussions we have had in our local Lions Club with a QPS officer. This has more to do with courtesy when it comes to using the road. This would make some real differences. These are the types of programs that potentially could receive some funding, and it relates to merging at speed.

One of the biggest problems we see on the M1 motorway is that every time you come up close to an interchange there is a domino effect and traffic slows down. The problem is that people are not merging properly. There is a twofold issue: vehicles coming onto the motorway and vehicles already on the motorway not allowing people to merge. For some reason we have an attitude that we are not going to let in the car in front of us: we are going to make them go behind us. It is going to take two seconds off our driving trip. Queenslanders do need to change that attitude.

One of the other aspects we discussed was vehicles sitting in the far right-hand lane. On the M1 motorway that lane is really designed for emergency vehicles. Many of my residents and I have expressed concern about the number of vehicles that just sit in the right-hand lane for upwards of 10 to 15 minutes. That leads to another dilemma which was highlighted by our local police officers and should also be mentioned in any education programs in our schools: driving ahead of where you want to go. All too often we see accidents at major interchanges as a result of vehicles cutting across from the far right-hand lane all the way to the left-hand lane to exit. They are crossing four lanes of traffic within a very short distance and time, which causes other vehicles to slam their brakes on to avoid them. Unfortunately, more often than not there are collisions because of that attitude. We need to make sure that drivers are prepared to drive ahead of time, to make sure they are using exits appropriately and getting into the left-hand lanes so they do not cut across all of these vehicles.

That is something which education programs in schools need to address, and I thank my local schools for the programs they run in their areas. Upper Coomera State College has had very gory and graphic, you could say, educational programs to scare students about the realities of car accidents. The issue I have is that there is still a group of individuals who ignore the messages, and it is those individuals we need to capture. It is those students who are ignoring the signs. For example, as in all electorates we have hooning in our areas, speeding down local streets potentially putting themselves and other motorists at risk. These programs need to address and highlight the danger of their activities.

I say to the minister that we need to really push these programs with students. We also need to get in earlier so it is drummed into them long before they get their licence. You could say that it is a reminder for parents too. I know it would drive some parents crazy to have a back-seat driver saying, 'Mum, you're speeding. You shouldn't be speeding, Mum.' 'Dad, don't touch your mobile phone.' All too often there are accidents as a result of people using their mobile phones.

One aspect we do not seem to discuss is technology in vehicles. As technology becomes more prevalent in vehicles, it is becoming more of a distraction to drivers with the head-up displays and central controls where you select Apple CarPlay et cetera. That is a distraction. When I am driving my Hilux, I see too many people in sedans using these displays which means they are taking their minds off the road. I understand vehicles are safer because they have automatic braking for crash avoidance, but we still need to make sure that people are concentrating on the road and are not being distracted by technology.

When we look at road safety upgrades, we also need to look at the areas around those upgrades. One example is Tamborine Oxenford Road and Michigan Drive. I have asked the minister to consider a turn-right lane into Georgina Street because that would make it safer for motorists. That street is on a bit of a blind corner, right beside the proposed upgrade of Tamborine Oxenford Road. This is not a big ask. We are just asking for a safe turn-right lane into that road which would be welcomed by all motorists who use that area.

There is another road that I have asked the minister about many times. We need to put a safe turn-left lane at Henri Robert Drive. That should be put on the agenda when it comes to safer roads because when you are coming from the Canungra direction, you are going across the crest of a hill and you do not get sufficient time to avoid a vehicle turning left into Henri Robert Drive. That road is on the back of quite a decent crest and many trucks use that road. I ask the department and the minister to please consider all of the communication I give them and put that on the road safety program.


I would like to talk about mobility scooters and the limit of 10 kilometres per hour on pathways. Mobility scooters are very important for the elderly people, and I have a lot of elderly residents in my electorate.

Mr Power interjected.

Mr BOOTHMAN: I hear a lot of quips from the member for Logan, who obviously has no respect for road safety in this state. He carries on, but I am actually asking for some decent road upgrades which could potentially save the lives of many of my residents in the future as more and more cars are on my local roads.

I welcome the increase in weight limits of mobility scooters. A lot of elderly residents use them to go to the shopping centres and bring their goods home. Therefore, this is very important for them.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Bush): Before I call the member for Maryborough, I caution all members that it is getting a bit loud in here. There is also a bit of noise outside. Could we please be aware of that and try to keep the noise down when members are on their feet speaking.

 **Mr SAUNDERS** (Maryborough—ALP) (11.33 am): I rise in support of the Transport Legislation (Road Safety and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2022. I would like to put on the record that I have had many conversations with the member for Logan about road safety in my role as the Assistant Minister for Regional Roads. We have had some good conversations, and he is very aware of and a big supporter of road safety and what this government is doing to help road users throughout the state.

I would like to congratulate the minister and his staff, the director-general of the DTMR and the RoadTek crews for their work during the big rain events. Could members imagine what would have happened if the LNP had stayed in power with the workers they sacked? If we did not have those RoadTek and TMR workers, we would not have the roads back together so quickly. We endured two floods in the great city of Maryborough, and the bridges were opened so quickly thanks to the TMR and RoadTek crews. I cannot thank them enough. The potholes were fixed. They are great men and women who go out in all conditions to make sure the roads are safe for us. I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for the good work they do.

We could talk all day about road safety, but one thing that has to happen is driver behaviour has to change. In my role as the Assistant Minister for Regional Roads, I do a lot of kilometres on Queensland roads and I know the investment from the Palaszczuk government. We are spending over \$18 billion on regional roads at the moment, but safety also involves driver behaviour. The only way we are going to change this is with legislation and fines. I will give an example. Last week I was driving to Yeppoon on the Bruce Highway and some of the driver behaviour was scandalous. I saw overtaking on double lines around a corner. It was appalling. We cannot legislate for that, but we must try to educate people and this will happen with all of the fines going back into driver education. We need to tell people that it is not okay to overtake on double lines and it is not okay to drive with your telephone to your ear. There has to be some responsibility back on the driver with driver behaviour. We see it all the time.

The member for Gregory will agree with this next point. He would have seen how motorists overtake the trucks with cattle and give no consideration to the fact that a truck cannot brake on a 10-cent piece. Motorists have to leave room for the trucks. The trucks are important in regional communities because that is how we move our freight and livestock around. We have to make sure that drivers are aware that they cannot just overtake and stop in front of the B-doubles and B-triples on the road. Motorists need to give them considerable time when they overtake them.

Mr Millar: It's 54 metres.

Mr SAUNDERS: I take that interjection from the member for Gregory. It takes 54 metres for a truck to stop. Thank you for that. We have to educate the people who visit Western Queensland and have never driven on these roads. They must always make sure that they give the trucks ample room, particularly on some of the narrow roads in Western Queensland.

The bill also talks about school zones and the flashing lights with the cameras. I think that is a great move. It is absolutely tremendous because how much money do we put on a child's life? It is good to see that the LNP supported this bill through the committee process. Anything we do as legislators to save lives on the road is worth it. We need to do anything we can in this place to make sure that people can get home safely or can go on holidays and come home safely. We all have an obligation in this chamber to make sure there is legislation to stop people from using their telephones and that we educate drivers, particularly young drivers. There are a lot of good programs around Queensland run by Rotary, Lions and other organisations to educate young people in high schools about driver behaviour, road safety and maintenance on their vehicles.


The other thing I am very pleased with in the bill is the mobility scooters. Maryborough and Hervey Bay have a large number of people who use mobility scooters, and I would like to give a shout-out to a good friend of mine, Camille, who uses a mobility scooter in Maryborough. Through her advocacy through my office and the great work from TMR, we were able to change an intersection in my city to make it safer for people on mobility scooters to cross. Camille did a lot of work with me because she is in a mobility scooter so that was important for her. The chair of the committee, the member for Kurwongbah, told me that if we increase the speed limit to 15 kilometres an hour it gives people on these mobility scooters a greater choice.

As I said, I travel a lot on regional roads. This government has committed a lot of money to regional roads across the state. We are doing heaps of work. Looking out west, from Jericho across to Blackall, the Cramsie to Muttaborra roads, there are upgrades to roads all around regional Queensland—

Mrs Gilbert interjected.

Mr SAUNDERS: To take that interjection from the member for Mackay, there are upgrades too around Mackay and all around Queensland, and that is because we are committed to spending money. When people pull me up in the street and they want to talk about the money which is spent in the south-east corner, I explain to them that this government is spending more on roads in regional Queensland than in the south-east corner. We are making sure that it is safe for the RVs, the trucks and road users to use regional roads.

As I said earlier, and I will say it again, driver behaviour has to change. We have to make sure that drivers are aware they need to drive to the conditions, do not drink and drive and obey the speed limits at all times. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr DAMETTO** (Hinchinbrook—KAP) (11.40 am): I rise to give my contribution to the Transport Legislation (Road Safety and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2022. From the outset, I must say that the roads in North Queensland need more attention than anywhere else that I have ever seen. There is good money being spent in the north, but more needs to be done. We have upgrades happening between the Townsville and Ingham part of the electorate right now, and it is great to see those road packages coming through to completion. However, they are still being worked on in some sections, especially the Northern Access Intersections Upgrade, but the reality is that there is some frustration being felt through that which I will get to in a moment.

The part of the road network on the Bruce Highway where I would like to see more money being spent at this time is between Cardwell and Tully Heads. Unfortunately, we are dealing with a Bruce Highway that is narrow with narrow bridges, which is one of the biggest complaints. Road upgrades are very necessary in order to stop some of the highway accidents that are happening in this area.

I will take what the member for Maryborough was saying a little earlier, and I must reaffirm, that driver behaviour must change out on our highways. I drive about 1,100 to 1,200 kilometres a week up and down the Bruce Highway, in my grey Hilux, my mobile office, and I see some pretty horrendous behaviour out there on the roads, everything from people driving on their mobile phones to—

Ms Boyd: Driving on their mobile phones?

Mr DAMETTO: Yes, driving while on their mobile phones. I will take that interjection.

Mr Walker: Driving around detours.

Mr DAMETTO: I cannot hear what the member for Mundingburra is saying.

Mr Walker interjected.

Mr DAMETTO: At least I remembered his name, unlike the Speaker the other day, but I will come back to the bill. When they are driving, I notice them taking very risky behaviour. I would like you to take the contribution seriously.

Mr Walker: Don't drive through flooded waters.

Mr DAMETTO: Take the contribution seriously.

Mr Walker interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Bush): Order, members!

Mr DAMETTO: The member for Mundingburra is absolutely being antagonistic across the chamber. What I will get to in a second is probably something he is talking about. We need to make sure people change their behaviours.

Mr Walker interjected.

Mr DAMETTO: If the member is going to speak on something, he should know a little bit about it before he speaks on it.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Through the chair, member.

Ms PEASE: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I think the member for Hinchinbrook is reflecting on the chair and your position and I ask him to withdraw.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: I do not believe there is a point of order. The member for Hinchinbrook has the call and I ask him to come back to the long title of the bill.

Mr DAMETTO: I appreciate that. I also ask the member for Mundingburra to withdraw. I take personal offence.

Mr Walker: For what?

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Mundingburra, if you did say something offensive to the member, I ask you to withdraw.

Mr WALKER: I don't know what it is, but I withdraw.

Mr DAMETTO: People are making risky decisions out there on the Bruce Highway because they are frustrated. There are a number of things that create frustration on the Bruce Highway: slow-moving traffic; roadworks that are in built-up areas; and roadworks that have speed signs that people believe are too slow for the kind of work that is going on. It is great to see that some of the work along the Bruce Highway is being broken up into smaller areas, but unfortunately—and I have raised this with Transport and Main Roads regionally—what happens is that once you hand over this package, whoever is doing the work gets to decide on what the speed limit is on risk assessment.

The thing is that when people are going through these areas at, say, 10 o'clock at night, there is no work going on there, there is no line marking going on, there is no machinery running around, there are no workers in danger, so people are finding themselves speeding through those areas because they are frustrated. There was a similar scenario playing out with the roadworks south of Townsville—kilometres of roadworks where people are forced at night-time to do 60 kilometres per hour when they feel like there is no risk to anybody. Why should it not be 80? Because it is too tough, it is too hard, for the contractor to change those speed signs on a nightly basis. That is creating frustration and driving people to take risky behaviours.

I like the idea that people are being asked to curb their risky behaviour away from speeding, but what happened to highway police officers travelling up and down the highway actually pulling people over and having that tough conversation? These days you do not see or hear the flash go off, and 20 days later you get a fine in the mail; a bloody big fine, I will tell you that, but I tell you—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Bush): Member, that is unparliamentary. I ask that you withdraw that statement.

Mr DAMETTO: I am happy to withdraw that.

Mr POWER: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order while there is a break. I have read the bill and what the member is describing on construction zones or police enforcement has nothing to do with the bill.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am giving some latitude to the debate on both sides. I am listening, member for Hinchinbrook. I ask that you come back to the long title of the bill. While I am speaking, member for Mundingburra, I will caution you to cease your interjections.

Mr DAMETTO: I will get back to the part of the bill which I was actually coming to, thank you, member for Logan. Speed cameras may do a great job for raising revenue across the state, but they do very little for curbing people's behaviour. It is like punishing someone three weeks after they have made the mistake. What does that do? You have to talk to people right there and then exactly on the mistake.

Government members interjected.

Mr DAMETTO: I am not taking the interjections, so I ask them to cease. The reality is—

Ms Pease: You did take my interjection.

Ms Boyd: Comments through the chair.

Government members interjected.

Mr DAMETTO: I can keep talking? No, I have a bit of a respect for the Speaker, sorry.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member, yes, you still have the call.

Mr DAMETTO: When people are pulled up on the side of the road and a police officer has that tough conversation—you have to remember, Queensland police officers are the first ones to arrive at a fatality. They are the ones who can have that conversation with the person who has been speeding to say, 'Hey, you have been 15, 20 kilometres over the speed limit. This is how people create road accidents.' When you cop a fine in the mail three weeks later, people just pay it and move on. It does very little to curb their behaviour.

We also have frustrations from the community when it comes to speeding fines because there are people who are out there on our roads every day who are causing an horrendous amount of grief and an horrendous amount of risky behaviour, namely juvenile offenders running around in stolen cars. I like the idea that we do try to curb people's behaviour, but try to get some of this risky behaviour from these children off our streets first. Unfortunately, time and time again the strategy is not to pursue these children but to make sure we follow them until they run out of fuel. They have run a number of red lights—no fine for them. They have committed a number of speeding offences—no fine for them. Sometimes a speeding fine is issued when they go past a speed camera unit, but it is sent to the person who actually owns the vehicle and then they have to go through a lengthy process. We need to be doing more to create safer roads, not just going after those people who are willing to pay the fines.

While we are talking about speeding fines, we need to address and revisit another aspect. I do not ask people to break the law—and I would never advocate for that—but we need to review some of the speed limits across Queensland. In Western Queensland there can be thousands of kilometres between towns and sometimes hundreds of kilometres. Doing 120 or 130 kilometres per hour—

Mr Katter: Like the Northern Territory.

Mr DAMETTO:—like the Northern Territory—in Western Queensland, which has similar roads and distances, is not as risky as doing 130 kilometres per hour in a built-up area on approach to a city.

Mr Katter: Go and drive it sometime.

Mr DAMETTO: I ask people to go out there and drive it if they are opposed to a review of speed limits across Queensland.

Mr Katter: Try to do 50,000 a year.


Mr DAMETTO: I take the interjection from the member for Traeger. If members try to drive 50,000 kilometres a year they will find that it is very different.

Mr BAILEY: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. As fascinating as the contribution of the member is, I do not believe he is actually speaking to the bill. I ask him to come back to the bill that we are debating.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Bush): Member, I have been listening and you have been given latitude. I will now ask that you come back to the substantial matters contained in the bill.

Mr DAMETTO: Some parts of the bill deal with mobility scooters in Queensland. I must commend the Hinchinbrook Shire Council. Using Works for Queensland funding, it has made sure that not only the footpaths but also the road entries and exits are safe for those people using mobility scooters around town. They have done a really good job to get that up to specification and our elderly residents in the Hinchinbrook shire are quite happy with that. They feel safe. The reality is that most people respect people on those scooters. I want people to ensure they keep an eye out for those people because they are our elderly residents and they are out on the roads.

I will finish my contribution on the bill there. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (11.51 am): Whilst I would really value the opportunity to get up and refute and comment on the many points that the member for Hinchinbrook spoke about, I am not going to waste my time because it is purely laughable. I rise today to speak in support of the Transport Legislation (Road Safety and Other Matters) Amendment Bill.

Mr Dametto interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Bush): The member for Hinchinbrook will cease his interjections.

Ms PEASE: In doing so, I would like to acknowledge the Minister for Transport and Main Roads, Mark Bailey, for his outstanding work in upholding road safety in Queensland. I also commend the Transport and Resources Committee; the committee chair, Shane King, the member for Kurwongbah; and other committee members; the committee secretariat; and Hansard for their work to consult Queenslanders on this important bill. The committee called for submissions and received a number of submissions and one late submission.

This is a very important bill and it is critical that we take careful consideration when we examine it. That is why again this government and the committee undertook to get advice from experts who actually know what they are talking about. It is not anecdotal advice or an opinion about this; it is actually relevant, pertinent data that responds to the matter at hand. That is what good governments do. They actually use proper scientific data to evaluate, to assess and to come up with the right outcome, not some random advice saying, 'I want to be able to drive 200 kilometres an hour because, hey, I am bulletproof,' which is kind of what the member for Hinchinbrook was saying. Feedback from stakeholders involved in this process included motorised mobility device users as well as representatives from academia, disability associates, suppliers of the motorised mobility devices, insurers, local governments, advocacy groups, police, state road and transport agencies and the Australian government.

This bill will improve road safety, something that is important to my bayside community. We have too many incidents on our roads—crashes that result in fatalities or catastrophic injuries that could easily have been avoided. We need strong legislation in place to minimise the risk of these potential harms to road users. It means enforcing laws through legislation that would influence driver behaviour in order to reduce the number of avoidable fatalities like, for example, speed cameras. People know that if they speed past a speed camera they will get caught. It might take a little while for them to receive that infringement notice, but they will get caught. The same goes for those cameras pinging people for not wearing their seatbelt or for being on their mobile phones. That is one of our fatal five which also includes: speeding, not wearing seatbelts, driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol, and driving distracted. People will get pinged. That is an important thing. It might not happen immediately because a police officer cannot be beside them each and every time they get behind the wheel of a car, but they will get caught, and that is the important thing.

The Palaszczuk government is absolutely committed to reducing the number of fatalities on our roads each year. It is doing this by introducing this strong legislative framework, which will allow us to hold road safety in the highest regard. This bill will increase the range of mobility scooters, make improvements to certain court and administration processes and make minor amendments to transport legislation. The bill will improve road safety by clarifying how financial penalties from camera detected offences are invested for road safety purposes and provide legal protection for health professionals who, in good faith, report on the medical fitness to drive of the holders of non-Queensland driver's licences.

The bill proposes to achieve the policy objectives by amending the Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995 and making consequential amendments to various regulations: to modernise and clarify how financial penalties collected for camera detected offences can be spent on road safety initiatives; implement the national MMD changes in Queensland and apply gratuitous registration and compulsory third-party arrangements to a greater range of MMDs; ensure a health professional who provides information about a non-Queensland driver's licence holder's fitness to drive has the same legal protection as would apply if the information was provided by a Queensland licence holder; allow for documentary related evidence to be provided to courts for certain objective and non-contentious information relevant to vehicle standards related offences; and upgrade the definition of gross vehicle mass. It will also amend: the Transport Planning and Coordination Act to provide that a digital photo taken when a person is less than 15 years old will have a shelf life of five years instead of 10; and the Transport Infrastructure Act 1994 to clarify that accommodation works may be undertaken as a result of a rail project to provide certainty and consistency for landowners and occupiers and all transport projects.


As I have said, there are way too many crashes that result in catastrophic injuries or fatalities on our roads—injuries or fatalities that could have been prevented. There is so much to take into consideration to keep road users safe from harm. If we lived in a world where everyone did the right thing to keep themselves and others safe, legislation for road safety would not need to exist. Unfortunately, we know that is not the case because driver behaviour such as speeding, driving fatigued, drink and drug driving, driving distracted and driving without seatbelts is still a major contributing cause of deaths and catastrophic injuries on our roads. These traffic incidents have long and lasting effects on families, friends and our first responders.

I have participated in a traffic incident exercise at QCESA, which is our Queensland Combined Emergency Services Academy at Whyte Island, which is in my electorate. The QFES crew took me through what a traffic incident looks like and what it looks like to them as a first responder. It was incredibly confronting. Whilst the people involved in the incident were all actors and the blood was not real, cutting them out of the vehicles, breaking windscreens and rescuing them from these vehicles was really hard. It was hard physically and emotionally. Holding up those jaws of life pieces of equipment that are used for cutting was a massive undertaking. Even smashing a windscreen was difficult. One would think that would be an easy thing, but because there was someone inside the vehicle it had to be planned.

This is the bread and butter of our first responders. I really want to take the opportunity to say thank you for the great work they do. They go out and turn up to save these people. May I say, they have an absolute genuine care for these people who find themselves, many times through no fault of their own, in a terrible set of circumstances. These first responders look after these people so kindly and lovingly. One of the things that is so important to them—and they have spoken to me about this—is that they want the loved ones of these people to know that they genuinely want to take care of them.

I cannot express enough how proud I am and how moved I am by their capacity for great compassion and genuine care under horrific circumstances. It is terrifying—and I was just in an exercise. These men and women are beside a road as cars are screaming past, trying to deal with people who are screaming out in agony. That is what they do. I thank them. They are true professionals and I acknowledge the great work they do.

I call on everyone in this House, in Queensland and across Australia: next time you decide to make or take a call while you are driving, decide not to wear a seatbelt that rubs your neck or think, 'I'll be right mate' or 'I've got time for one more drink before I get behind the wheel,' just don't. Stop. Please, do not do it. Think of the impact your behaviour will have on everyone else around you. Stop being selfish and think of other people, because your selfish decision will have long and lasting impacts on so many in our community. Anything that will reduce the number of these incidents and reduce the number of times that our first responders are required to pull people from their vehicles is a good thing in my book. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (12.01 pm): I rise to speak on the Transport Legislation (Road Safety and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2022. I thank the committee for the comprehensive report that is the basis of my speech. I note that some issues that I want to speak about—MMDs and PMDs—are not covered in this bill, but they certainly have relevance in my electorate of Surfers Paradise.

I also want to speak about the issue of road safety, which I know previous members have spoken about. I thank our first responders. There are significant cumulative effects on first responders when they respond to accidents. Whether they are police, ambos, nursing or medical staff, dealing with the effects of road trauma is significant.

I am concerned that in spite of road safety action plans the road toll is still rising, but I am prepared to acknowledge that a lot of this is to do with driver behaviour. I remember from my early times in this place getting briefings from the department of transport that young drivers go from the period when they are least likely to have an accident, which is when they are on their L-plates, to when they are most likely to have an accident, which is as soon as they get their green Ps. That shows that there are obvious concerns about what happens to the mentality of young drivers who believe that they are not going to have an accident.

We are seeing continual issues, especially around the Gold Coast and on the M1, caused by drivers who are drug or alcohol affected. Mental health issues are also causing potential damage and danger to other drivers on the roads. They are issues that only education programs may be able to assist, but there comes a time when you start to wonder whether people will pay any attention to the education processes. I am not saying that we should not do them, but it is very frustrating.

As a parent I have great concerns when I hear that my children are driving, especially in regional Queensland. A couple of weeks from now they are going to a wedding in Goondiwindi and have to be back early. As a parent, you are never not concerned about your children. There were 251 fatalities in 2016 and in 2021 there were 275. That is an almost 10 per cent rise in fatalities. We have heard from other members that as of Sunday, 29 August 198 people have died on Queensland's roads. There have been 15 fatalities more than at the same time last year and 35 fatalities more than the five-year average. Although it was many years ago, I still remember the *Courier-Mail's* Campaign 550. We know that vehicles have improved. We know that the work beside roadways—taking away trees and vegetation on verges—has made an improvement but any fatality is too many, especially for the families involved.

Other issues that members have mentioned include the question of whether fines are a deterrent. I have no doubt that once people start to accumulate points there is a deterrent element of fines, but I am concerned that many people—especially young people—who find themselves in a financial situation unable to pay the fine simply divert it to SPER. Therefore, there is a question—I think there needs to be an assessment—as to how effective the deterrent effect is if they are just diverting their fines to SPER. A significant majority of people will pay their fines because they do not want the ignominy of potentially losing their licence, but if people have no fear that it is going to have any significant effect on them, especially financially, they just add it to SPER. That process is not really working at the moment, simply because we have allowed people to send their fines to SPER.

The bill proposes to broaden where the revenue can be spent to include collaborating with organisations and local communities to develop and implement safer practices. I note that the RACQ supports the proposed amendments, advising that ‘additional initiatives that camera detected offence revenue can be used for are supported by the RACQ’. The Caravan Trade and Industry Association of Queensland, CTIAQ, also welcomed the proposed amendments and highlighted its concerns about the rate of fatalities on Queensland roads and the unique complexities associated with towing, which we are going to see far more of with increased caravan use and grey nomads travelling through the state with a generation of tail-end baby boomers taking up those activities, especially given that international travel has not returned to what it was.

I note that currently medical professionals are protected from defamation or breach of confidence when providing the Department of Transport and Main Roads with information about the medical fitness of a Queensland driver’s licence holder. The amendments will extend these protections when reporting on a non-Queensland driver’s licence holder.

The coastline in my electorate of Surfers Paradise has arguably one of the most picturesque public pathways in the country. It is wide, it has been established by the City of Gold Coast and it is obviously appealing to walk all the way from Surfers up to Main Beach and then south through to Broadbeach and beyond. The iconic views attract many residents and holidaymakers who use mobility scooters or motorised wheelchairs—MMDs—and personalised mobility devices—PMDs—on these pathways. I support transport alternatives such as PMDs—scooters. I know that they are not referred to in this bill, but they do interact with those using MMDs. Mobility devices are on that path, as well as those without MMDs.

Personal mobility devices are causing constant issues because they travel at a greater speed. This legislation will allow MMDs to travel at 10 kilometres per hour on public infrastructure, but many of the other PMDs travel at far higher speeds. I know that the minister has proposed halving the speed that those PMDs can travel. It does endanger pedestrians. This includes families who are wandering along the pathway with little children. They are in Surfers Paradise—they may be visiting relatives or just touring around—and suddenly divert to the left or right, and those PMDs cause significant issues because they are often travelling at a greater speed than the MMDs are.

There is a lack of clear legislation in place, but I acknowledge that the minister has made significant announcements. Admittedly, some of the measures that have been announced, such as wearing a helmet and not using alcohol, are already in legislation, but the halving of the maximum speed for a PMD is something we will certainly welcome. I note that the MMDs will be able to travel at 10. I will shortly address the recommendation for them to be able to travel up to 12.

On the Gold Coast alone, there were 66 people injured with PMDs in the period from January to June 2022. I table the article from the *Sunday Mail* dated 28 August 2022 titled ‘Register call for electric scooters’.


Tabled paper: Article from the *Sunday Mail*, dated 28 August 2022, titled ‘Register call for electric scooters’ [\[1246\]](#).

I do not support the registration, as I note the government does not, but I do note that, with the issues referred to in that article at Princess Alexandra Hospital of significant numbers of people being injured, it is something that needs to be attended to.

As I have mentioned before, I note that in the committee’s report Spinal Life Australia, SLA, supports the existing 10-kilometre-an-hour limit for MMDs when travelling on a public path, and that is a specific referral in my case to the issue in Surfers Paradise, Main Beach and Broadbeach. Spinal Life Australia has suggested that a case could be made for speed limits to be on par with e-scooters, the PMDs, which is 12 kilometres per hour for use on footpaths. The bill reflects changes to the national model legislation, with key changes to include: increasing the maximum unladen mass for mobility scooters from 150 kilograms to 170 kilograms; ensuring that MMD operators are consistently classed as pedestrians under Queensland road rules; and introducing a maximum speed capacity of 15 kilometres an hour for MMDs to match international markets. There are a number of other changes

to the bill including updating the definition of gross vehicle mass, the shelf life of digital photos taken when a person is under 15 years of age, and clarifying accommodation works to include heavy rail works.

I am regularly contacted about the issue of road safety. I have risen in this place to address the topic of hooning, which continues to be an ongoing problem in my electorate and by its very nature leads to issues with road safety. That is why the Main Beach Association currently has an e-petition before the parliament which I encourage all residents to sign. I will send them copies of my speech about this because we need to have more done on road safety. It is an issue that affects us all. In the most recent data, from January to December 2021, there were 7,863 hospitalised casualties as a result of crashes within Queensland, so we need to ensure we do more so that Queensland citizens stay safe and keep safe.

 **Mr SKELTON** (Nicklin—ALP) (12.11 pm): I rise to speak on the Transport Legislation (Road Safety and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2022. I want to thank the Minister for Transport for introducing such an important and timely bill and acknowledge how hard he works in road safety across all of our roads and for every type of road user. I also want to thank the members of the Transport and Resources Committee, including my colleague the member for Kurwongbah and the deputy chair, the member for Gregory, and all of the other members who were involved in that committee. Of course, I also want to thank the committee staff, Hansard, the secretariat, all of the TMR people and the ministerial staff who make this work possible.

Here in Queensland we take the safety of our traffic network users seriously, but there is still more we can do, as is evidenced by the legislation before the House today. The policy objectives of the Transport Legislation (Road Safety and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2022 are to improve road safety, increase the range of allowable motorised mobility devices, make improvements to court and other processes and make minor enhancements to transport and other legislation.

The amendments include provisions to clarify the use of revenue from camera detected offences for road safety. Queensland was the first jurisdiction nationally to legislate the investment of revenue from camera detected penalties into key road safety priorities. Under section 117 of the Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995, or TO(RUM) Act, the use of all money collected for penalties imposed for camera detected offences in excess of the administration costs of collection is limited to road safety education and awareness programs, road accident injury rehabilitation programs and road funding to improve the safety of the sections of state controlled roads where accidents most frequently happen.

Section 117 commenced in 1997 with the policy intent of ensuring camera enforcement was first and foremost about improving road safety and not about raising revenue. This framework has served the people of Queensland by providing dedicated funding to road safety initiatives including the Safer Roads Sooner capital works program, community road safety grants, flashing school zone signs, various road safety awareness campaigns and blood products for road crash injuries.

The Queensland Road Safety Strategy 2022-2031 commits to the ambitious targets set out in the National Road Safety Strategy 2021-2030—that is, a 50 per cent reduction in lives lost and a 30 per cent reduction in serious injuries by 2031. To achieve these targets and the ultimate vision of zero road deaths or serious injuries by 2050, innovation and new approaches must be considered. The strategy seeks to push our thinking beyond the traditional transport sector to also consider the health, social and cultural factors that contribute to road trauma in Queensland, and many members have already spoken about people's driving behaviours and the general lack of courtesy or driving to the conditions.

In order to deliver safer state controlled roads, we must amend section 117 so that it may be applied proactively to prevent crashes on roads where serious crashes have not yet occurred but where analysis suggests a serious risk exists, and there are many regional roads and city roads we could talk about where that could be the case. It is also important to clarify that funding can incorporate infrastructure that is innovative and utilises the latest technology and that road safety objectives will be best achieved through improvements to areas and infrastructure adjacent to roads.

This bill also seeks to amend legal protections for health professionals who report on medical fitness to drive for non-Queensland driver's licence holders. Under this bill, anyone driving in Queensland can be told by a health practitioner if their health makes them unfit to drive. Section 142 of the TO(RUM) Act provides protection against liability and defamation or a breach of confidence if a health professional provides information to TMR about a person's medical fitness to hold or continue to hold a driver's licence. We want to encourage our health professionals to continue to report to TMR any issues relating to medical fitness to drive for any licence holder, so we must extend to them the same legal protections as when they report on Queensland driver's licence holders.

The bill will also amend the legislation pertaining to motorised mobility devices and increasing their range. MMDs allow those with reduced mobility to access essential services and employment, to socialise and to participate in the community generally. The NTC has proposed changes to the national model legislation, the Australian Road Rules, to update the regulations for MMD users. Changes will include: recognising motorised wheelchairs and mobility scooters as separate devices, collectively referred to as MMDs; increasing the maximum unladen mass to align with the latest technical specifications; ensuring MMD operators are consistently classed as pedestrians under the Queensland road rules and other transport legislation; and introducing a maximum speed capability of 15 kilometres per hour for MMDs to ensure a broader range of devices can be used while maintaining the existing 10-kilometre-an-hour limit on a public path.

These changes ensure mass limits are reflective of the actual use and design of devices by removing mass limits for motorised wheelchairs and increasing the maximum unladen mass from 150 to 170 kilograms. Through adopting the changes made to the national model legislation, we hope to remove the barriers to the safe and effective use of motorised mobility devices in the community, allowing MMD users to utilise the device most suitable to their needs. In addition to the national changes, existing gratuitous MMD registration and CTP insurance arrangements will be retained. Importantly, users requiring MMDs over the previous unladen mass limit of 150 kilograms and whose devices now meet the amended definitions will be eligible for gratuitous registration and CTP insurance. This amendment also makes clear that MMD users are considered pedestrians for the purposes of this act.


This amendment bill also seeks to clarify that accommodation works may be undertaken as a result of a rail project, providing certainty and consistency for landowners and occupiers and all transport infrastructure projects. Accommodation works are transport-incidental works carried out where necessary to remedy the impact to land caused by the establishment of transport infrastructure. These works are carried out in order to: minimise the impact of works; restore land to its former condition, purpose or use; and provide for safety to persons who use the land. Accommodation works can include road access works—for example, replacement or upgrade of driveways and ensuring safe access points to and from the property—and other minor works such as replacement of letterboxes and restoration of gardens.

The bill clarifies that the chief executive or someone authorised may temporarily enter land and undertake accommodation works that are necessary as a direct result of a rail project. The amendments replicate similar provisions already in place for road, busway and light rail which do not currently apply for rail. Due to the current lack of similar provisions for rail projects, TMR must negotiate individually with each affected landowner and occupier. The formality of the process can be lengthy and confusing for the landowner and occupier. The lack of clarity about accommodation works can cause project delays, increasing the duration of inconvenience for the landowner, neighbouring property owners and businesses.

In addition to the changes I have mentioned already, the bill will also amend legislation relating to evidentiary provisions for vehicle standards related prosecutions, the shelf life of digital photos taken when a person is less than 15 years of age, as well as updating the definition of gross vehicle mass and fixing minor drafting errors in the Housing Legislation Amendment Act 2021.

It is not anticipated that there will be any significant costs to implement the amendments in the bill, but they will be met from existing budgetary allocations. Many people have spoken about MMDs and improving access. I thank the transport minister for fixing up pedestrian access and allowing space for MMDs on pathways in my township of Palmwoods. There are two nursing homes in the electorate that will benefit from those improvements. It is my view this is good legislation which will have the desired effect it is designed to bring forward. As such, I commend the bill to the House.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Before I call the member for Maiwar, I would like to acknowledge in the gallery Jo Martin, the secretary of Queensland Beekeepers' Association, and one of her Beekeepers' Association colleagues. Jo is a resident of the Scenic Rim electorate. Welcome to parliament.

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (12.21 pm): I rise to give my contribution on the Transport Legislation (Road Safety and Other Matters) Amendment Bill. I say at the outset that the Greens support this bill and we will vote accordingly. However, I do think there are two key missed opportunities while we are amending the Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995, which I will refer to as the road use management act, to improve the safe use of e-scooters in Queensland and to address outdated and discriminatory sections relating to drug driving offences and THC.

I intend to move some really simple amendments during consideration in detail to update the drug-driving sections which would ensure medicinal cannabis patients are not subject to unfair, outdated and discriminatory charges for the mere presence of THC in their system as an interim measure while the government considers an appropriate framework to measure impairment. First I will turn to the changes proposed by the bill. We support reinvesting revenue raised from camera detected offences into assistance for organisations and local communities to develop and implement road safety initiatives. This makes a lot of sense and we note it was broadly supported in stakeholder submissions on the bill. We also support the changes to ensure photos taken of children under the age of 15 are destroyed after five years instead of 10. The amendments to apply national changes around motorised mobility devices, or MMDs, in Queensland are also commonsense changes to ensure our laws account for disabled people.

I note disability advocates, including QDN and Spinal Life Australia, welcomed the increase to weight limits for motorised wheelchairs, as well as classifying people using one of these devices as pedestrians, extending their access to free registration and CTP insurance, and setting maximum speed capabilities of 15 kilometres per hour or 10 kilometres per hour when on a public path. I do note that the 170-kilogram limit, while an improvement, does not match the 300-kilogram weight limit in federal disability standards for public transport accessibility. We are also still falling behind on those standards when it comes to train station accessibility, including at Taringa Station in my electorate, where platforms can only be reached by stairs. That station has really high patronage.

Mr BAILEY: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member is clearly straying well off the specifics of the bill. This has nothing to do with Taringa Railway Station and I respectfully ask him to come back to the bill.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Member for Maiwar, the bill is clearly about road safety. I would caution you at this point to please keep your comments confined to the long title of the bill, which is about road safety.

Mr BERKMAN: I will take your guidance and move on. I support the other amendments and administrative changes in the bill around legal protections for professional health advice on fitness to drive, amendments around admission of documentary evidence relevant to vehicle standards offences, and the clarification that accommodation works may occur as a result of railway works.

Alongside the changes for motorised mobility devices, I think this bill should address safe e-scooter use in Queensland. E-scooters hit our streets a few years ago and I have been pushing for reforms to make them safe for everyone, including riders and pedestrians. There has been some welcome progress in this area, including allowing e-scooters to be carried on trains, which I wrote to the minister about in July 2020. However, the government still refuses to consider allowing e-scooters and other personal mobility devices to use on-road bike lanes under the same conditions as bikes. I am still contacted by residents concerned about clashes between pedestrians and e-scooter riders who are forced to use footpaths under the current rules. Given that e-scooters can travel at similar speeds to bicycles and the riders use similar safety equipment, it seems far more dangerous to put them on the footpath where there is a significant difference in speed between pedestrians and themselves and a real risk of dangerous collision. Obviously allowing e-scooters in bike lanes should be accompanied by a broadscale review of, and greater investment, in a comprehensive network of safe, separated bike lanes.

We have seen in the debate on this bill how road safety is seen pretty much solely through a lens of car use instead of properly accounting for public and active transport. I would also like to see requirements put in place for council or the state government to collect and report data on e-scooter crashes to inform future policy setting around safe use. While I am encouraged to see that all e-scooter hire companies operating in Brisbane now have comprehensive insurance, I still think it is concerning this is not required either by council or state laws. This bill does feel like a missed opportunity to make e-scooter use safer.

While we are amending the road use management act, I will use this opportunity to address the glaring discriminatory and outdated inconsistency between our drug driving laws and their potential impacts on medicinal cannabis patients. I table a copy of my amendments, statement of compatibility and explanatory notes in case the government sees fit to argue the relevance of these amendments.

Tabled paper: Transport Legislation (Road Safety and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2022, amendments to be moved by Mr Michael Berkman MP [[1247](#)].

Tabled paper: Transport Legislation (Road Safety and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2022, explanatory notes to Mr Michael Berkman's amendments [[1248](#)].

Tabled paper: Transport Legislation (Road Safety and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2022, statement of compatibility with human rights contained in Mr Michael Berkman's amendments [[1249](#)].

No-one should be driving while impaired by alcohol or any other drug. We take no issue with this fundamental premise. The amendments I have tabled propose no changes that conflict with this premise. They deal with the offence of having the mere presence of THC in your system. If it is safe to drive after taking medication when the effects of the medication have worn off and in the days and weeks following its use, you should not be criminalised for doing so.

There is currently no consideration of medicinal cannabis in our road safety laws in Queensland. This is an issue we urgently need to address. Queensland's roadside saliva tests pick up trace amounts of THC for longer than 24 hours, long after all impairment has passed. Trace amounts of THC or its metabolites may appear in blood tests weeks after the patient has used these medications. Our laws avoid the truth that impairment can come from an excess or misuse of many legal drugs. This includes conventional medications like opiates, benzodiazepines, amphetamines and, of course, alcohol. In fact, research shows that cannabis has a lower crash risk than benzodiazepines and opiates. However, Queensland law does not criminalise patients who test positive for the presence of these other potentially impairing drugs. In fact, our roadside drug testing does not even provide for testing for the presence of these drugs. It should be no different for medicinal cannabis patients. There is no evidence that the mere presence of THC equates to impairment, but there is lots of evidence that spurious drug driving charges can cause financial and personal ruin.

Medicinal cannabis is legal and it can be transformative for patients, especially those suffering chronic pain or undergoing chemotherapy. Those patients should not need to give up their licence or lose the ability to drive. This is the central issue we need to address. Our current laws mean that someone undergoing chemotherapy or suffering from chronic pain cannot drive for weeks after they use their prescribed medication or they risk breaking the law and losing their means of transport. This can mean lost work and income and other major impacts on every aspect of a person's life.


Medicinal cannabis should be treated the same as alcohol or other prescription drugs, meaning that driving with THC in your system should not be illegal unless it causes impairment. Punishing patients using medicinal cannabis by taking away their licence for trace amounts of THC, which does not impair driving, is cruel and it just makes their lives harder. The Queensland government should catch up with Tasmania, Canada and California in allowing people to drive when they are using medicinal cannabis as long as there is no evidence that it impairs their ability to drive.

Since creating a process for the lawful prescription of medicinal cannabis, we have known that our drug driving laws do not make sense in this respect. That fact is only reinforced by the knowledge now that around 70 per cent of medicinal cannabis prescriptions contain some amount of THC. I understand from media reports that the government is reviewing drug driving laws and looking at impacts on medicinal cannabis users. I will seek to move these amendments today because our laws must be updated to ensure medicinal cannabis patients are no longer subjected to unfair and discriminatory sanctions. A government review should consider the issue that remains genuinely unsettled: how do we measure impairment from drugs, including drugs such as cannabis?

Debate, on motion of Mr Berkman, adjourned.

RESIDENTIAL TENANCIES AND ROOMING ACCOMMODATION (RENT FREEZE) AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction

 **Dr MacMAHON** (South Brisbane—Grn) (12.30 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008 for particular purposes. I table the bill, the explanatory notes and a statement of compatibility with human rights. I nominate the Community Support and Services Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation (Rent Freeze) Amendment Bill 2022 [[1250](#)].

Tabled paper: Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation (Rent Freeze) Amendment Bill 2022, explanatory notes [[1251](#)].

Tabled paper: Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation (Rent Freeze) Amendment Bill 2022, statement of compatibility with human rights [[1252](#)].

Queensland is in a cost-of-living crisis like we have not seen in decades. Across Queensland families are struggling to make ends meet with rising costs of rent, fuel and groceries and it is hitting renters and first home buyers the hardest. In Brisbane, in Bundaberg and on the Gold Coast, rents have soared by a record 20 per cent over the past year. Families are living in tents because they cannot

afford a secure, affordable home. Pensioners are skipping meals because they cannot afford rising rents. Working people are sleeping in their cars because they cannot afford a rental property. The people who can least afford it are being hit the hardest and we are not at the peak yet. With inflation set to peak at around Christmas time, this government must act now before the housing crisis spirals even further.

Today I am introducing a bill for an emergency rent freeze over the next 24 months. Labor has let this become a housing emergency. This government is more interested in keeping up the profit margins for an investor's eighth property than they are in making sure that everyone has an affordable place to live. Right now our state's weak rental laws do nothing to stop property investors hiking up rents to eye-watering amounts. Maybe if the government had taken up calls for a cap on rent increases last year or for the mass build of public homes then we would not be in this crisis. The government has let this become a housing emergency. An emergency two-year rent freeze is crucial now to halt skyrocketing rents, to give the tens of thousands of renters across Queensland certainty and security, and to give the government time to put in place long-term measures to address the housing crisis.

This government's inaction has left us with Queensland kids growing up in tents and caravans while property investors make record profits. Our state's housing policies cannot continue to be geared towards ensuring the profits of a property investor's portfolio. Not only is this pricing families out of rental properties; it is artificially inflating property prices which is locking working families out of the housing market. Right now this government is willing to stick up for property investors with investment portfolios but it will not stick up for a single mum in Bundaberg who is facing eviction because she cannot afford another rent rise. This government will not stick up for a young couple in Acacia Ridge who are trying to buy their first investment property but who keep getting outbid by wealthy property investors.

In the middle of a housing emergency, we need this government to take leadership and show courage to stop out-of-control rents. Therefore, I urge this government to support the rent freeze bill that I am introducing today. The Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation (Rent Freeze) Amendment Bill 2022 will freeze the rent of all Queensland residential tenancies at the amount agreed upon or advertised on 1 August 2022 for two years. Under the bill, if new tenants start a lease at a property after that date, the investor can only rent the property at or below the 1 August 2022 level. If the property is a new build, is a new entry into the rental market or was vacant on 1 August 2022, then the investor can only rent the property at or below the median rent for that postcode. If a property has been recently renovated but was listed on 1 August 2022, the rent must be the same as at that date. If the recently renovated property was vacant, the rental price must be at or below the median rent for that postcode.

Rents will be frozen for all residential properties for 24 months from the bill's commencement. At the end of the rent freeze period, rents will be capped so they can only increase by a maximum of two per cent every two years. This will give the state government time to pursue long-term solutions to the housing affordability crisis. The Residential Tenancies Authority will maintain a register of rents based on tenancy agreements and bond lodgement forms. Where the authority is not in possession of the rent applicable to a particular tenancy, the bill will require the investor to declare the rental amount.

When I first ran for South Brisbane in 2017, we heard thousands of stories from renters in the Queensland market and that has only continued. We have heard stories from South Brisbane and from across the country. I have doorknocked, hosted forums, conducted surveys, done personal advocacy and case work, and shared stories on social media. Those stories are why I have introduced this bill.

The data shows unprecedented rent rises in Queensland. According to SQM Research, this year rents in Brisbane saw the steepest annual increase on record at more than 20 per cent. A similar study of rents by Domain found house rents in Brisbane surged to a new record high of \$520 per week. Unit rents jumped to a new record high of \$450 per week, which is the steepest annual increase since 2009 at 12.5 per cent. The number of potential renters per listing has hit an historic high and is 77 per cent times higher than the five-year average. The same report found similarly steep rent rises in our state's regions. Last year Toowoomba house rents rose by more than 15 per cent while Bundaberg residents face rent rises of more than 22 per cent. The five-year data paints an even grimmer picture, with rents in the Central Highlands rising by more than 50 per cent and rents in Gladstone nearly doubling. Things are dire and without a rent freeze now things will only get worse.

In Queensland, housing is treated as a commodity. Houses are treated not as homes or as a basic human right but as a tool for investors to make money. Years of record-low interest rates and tax concessions such as negative gearing and capital gains tax discounts have driven record hoarding of properties by investors, pushing the house prices up to unprecedented levels. While the investors

gather their millions in negative gearing, ordinary people ultimately pay as houses and rents have become more expensive. As long as we have a housing system that prioritises the profits of investments at the expense of mum-and-dad renters, we will continue to see a housing crisis, families evicted into homelessness and kids growing up in caravan parks. First-time home buyers and owner-occupiers will continue to struggle to break into the housing market and struggle with rising levels of housing stress.

Tenants will continue to struggle with skyrocketing rents. Rents have increased to historic levels over the past 12 months: Brisbane, 20 per cent; the Gold Coast, 24 per cent; Rockhampton, 15 per cent; Bundaberg, 23 per cent; the Fraser Coast, 19 per cent; and Toowoomba, 15 per cent. The members in this place might like to look at some of the ABS data to see just how many renters are in their electorates.

Those rent rises have coincided with an historic cost-of-living crisis. Inflation is set to tip seven per cent by the end of the year and basic things such as food, petrol and electricity are becoming more and more expensive. Rising interest rates, which investors are able to absorb, are hitting hard first home buyers and owner-occupiers. In South Brisbane and across the state we have seen rising levels of not just rental stress but also mortgage stress as owner-occupiers spend more and more of their income on housing costs. Meanwhile, wages have been flatlining for a decade. I compare 20 per cent increases in rents to the increase in wages, which have increased by just 2.6 per cent over the past 12 months—I repeat: 2.6 per cent. How are mum-and-dad renters meant to absorb these rising costs? What other costs will they start cutting? Will they cut coffee out with friends? Will they cut the cost of kids sport? Will they cut a weekend away with their family? Clothes? Food? Without a rent freeze, things are only going to get worse.

This is not the first time the Greens have tried to encourage the government to take any decent steps to address the rental crisis here in Queensland. Last year I introduced a bill to put a cap on rent increases, to put a genuine end to no-grounds evictions and to allow tenants to make minor modifications to their homes. Over 800 Queenslanders made submissions on this bill. Some MPs might have seen submissions from their own constituents. They shared horror stories about poor conditions, about bullying and about facing homelessness due to rent increases. The bill was never debated. As a result, the housing crisis has only gotten worse. These measures were needed last year and they are even more urgent now.

If the Queensland government had genuinely listened to the hundreds of thousands of struggling renters, my office might have never met with a person I am going to call Sarah. Sarah is a single mum on a disability pension. For the past 16 years, Sarah and her daughters have been proud community members. As a low-income mum, Sarah struggled to make ends meet but her friends and community supported her to get by and she knew that her rental was secure. Her daughters flourished at school. Her eldest was looking forward to finishing grade 12 and potentially heading to university. Then, after nearly two decades in their rental home, with only a few months notice, Sarah's landlord decided to sell up. Sarah did what we all do: she started looking for other rentals. Yet no matter where she looked, there was not a single place she could afford. Places that maybe she could have afforded a year ago if she tightened her belt were now going for \$90 or \$100 more per week. The clock was ticking and the stress of finding a place started impacting her daughters' studies and their mental health. She tried to get into public housing only to have the department tell her that she would have to wait two years for a place because 'there is nowhere suitable for teenage girls to live'. Around her, those people who would usually help Sarah out—her friends, her neighbours, her community—were also getting pushed further and further away by property investors jacking up house prices and jacking up the rents.

If the Queensland government had genuinely listened to the hundreds of thousands of struggling renters, my office would never have had to write support letters for Denis and Mary. Denis and Mary are a couple who have been married for six decades. After years of hard work and spending days out in the sun doing manual labour, Denis retired. Despite their hard work and because of the difficulties life throws at so many Queenslanders, Denis and Mary were never able to afford to buy their own home. They loved their little rental and were happy to stay there until they could move into an aged-care facility; that is, until a property investor—a property investor who owned nine other properties—decided to increase the rent by \$80 a week. A week before this, Denis and Mary were the quintessential retired Queenslanders we can all hope to be one day—going out to the cinema, having friends over, taking their grandkids to the park. Overnight, Denis and Mary stopped doing these things. They stopped visiting their friends because they could no longer afford to maintain the car. They even ended up skipping meals so they could afford to pay rent—pay rent to an investor who owned nine other properties! Mary told me that she would often skip maybe dinner and lunch if she wanted to take her grandkids out for a meal.

The stories do not stop there. Every single day my office is approached by everyday Queenslanders who are struggling to find an affordable place to live, who are about to get evicted into homelessness, who are being threatened with eviction in the middle of a housing crisis because they cannot afford to pay a rent increase of \$100 or more, who are skipping dinners to pay rent, who have stopped sending their kids to kindy or who have to move away from their community.

These are the types of stories that every single MP in here will have heard. Every member in this place has had constituents come into their office, call them, email them and share stories like this. I know this because these constituents—these struggling mums, dads, pensioners and everyday Queenslanders—come to my office after these other offices have told them that there is nothing they can do to help. This week we have been contacted by a single mum in Darra. Last week it was a family in Pimpama and a family in Mount Gravatt and the week before that a family in Elanora. I say to the MPs who represent these people: you can help them. If the stories of your constituents sleeping in tents, getting evicted onto the streets or skipping meals to pay rent have kept you awake at night—I am sure these stories horrify you the way they horrify me—then you will vote for this bill. Vote to stop the rent rises; vote to stop the out-of-control rent spirals; vote to keep families in their homes; vote to give that struggling single mum, that elderly resident skipping meals and that family weeks away from living in a caravan a little bit of hope so they can go to sleep tonight with a secure and safe roof over their heads.

When I introduced our renters rights bill into parliament last year, we saw ministers and MPs argue against greater rights for renters on the basis that these measures would disrupt the property rights of investors. In response to heartbreaking stories from tenants about the conditions they were living in, the fear, the bullying and the insecurity, this is what MPs were sending back to their constituents. I quote from letters that were sent—

Elements of the Greens' Private Member's Bill ... including the proposal that an owner would not be able to end a tenancy at the conclusion of the lease, are in breach of Queensland's Human Rights Act and will lead to reduced supply in the rental market. The Palaszczuk government will ensure that laws provide a strong, balanced approach that protects the rights of renters and lessors, while improving stability in the rental market.

I ask the Palaszczuk government: is there stability in the Queensland rental market now? Has your so-called balanced approach worked? Has putting the property rights of investors ahead of Queensland renters produced the outcomes that you wanted? If you are seeking to do little more than window-dressing while investors get richer and tenants get screwed, congratulations: you have achieved your goal.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Member for South Brisbane, could you please withdraw the unparliamentary language?

Dr MacMAHON: I withdraw. If you actually intend to ensure safe, secure, affordable housing for every Queensland renter, you have failed. There is no stability for the tens of thousands of Queensland renters facing skyrocketing rents. There is no balance when the fear of eviction from a rent increase means that you are too fearful to pursue what meagre rights you do actually have. Thankfully, the Human Rights Commissioner intervened last year and put this ludicrous debate to bed. He said—

While much of the conversation so far has focussed on the property rights of property owners, there are also rights held by tenants which need to be properly considered—including their rights to protection of families and children, and freedom from interference with their home, which is protected under the right to privacy and reputation.

He said—

43% of renting households include children for whom housing stability, connection to community and access to schools is vitally important—and families and children are also entitled to protection under Queensland's human rights legislation.

In New Zealand, the Human Rights Commissioner has pointed out that a rent freeze is necessary to ensure citizens are not sacrificing their fundamental human rights to pay for rent. We need a similar approach here. This bill provides a way to ensure tenants' human rights are not trumped by private profit. This government could look to parts of Canada or Victoria, where rent caps and rent freezes were implemented during the pandemic. In places like New York, San Francisco, Berlin, Paris and Barcelona—right across the world—governments are implementing rent freezes and rent caps because they see that tenants are struggling and that the rent spiral needs to be stopped.

You can even look at the history of this country for an example of a Labor government successfully implementing rent controls. When the Curtin Labor government intervened in the housing market during the Second World War by fixing rents, it drastically helped with the rampant wartime inflation, gave security to tenants during an unprecedented crisis and allowed the government to find long-term solutions that created the social housing boom that remains one of the high points of the postwar era.

I would also like to take a moment to talk about Christine Butler's petition for greater action on mould in rental properties. Her petition now has over 2,300 signatures and rising. Christine and her family were forced out of their rental property on the Gold Coast after mould starting rising through the foundations and which the investor refused to remedy. Multiple different kinds of mould turned the house toxic and the family were forced to throw out most of their possessions. The family is \$12,000 out of pocket.

Lack of maintenance by investors is directly related to tenants' lack of security. If you are scared of being evicted at the end of your lease or being priced out of your home with a rent increase, speaking up for your basic rights to health and safety is often untenable. We need a genuine end to no-grounds evictions, direct responsibility for mould remedying in the act and a rent freeze to ensure renters' most basic right to a safe and healthy home is secured.

Given the gravity of this situation, I will also be moving that this bill be dealt with urgently. Private members' bills take six months to make it through the committee process and to be debated—if they get debated at all. I say to every member in here that Queensland renters do not have six months. The families struggling to find somewhere safe, secure and affordable to live right now do not have six months. The tenants on the verge of eviction, anticipating a rent rise, do not have six months. This bill needs to be dealt with by the Community Support and Services Committee as a matter of urgency. I will be moving a motion at the end of this speech, which I urge the House to support, so that I can seek to make this bill urgent.

At the conclusion of this speech I will be moving that standing and sessional orders be suspended so as to require the Community Support and Services Committee to report to the House on the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation (Rent Freeze) Amendment Bill by Friday, 14 October 2022 and consideration of all stages of the bill be completed by the House no later than 1 December 2022.

We are in a crisis. As members of parliament, every single member in here is hearing these stories. All evidence suggests that the crisis will get worse with inflation soaring by Christmas. Every person in this place needs to act now. My bill sets out a way to curb the rampant rental increases that are hitting Queenslanders hard. The rent is too damn high and this bill is a way to take action.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Member for South Brisbane, could you please withdraw the unparliamentary language that you have just used.

Dr MacMAHON: I withdraw.

First Reading

Dr MacMAHON (South Brisbane—Grn) (12.51 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Referral to Community Support and Services Committee

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Community Support and Services Committee.

Leave to Move Motion

Dr MacMAHON (South Brisbane—Grn) (12.51 pm): I seek leave to move a motion without notice.

Division: Question put—That leave be granted.


Resolved in the negative in accordance with special sessional orders.

TRANSPORT LEGISLATION (ROAD SAFETY AND OTHER MATTERS) AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from p. 2355, on motion of Mr Bailey—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (12.57 pm), continuing: It is quite extraordinary the cowardice that will not even allow a bill to be heard by a committee in a timely matter.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Member for Maiwar, I urge you at the outset to remain relevant to the long title of the bill before the House.

Mr BERKMAN: As I was saying before the interruption, we understand, only because of media reports, that the government is undertaking a review of drug driving laws and looking at the impacts on medicinal cannabis users. That does not reduce the urgency or the relevance and importance of the amendments that I will move as an interim measure. This government review, as I was saying before the interruption, should consider the issue that remains genuinely unsettled: how do we measure impairment from drugs, including prescription drugs like cannabis? In the interests of improving safety outcomes, we should continue to invest in research on the link between drug use and impairment behind the wheel. Our regulation of drug driving should reflect the best evidence. Clearly that is not the case at the moment.

Parliament is updating the relevant act today, so we should fix this discrepancy with a medical defence now and get on with a review of options to measure impairment. Drug driving regulation should not be an overly simplistic regime that simply reinforces the failed and absolutist war on drugs. It should not risk criminalising people where there is no clear safety benefit.


In concluding, I reiterate that there are a lot of commonsense changes in this bill, which the Greens support, but there could have been even more. I urge the government to take this opportunity to create safer rules around e-scooter use and to fix these outdated sections of the road use management act that treat the mere presence of medicinal cannabis as an offence even where there is no impairment.

Sitting suspended from 12.59 pm to 2.00 pm.

Interruption.


SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

Error in Division

 **Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Martin): Members, before I call the first speaker, I advise the House that there was an error with the division just before the break. The correct tally is ayes 3, noes 79.

PRIVILEGE


Correction to *Record of Proceedings*

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (2.00 pm): I rise on a matter of privilege suddenly arising. Yesterday during my contribution to the Transport Legislation (Road Safety and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2022 I made the statement that we were on track for the road toll to be the 'worst in history'. What I should have said was that we are on track for the road toll to be the worst in 10 years. I correct the record.

TRANSPORT LEGISLATION (ROAD SAFETY AND OTHER MATTERS) AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed.

 **Hon. LM LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (2.01 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Transport Legislation (Road Safety and Other Matters) Amendment Bill. This bill aims to improve road safety, increase the range of allowable motorised mobility devices, make improvements to court and other processes, and make minor enhancements to transport and other legislation. Last year 277 people died on Queensland roads and, sadly, 198 people have already lost their lives this year. The causes of the vast majority of these fatalities remain the so-called 'top 5'—speeding, driving fatigued, driving under the influence of alcohol and drugs, driving distracted, and driving without a seatbelt.

The introduction of mandatory seatbelt laws in Queensland in 1972 has seen the road death toll drop significantly but, unfortunately, around one in four people killed on Queensland's roads were not wearing a seatbelt. According to data from the Department of Transport and Main Roads, five per cent of all motorists still are not wearing a seatbelt when they drive. Fatal and non-fatal road crashes cause not only immense harm to the people involved, their friends, family and communities but also economic implications, costing Queenslanders approximately \$6 billion in 2020.

While we have seen an increase in road fatalities over the last two years, our government is committed to decreasing the toll, with the launch this year of the Queensland Road Safety Strategy 2022-31. The strategy takes a new approach to road safety by taking on the complex social factors that play out on Queensland roads. It acknowledges that road safety is a preventative public health issue that needs urgent attention and aims to expand our thinking beyond the traditional transport sector. These unique issues will be tackled at the local level through the building of partnerships with new stakeholders across government and in communities. Importantly, the strategy sets an ambitious target of reducing road fatalities by 50 per cent and serious injuries by 30 per cent by 2031—which aligns with the National Road Safety Strategy 2021-30.

Currently, the Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995 allows for all money collected from penalties imposed from camera detected offences, in excess of the relevant administration costs, to be used for road safety education and awareness programs, road accident injury rehabilitation programs and road funding to improve the safety of the sections of state controlled roads where accidents most frequently happen. Road safety initiatives funded by camera detected offence penalties since its commencement in 1997 include the Safer Roads Sooner capital works program, community road safety grants, various road safety awareness campaigns and blood products for road crash injuries.

One of the funded initiative closest to my heart—and I am sure all members in this House would agree with me—is the flashing school zone signs program. Road safety around primary and secondary schools is so incredibly important because, as we all know, every 'k' over is a killer, and the 40-kilometre school zones, backed up by the flashing signs, are saving the lives of our most precious—children and young people.

Since my election as the member for Nudgee in 2015, I have worked closely with all of my school communities, P&Cs and principals to ensure that the roads around my local schools are as safe as possible. As a result of this collaboration with school communities, and support from our state government ministers and agencies, Boondall State School and Northgate State School recently had upgrades to their Stop Drop & Go facilities, and schools across the electorate now have flashing signs. Our government recognises that school students are, of course, among our most vulnerable road users which is why we have installed over 889 flashing school zone signs across Queensland since 2015.

I would also like to acknowledge that Minister Grace was able to secure a further \$40 million in this year's budget to improve the wider infrastructure around Queensland schools through the School Transport Infrastructure Program, where school communities can submit applications with ideas on how to make their school zone safer. Elsewhere in my electorate, I have worked with locals in Northgate to advocate for the installation of additional improvements including 'Unsuitable for large vehicles' signage for Northgate Road—a major thoroughfare between Toombul and Sandgate roads but a predominately residential area. I thank the Minister for Transport for listening to the concerns of my community in this regard.

In addition, I have been working closely with the minister and the Department of Transport and Main Roads around a number of upgrades to intersections on Sandgate Road at Cameron Street and Northgate Road, where just last week there was a serious vehicle accident. The installation of traffic lights at these two intersections has been an issue of some contention in my local community. When we make changes to our roads to improve safety they are not always welcomed. They can have other impacts. They can move traffic to different local roads which can cause concern. I want to acknowledge the fact that Transport and Main Roads officers came out and talked to my community about the need for these improvements. Again, I thank the minister for these ongoing improvements.

We have a significant amount of investment on our local roads to keep the community safe. When we have Sandgate Road—I formerly had Gympie Road and the Gateway north—and these major thoroughfares, we need to be always looking at technology improvements and ongoing investment to ensure they are safe for our communities. Installation of traffic lights at both Cameron Street and Northgate Road intersections and making London Street a cul-de-sac by closing the northern end where it meets Northgate Road will again increase road safety and keep my community safe.

I have spoken many times in this House about the dangers drivers face at the Banyo railway level crossing. Again, I acknowledge the Minister for Transport, Minister Bailey, and his department who have been nothing but supportive when it comes to exploring innovative solutions to improve this dangerous crossing. Through those conversations and the advocacy for my local community in partnership with the minister, I was able to secure \$200,000 for a transport strategic planning study at the crossing.

No solution there will be simple, but I think as local members what we always need to do is have honest and frank conversations with community. We need to consult openly. We need to take community with us so that if there are solutions—and, indeed, there may not be many solutions available to us given the nature of this village and the development around it—we do have to have those conversations. They are conversations and investments that we are willing to make to keep the community safe at state level.


Unfortunately, we have had to go it alone because the Brisbane City Council is not willing to come to the table, make those same investments and have those frank conversations. I look forward to that study being delivered. I know that we are out to tender and I will have an announcement in regard to who will do that work. I thank the minister for being willing to come to the table and honour the voices of my community.

This bill confirms that money collected from penalties imposed from camera detected offences will be used for road safety campaigns but also expands on this by providing the ability to spend money on research and development to test new options and technologies that may affect road safety in a positive way. For all of the reasons I have just outlined, we need to continue to do that. We need to continue to invest in research. We need to look for new options and technologies and new solutions that can continue to keep road users safe.

During the Transport and Resources Committee's examination of the bill, the department noted that the trial and testing of recent innovative initiatives, such as the new mobile phone and seatbelt-detection technology, could not be funded by the camera detected fund under the current act. The amendments in this bill will provide the department with the ability to spend money on research and development, and I have no doubt that will have a positive impact on road safety.

As someone who is passionate about caravanning and camping—I do want to acknowledge my colleague from Barron River—and someone who has travelled the length and breadth of Queensland, including regional Queensland, I was pleased to read the submission of the Caravan Trade and Industries Association of Queensland and the concerns they raised regarding the road toll. They highlighted some of the additional risk factors we have seen caravanners face when towing a van or trailer and the recent increase in people who may not have as much experience. Research and development is so important not only in our road network but also in caravan technology to ensure not only that those who tow such large vehicles are safe but also that other road users are kept safe. Road safety affects every Queenslanders. All road users have a responsibility to ensure everyone gets home safely. These amendments will enable government to invest in the technologies that may go towards reducing the road death toll.

I would like to thank the Transport and Resources Committee and committee secretariat for the work they have done with regard to this bill and all of the organisations that have made submissions and participated in the inquiry process. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mrs GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (2.10 pm): In 2012 Jordan was on his way home from his work Christmas party. He had been drinking; at some point he had smoked some marijuana. He was speeding at 30 kilometres over the speed limit. Somewhere around Beenleigh he hit a guardrail but continued on. When he got to about three kilometres north of Dreamworld he hit a broken-down stationary car on the side of the road that had five young adults inside. It was one of the darkest scenes on the M1 and it still is. Five young lives were taken that night. Only one of the five young teens in the stationary car survived.

My constituents Melissa and Peter McGuinness have embarked on a social mission to push for change in the reckless driving behaviours of young drivers. Jordan, the driver, was their son. He too was killed in the accident. They have shared their experience with over 150,000 young people across Australia because they seek change in youth driver behaviour through their road safety education and awareness program. As the shadow assistant minister for youth, I am very proud to stand up in this House and inform members about their road safety mission. They do not receive any state government funding, and it is my hope that the amendments in this bill will open some funding up to them.

Mel and Pete's youth road safety program You Choose takes an innovative social project approach to road safety education for teens. It focuses on peer advocacy as an integral part of changing behaviours and attitudes. You Choose places students in a place of personal reflection around their own intentions, choices and actions and how those intentions, choices and actions affect others and their loved ones because we all know that driver behaviour is a massive contributor to road trauma. In Peter and Melissa's words—

The program stimulates young people's instincts as social change agents ... similarly to how teens change their world for the better by being energised about the climate, bullying, consent and so on.

Luck and passivity are replaced by choice and accountability. Protecting each other, their families and their communities from preventable tragedy. One student, one friendship group, one school, one family, one community at a time.

When Mel and Peter go into schools they create this change. Road safety is not just about skills and cautionary tales: it is about wellbeing. Mel speaks with high school students right across the country and challenges young drivers to put themselves in Jordan's shoes and to put their own families in Mel and Peter's shoes. Mel and Peter are making a real difference and they have been acknowledged nationally for their work. I am very proud to report that Mel and Peter will be attending the national awards for charities event tomorrow night. They have been nominated as finalists for the emerging not-for-profit of the year award.

Mr Minnikin interjected.

Mrs GERBER: Thank you. This is not the first award they have been put forward for. Mel and Peter were awarded Australian Road Safety Award for school programs and Mel was an Australian of the Year runner-up in both 2021 and 2022, yet they receive zero funding from the state government for the critical program they deliver in our schools. One of the objectives of this bill is to ensure revenue from camera detected offences is invested back into road safety initiatives and allow revenue raised to be used to collaborate with organisations and local communities to develop and implement safer practices. You Choose has made an incredible impact on young Australians. They applied for funding from the state government last year and were rejected. It is my hope that this bill will mean charities like You Choose get the funding they need to continue to deliver road safety programs in our schools.

Initiatives like You Choose have never been so important. Yesterday Queensland reached a tragic milestone: more than 200 lives have been lost on our roads this year. That is 18 more fatalities when compared with the same time period last year and almost 40 more fatalities than the five-year average. Recent fine increases announced by the state government do not seem to be changing behaviour quickly enough, but hopefully education and collaboration with organisations like You Choose will.

This bill also implements changes to where funding can be spent on infrastructure safety improvements. Existing legislation determines that this funding can only be spent on state controlled roads where accidents most frequently happen. This bill will broaden this to allow revenue to be spent on funding any safety improvement on state controlled roads prioritised to reduce the frequency of crashes. It is my sincere hope that this proposal will open funding up to provide safety upgrades to projects like 'Devil's Elbow' on Tallebudgera Connection Road before it is too late.

It took a massive community campaign to get the state government to commit to planning safety upgrades at that hazardous corner. It took crash after crash, it took the section of the road to be dubbed 'Devil's Elbow', it took petitions and it took me raising it time and time again in this House, but for years Main Roads said there was not enough data to support this section of the road requiring safety upgrades. It should not take someone being killed or injured before we get the upgrades we need. I am hopeful this amendment will mean that funding can now be spent on dangerous intersections like 'Devil's Elbow' before there are 40 crashes.

In considering the proposed extended use of this revenue for research into innovative solutions to existing or emerging problems I want to touch on two local intersections. The first is the Currumbin Creek Road and Bienvenue Drive intersection at Currumbin Waters. It has been a trouble spot for our community for years.

As our community grows, so does the need for transport solutions that balance efficiency with road safety. Overwhelmingly, our community is concerned that the \$4 million upgrade, both state and federally funded, will not address the congestion and subsequent safety concerns that have riddled the intersection for years. When speaking with locals about this intersection just last month I heard a number of road safety concerns, particularly concerning the left-hand turning lane into the Meadows Estate. One frequent visitor to the Meadows Estate told me that because of the confusing layout she is really worried that she will hit someone while trying to do the right thing.


The second intersection I want to touch on is the dangerous Toolona Street intersection at Tugun. At the end of the 2020 election the government made a commitment to upgrade this intersection. This intersection needs a complete safety reconfiguration. It is incredibly dangerous and it is the constant location of accidents for locals. This is what our community needed and this is what our community expected when the state government committed to upgrading this intersection. What did our community get? We did not get the upgrade we asked for. We got some safety improvements but no upgrade to the intersection.

The whole intersection needs to be looked at. It needs to be properly planned and it needs to be upgraded, because it is extremely dangerous. What makes matters worse is that the feedback I have received from my community is that it feels more dangerous now than it did beforehand. Matt from Tugun wrote to me saying—

The government have spent \$1.5 million on this. An eye watering sum of money for what many locals call a 'downgrade'. It doesn't work properly and most people who attempt to cross the road here risk their lives.

It is this kind of planning I am talking about that we need from the state government. I am hopeful that this bill will allow for proper funding and the proper planning of intersections that need fixing. This is a broken promise to my community and it is simply not good enough. I have provided this feedback to TMR. Unfortunately, the response I have received is that no further works are planned for this very dangerous intersection.

I hope this bill will allow for a research proposal so that a safer upgrade can be planned and provided, but I will not be holding my breath because I have raised this time and time again in this House with no result. Our community deserves to feel safe on our local roads, and at the moment the Toolona Street intersection is so dangerous that my community does not feel safe. I implore this government to ensure they commit to their promise. They made a promise to upgrade the Toolona Street intersection and we did not get the upgrade we were promised. This state government needs to stay true to their word and upgrade the Toolona Street intersection.

 **Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development) (2.20 pm): I am pleased to speak to the Transport Legislation (Road Safety and Other Matters) Amendment Bill. The amendments in this bill will: improve road safety; increase the range of allowable motorised mobility devices; make improvements to court and other processes; bring equity and consistency to landowners and occupiers whose land is affected by transport project works; and make minor enhancements to transport and housing legislation.

I want to congratulate the Minister for Transport and Main Roads for his dedication to this cause. We are all used to his awesome speeches in parliament where he talks about the transport infrastructure that is happening all across the state, including in my electorate, which I am eternally grateful for. He talks a lot about that as well as the range of investment that is occurring across the transport portfolio. In all the years I have known the minister, I have seen his great personal passion for the issue of road safety. I want to thank him for bringing these amendments forward. I also thank the Transport and Resources Committee, with the mighty member for Kurwongbah as its chair. This is a great draft bill that has been brought to this House and they have done important work.

Like every member in this House, whenever we hear of yet another death on our roads, our hearts sink and we think about what more we need to do. While it might be a number in a media release or a news article, unfortunately, it is someone's mother, child, brother, sister, friend or next-door neighbour. There is a human face to that statistic. Unfortunately, sometimes we know those people ourselves, and I think that is why we all feel so passionately about this.

We know there are lots of accidents that, unfortunately, cannot be avoided; they are just accidents and things happen which no-one could predict. We also know there are lots of accidents that can be avoided, which is why this road safety legislation is important. We know about the fatal five and all of the initiatives this government has put in place to try to address those. I was pleased to hear in the minister's introductory speech that the rolling out of the seatbelt and mobile phone detection cameras is an Australian first, that Queensland has taken leadership over that. I delight in sending out those photos that we have all started seeing of people using their mobile phones or pretending they have got seatbelts on. They are quite shocking and confronting and they are fantastic, because it shows people they can be caught and they are being caught. We have quite strong figures about that.

The phrase that the minister always talks about—that road safety is everyone's responsibility—is also an important one that we need to talk to our communities about. One of the other reasons that I wanted to speak to this bill is that my community reacts very strongly and in a very supportive way when we are rolling out these initiatives. We have probably all had people come to us as local members and

ask, 'Can you help me? I got a fine for speeding. I was doing 20 kilometres over the limit.' They then offer some excuse as to why they were speeding or sometimes they say, 'I got into my car after I'd had a few drinks and I didn't realise. I hadn't eaten anything'—or some other excuse—'Can you help me?' Of course, we always say absolutely not, under no circumstances, because we have to be so uncompromising about this.

When we say we are going to increase the fines, have heavier penalties or have cameras that catch you no matter what you are doing, a few people say, 'You're just revenue raising.' However, in my community, they say, 'You go for it.' When we say that there is a \$1,000 fine for using your mobile phone while driving, they say, 'You go for it. If you need to raise that even more then we're right behind you.' I want to talk to a few other issues in the bill, particularly about what the money is used for now. As I said, sometimes there are people who say that we are increasing the fines just for revenue raising, but on this side of the House we are very aware that that money is invested back into road safety.


I want to talk about some of the programs which I have found important in my electorate, aside from the many things in the legislation which the minister outlined in his introductory speech, including deterring unsafe and illegal driving behaviours by using speed cameras, red-light cameras and those things. When the department appeared before the committee, they spoke about the fact that one of the things they had not been able to do in the past was test new technology, and that new mobile phone and seatbelt detection technology was an example. The funds from the camera detected offences could not fund the testing, but now they will be able to do those sorts of things. If there are things we can do under that road safety heading to make it easier for the Department of Transport and Main Roads to deter people from bad behaviours, then I am right behind that. I am very pleased to see that.

I want to talk about those road safety programs that have been funded with this money, and I want to talk about where this starts in schools. It has to start early in schools and it does start early in schools with road safety education. I also want to talk about some of the programs which keep our kids safe when they are going to and from school, including the School Crossing Supervisor Scheme expansion program and the flashing school zone signs. I was grateful to see that we got a second crossing supervisor for St Oliver Plunkett. I spoke with Avril, Skye, Emily and Liberty. One of them was in prep and she was telling me my road safety rules and how to make sure I was crossing the pedestrian crossing properly. They clearly thought I was not putting my feet in the right places, but we crossed where that second supervisor is going to be. Cannon Hill State School has been wanting that flashing sign under that program for ages. We just want our kids to be safe as they are going to and from school.

I want to congratulate and thank all of our school staff—the principals, teachers, P&Cs and P&Fs. There is not a P&C or P&F meeting I go to where that is not a topic, as well as the issue of people acting safely around schools. There can be some bad behaviours, so I want to thank them for what they have to put up with sometimes to convince people to do the right thing.

The member for Macalister, as a former police officer, spoke before about how hard it is for police personnel to pick someone up on a traffic offence, whether it is for speeding or to do a random breath test. She said that it is a pretty inglorious kind of way to spend your day and that it is quite difficult and they most definitely never get thanked for it. I want to thank the police for the work they do there, and also the paramedics. The police have to do that enforcement, but they are both there as the first responders at a scene where there has been a terrible accident. The trauma they must go through cannot be believed and is not something they ever forget. I want to give them a big thanks. I have the Morningside Police Station in my area. They are good human beings and I know what a difficult task it is for them, so I give a big thank you to all of those workers.

I also want to thank not only the road safety team in the Department of Transport and Main Roads but also the council officers who work in road safety. They are experts. They have been out to my electorate a number of times. I have held meetings with school staff and parents with my local councillor, Councillor Kara Cook, and with the road safety personnel who are just so good at looking at where the risks are, where the danger is and coming up with solutions. They make such a difference. I am very grateful and so are the people from my community. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms CAMM** (Whitsunday—LNP) (2.29 pm): I am pleased to contribute today to the Transport Legislation (Road Safety and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2022. As has been outlined by many in this House, what this bill aims to achieve is the use of revenue from camera detected offences, for road safety and ensuring that that revenue can be adequately directed and targeted in a way that hopefully is going to support greater education and greater improvement to road safety, in particular on state controlled roads where accidents most frequently happen.

What I am not pleased to contribute is that I represent a region in Central Queensland where we have had the highest fatality rates this year. I share that region with the member for Mackay, the member for Burdekin and other colleagues in Central Queensland. In the Mackay, Isaac and Whitsunday areas, we have seen sadly a tragic loss, with 39 fatalities already recorded—some families I know personally, including a young man who was lost returning home with his mum and brother from a swim meet in North Queensland.

As has already been outlined, data released by the Australian Road Safety Foundation shows there were 1,127 road fatalities nationally in 2021. Queensland had the highest number in the nation at 275. In the Central Queensland district area, there were 22 deaths recorded in 2021, whilst 39 have already been recorded this year.

In our region of Central Queensland, the highways are the roads which take commuter traffic. They are also used for hauling cane, moving aquaculture and horticulture produce, heavy vehicle routes, oversize and overmass routes for mining equipment, as well as being, as I said, commuter roads for members of our community to attend doctors' appointments, to travel to school and also to just go about their daily lives. They are also major tourism routes.

The increase in the number of caravan and camper trailers we have seen on our major road networks, being both the Bruce Highway and the Peak Downs Highway, post COVID is enormous. I think it is important to outline where the committee received submissions that there does need to be greater education when it comes to those who are hauling or towing, whether it be caravans or camper trailers, who may not have the experience to do so or understand the road conditions when they are travelling—in particular, in rural and regional Queensland. It is also proposed to broaden areas where revenue can be spent from these camera detected offences, in collaboration with organisations and local community groups.

In my community, the Road Accident Action Group, RAAG, which has been established across my region now for 20 years, since 2002, has been advocating for good driving behaviour across the Mackay-Isaac community. This was brought about by a need which was identified when we saw an increase in fatalities in particular of commuters out to the Bowen Basin on the Peak Downs Highway. While part of that road is not in my electorate, the majority of people who live in my electorate are employed in the Bowen Basin and travel each and every week out to those mine sites.

It is important that any initiative which this funding and revenue seeks to fund is delivered from an evidence based approach. It is important that it is targeted. I also hope that the department will be transparent with the data that it collects over this time and correlates that in consultation and engagement with regional officers. In particular, I know many regional MPs would like to know the evaluation of how this revenue over the next 12 months and coming years is being invested in our electorates, in our communities, and in partnership and collaboration with some of our organisations which are already doing an amazing job.

When it comes to road safety and this legislation, I do need to highlight the great work of some of our frontline officers—in particular, Sergeant Steve Smith and Sergeant Nigel Dalton—who travel all across Mackay, the Whitsundays and the Isaac region, educating, in particular, our year 12 students and have recently undertaken enormous efforts to address the fatal five on the back of last week's Road Safety Week. Most particularly, they are educating students and ensuring that there is an engaging discussion around drink and drug driving, the wearing of seatbelts, distractions, speeding and fatigue, which is also a major contributing factor in our region.

There has also been a proactive approach taken by my local Queensland Police Service with Operation Mackay Edmonton results in from 15 and 16 August where we saw static interception sites manned by officers from Mackay Northern Beaches division, including on my local road, Mackay Bucasia Road—I am a strong advocate for ensuring upgrades occur there and that planning for upgrades occur over the next several years—as well as out to the Peak Downs Highway. We saw pleasing results. Almost 730 roadside breath tests were performed over a two-day period.


I am very pleased to advise that, whilst several drivers did return positive readings on the roadside, secondary tests confirmed they were not over the legal limit and that no drink-drivers were found over that period. One driver was caught for alleged drug driving and a further person was charged with unlawful possession of dangerous drugs. However, that does not correlate with why people are losing their lives on our roads. There does need to be further investigation and further research. We cannot wait for coroners' reports. We do need to ensure our police service is adequately resourced to be able to get to the bottom of the cause of deaths when it comes to these fatalities to ensure we can address any safety issues in a timely manner.

I would also like to highlight in my own community the Whitsunday Emergency Services Field Day where there was a massive campaign in educating around road safety. I acknowledge Constable Jess Leech, who was formerly from the Whitsundays and is now serving in the Queensland Police Service in Emerald. I know she will do an incredible job educating the community in Central Queensland.

In particular, our chamber of commerce also participated in Road Safety Week at Paget in Mackay. We have to give a huge thankyou to local business. That is an opportunity that the state government and, in particular, the department can take. There are proactive businesses all across our state. In particular, in my community I give a shout-out to Treadwell Tyres for hosting what was an incredible collaborative event in the Mackay region to educate people. They are teaching young drivers how to change tyres and how to be safe in their own vehicle on the roads—those practical things that young drivers are not necessarily equipped with if you did not grow up on a farm like I did where your father made you learn how to change a tyre before you were allowed to drive the car. I am forever grateful for that.

With regard to the fatality statistics across our community, I would also like to highlight the incredible work of our RACQ CQ Rescue chopper where there has been an increase of 30 per cent in callouts for road accidents. That is a doubling on last year. Predominantly that relates to Central Queensland. The funding for those first responders and the impact that has going forward across our entire community is incredible.

I would also like to thank and highlight the work of the chair of CQ Rescue, Chris Wright, and the CEO, Tim Healee. They raised, in conjunction with the CEO of RACQ, David Carter, over \$240,000 in our community last weekend as part of their gala event. I know that the fatality rate, which is already unacceptable in Central Queensland, would be much higher if we did not have that service, which is funded by the community for the community.

 **Mr BROWN** (Capalaba—ALP) (2.40 pm): I rise in support of the Transport Legislation (Road Safety and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2022. We know that road safety is an issue that affects all of us. It has certainly been a pertinent issue in my electorate given the tragic events that occurred in Alexandra Hills over a year ago and also the recent mishaps of our mayor. I want to give a shout-out to a constituent—

Mr Power interjected.

Mr BROWN: I take that interjection. 'Errors of judgement' I think they were!

Mr Healy interjected.

Mr BROWN: I will get to that. A constituent of mine, Judy Lindsay, has been a tireless campaigner for road safety through her Road Safety Awareness program. She travels the length and breadth of this state working with police officers to raise awareness of road safety with any group she comes across, be it regional councillors, schools, B&S events, rodeos—you name it; she is there to deliver her road safety message. She has done so since the tragic death of her daughter, Hayley. Hayley unknowingly jumped into a car driven by a drunk driver. That drunk driver lost control of that car and Hayley lost her life that night. Since then Judy has campaigned tirelessly to raise awareness of road safety, and I congratulate her.

She was drafted into the mayor's breach of bail campaign as one of the spokespeople to kick that campaign along. Judy, being nonpartisan, said yes to it. She said, 'If there is anything that makes our roads and our laws safer, I will be a part of it.' Unfortunately, she was on that Zoom call that night. She witnessed firsthand the mayor's Zoom camera turning off and on as the mayor drank wine. I do not know how she could do that, hearing the harrowing story of the loss of Hayley's life that night. It was not only the story of Hayley's life; we know that the Fields were also on that Zoom call. The mayor then decided, despite being 3½ times over the legal limit, to jump into a council car and crash it, yet she will not resign. That would be the honourable and the right thing to do. If she wanted to send a road safety message in our area, that is what she would be doing right now.

As I reported last night, the road safety message that Redland City Council wants to send is to punish all Redlands road users with a broadbrush approach in dropping the speed limit from 50 kilometres per hour to 40 kilometres per hour. This will not get the mayor's road safety cred back. As I said last night, the council already has those powers to identify certain streets that need a reduction in speed limit and they have done that. They have dropped the speed limit from 50 to 40 kilometres per hour and they have signed those areas. I hope they will continue to do that into the future. What this bills shows is the difference in approaches to road safety. This is targeted and considered legislation, and I congratulate the minister on it.


So far this year we have already lost 200 people on Queensland's roads. This is a sobering and tragic number given that one fatality on our roads is one too many. Unfortunately, we continue to see the fatal five all too often—speeding, driving fatigued, drink and drug driving, driving distracted and driving without a seatbelt—as the major contributors and causes of deaths on our roads. The Palaszczuk government, including the minister, is committed to reducing the number of these tragedies seen on our roads by working towards a goal of zero road deaths in Queensland. This bill demonstrates that the government's commitment includes a range of amendments that will, among other elements, improve road safety, increase the range of allowable mobility devices and make enhancements to our transport legislation.

One key aspect of the bill relates to the use of penalties from camera detected offences for road safety. The objective of such a program is to reduce road trauma. The amendments in this bill will continue to ensure all excess revenue from camera detected offences is invested into priority road safety initiatives including the ones that Judy conducts across this state. The amendments modernise the provision and clarify that the funds will allow the development and implementation of road safety programs and initiatives that use new approaches, innovation and proactive measures. Some of the measures may include the trial and evaluation of distinct and increased drug-driving deterrence, education and driving awareness programs, anti-hooping technology and expanding existing numberplate recognition technology.

In terms of the mobility reforms, this bill includes positive changes for those in our community who rely on mobility scooters and motorised wheelchairs. These changes will allow the registration and use of motorised wheelchairs of any weight and mobility scooters up to 170 kilograms, aligning with the Australian standards. These changes will assist people who require heavier and more powerful devices, such as when a user requires special equipment attached to the device, to better choose the device that best fits their needs. This bill also makes amendments to ensure consistent treatment of motorised mobility device users as pedestrians under the Transport Operations (Road Use Management—Road Rules) Regulation 2009 and other transport legislation.

Other excellent initiatives in this bill pertain to the legal protections for health professionals who report on a non-Queensland driver's licence holder's medical fitness to drive. Currently, the protections from civil liberty and liability afforded to health professionals under the administrative process does not apply if they report on a non-Queensland licence holder's medical fitness to drive. The amendments in this bill will ensure a consistent approach and provide the same protection for health professionals reporting on Queensland and non-Queensland driver's licence holders.

Road safety is everyone's business. We all have a part to play in keeping our roads safe. I am proud to be part of a government that is living up to these very sensible reforms. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr HEAD** (Callide—LNP) (2.47 pm): While this bill came before the committee that I sit on, being new, I must thank the other members of the committee for their work along the way. I also thank the member for Condamine for his work prior to me taking his place.

Road safety is an incredibly important issue and it is amplified by the sheer size and distances within my electorate. Callide has the highest road toll in Queensland, according to the RACQ, and this is a statistic I take very seriously as the member for Callide. I encourage all actions that dramatically improve road safety across Callide and wider Queensland.

If we want to get really serious about improving road safety, fixing the state of our roads also needs to be a top priority. Try driving a truck up the Wondai highway, which I have done a number of times, and passing other trucks with only inches left between the wing mirrors. I can tell honourable members it is not something anyone enjoys doing. This is one of the many roads I have a genuine safety concern for. I also have genuine safety concerns for the Leichhardt Highway, the Mundubbera Durong Road and the Burnett Highway, just to name a few. There are also a number of council owned roads where further funding and upgrades would assist in improving their road safety, and I actively call for this investment. I welcome anything that will bring tangible benefits to road safety in Callide and our state.

Imagine how much better our roads would be if we did not have a \$5.7 billion maintenance backlog. That could drastically improve road safety. I encourage the government to not stop with this bill if they want to have a significant impact on reducing our tragic road toll. Let's see them get on top of the maintenance backlog. Think of the road safety improvements and infrastructure that \$220 million would get the people of Callide. I would like \$220 million to spend on road upgrades and to improve safety for the people of my electorate, but no. Unfortunately, it was wasted on Wellcamp.

I believe that we should be doing all we can to improve road safety, and that is why the LNP are supporting this bill. If we want to see significant improvements in road safety, then let's not stop here. Let's get real about the need for driver awareness. Awareness programs in regard to driving around livestock and driving with wildlife for those unfamiliar with rural roads should be strongly encouraged, as should awareness around driving on single-lane bitumen. How many people grow up in metropolitan areas and cities, come to a country event—whether it be the Thangool Cup, which just so happens to be on this weekend, or the Chinchilla Melon Festival in February of next year—and do not understand how to negotiate oncoming cars, let alone oncoming caravans or road trains? You will not have safe roads if you do not have appropriate driver awareness.

Drivers who may have never driven anything other than a Tesla are now buying four-wheel drives, buying a large caravan and hitting the open road. While I encourage people to come and visit the bush, I also strongly encourage them to undertake a towing course and make themselves aware of the hazards and risks of driving on rural roads. On their travels, I also encourage them to drop in and support many of our great cafes, servos and small businesses. In my travels I see far too many smashed-up caravans along our roads as a result of traffic incidents. Further, I encourage caravanners to be well aware of the \$5.7 billion maintenance backlog, as the roads they will be travelling on are not as they should be. This directly impacts road safety and risks the lives of Queenslanders.


Speaking of driver awareness and education, we have an empty facility sitting west of Toowoomba that might just be perfect for a driver education facility. It is called Wellcamp—in case members did not pick that up! We have a minister for transport who has been in the position for seven years. Unfortunately, we continue to see massive budget blowouts—

Mr BAILEY: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The honourable member is misleading the House. I have not been the Minister for Transport for seven years.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Martin): Minister, there is a process if you believe a member has misled the House. Member for Callide, I ask you to withdraw and come back to the long title of the bill.

Mr HEAD: I withdraw. Unfortunately, we continue to see massive budget blowouts on the likes of Cross River Rail, while my roads continue to be neglected. This is a genuine road safety concern. Our road statistics continue to worsen. This is a huge safety issue for my electorate. If we want to continue to improve road safety we should not accept road hazard signs being left in place on a semi-permanent basis. We should fix road damage, including potholes, damaged bridges and rough shoulders, as an absolute priority. Let's keep working on road safety, because it is critically important.

Police numbers impact road safety. When there is a strong police presence, it is clear that people are more likely to obey the law. As I said at the start of my speech, my electorate has the highest road toll in Queensland according to the RACQ. Improving roads and infrastructure in my electorate was a significant priority for my campaign, and it is still a significant priority for me today. If anyone wants to come to my electorate and see firsthand how a lack of maintenance impacts road safety, I welcome them to come to the great electorate of Callide.

 **Hon. MC BAILEY (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (2.54 pm),** in reply: The Transport Legislation (Road Safety and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2022 includes amendments to improve road safety, increase the range of allowable motorised mobility devices and make improvements to court processes and digital photo shelf life. The bill brings equity and consistency to landowners and occupiers whose land is affected by transport infrastructure works and makes other minor enhancements to transport and housing legislation.

It is good to see the support for this bill from such a diverse range of members in this House, and I thank all members for their support across the board for this bill. I acknowledge the speeches of the various members who contributed to the debate who have been first responders in previous careers: the members for Macalister, Thuringowa, Nicklin and Greenslopes, who no doubt has treated many people who have been suffering road trauma. If I have left anybody out, I apologise. I think that is a pretty reasonable list. It is good to have that body of experience as a part of this discussion and debate. It is also good to hear the important message that 'road safety is everybody's responsibility' echoed around the House. I will return to that a little later.

I acknowledge the contribution of the member for Chatsworth and shadow minister for transport and main roads and the support of the opposition for the bill. I also acknowledge the support of members of other parties and independent MPs. Some MPs raised concerns about the number of lives lost this year. I am sure that all members share those concerns. The member for Surfers Paradise acknowledged that the majority of these are a result of driver behaviour. That is something the member for Callide might like to take note of from his more esteemed and elder fellow MP.

The number of lives being lost on Queensland roads has been on a downward trajectory since 1973, broadly, when the number of lives lost was a shocking 32.1 per 100,000 population or, in that year, 638 deaths. That was 50 years ago. In 2021 there were 277 lives lost, which is down to 5.31 per 100,000 population. We do not accept, in any shape or form, that that is acceptable. This decrease is a result of the introduction of significant and effective road safety interventions over time by a whole range of governments. They have been effective; however, we are beginning to experience some diminishing returns on those efforts.

Since the record low of 220 lives lost in 2019—the lowest since records began—we have been experiencing an increase in the number of fatalities through the pandemic. I do not believe that is any coincidence. Sadly, this trend is continuing this year. A few figures were mentioned during the debate, and I will provide an update. As of yesterday, we are up 13 fatalities on Queensland roads when compared to the same time last year. Of course, this year, with flooding from Bundaberg to the border, we saw 14 people unfortunately lose their lives after driving into floodwater.

Since the pandemic began we have seen a real shift in behaviour playing out on Queensland roads, with more dangerous driving becoming prevalent. Increased risky driving through the lockdown periods and more people travelling by road has coincided with an increase in road trauma—a trend which has also been experienced in other jurisdictions and countries. This highlights the importance of being able to identify and be responsive to the changes on our roads.

This bill clarifies that Camera Detected Offence Program funds may be invested in the trial or pilot of innovative new solutions that address existing and emerging risky behaviours and patterns that lead to road trauma. A great example of using innovation to address road trauma is the speed camera signs pilot for school zones and roadworks, which was announced last week as part of Queensland Road Safety Week. This is a world-first road safety pilot that will run until the end of April 2024. It uses portable, high-tech speed cameras attached to powered road signs. Speeding is one of the Fatal Five dangerous road safety behaviours, and in 2021 we saw 74 deaths on our roads as a result of speeding. That is almost 26 per cent—one in four deaths on our Queensland roads. These new cameras will be in place to protect the lives of some of the most vulnerable road users in our community: schoolchildren, their families, school crossing supervisors, parents, school staff and, of course, road workers.

TMR monitors the implementation of all major initiatives and at an appropriate time undertakes an independent evaluation to address effectiveness. Ongoing monitoring and evaluation assists TMR to determine the success of each initiative and identify opportunities for continuous improvement of road safety initiatives. For example, the Targeted Road Safety Program was independently evaluated by the Centre for Accident Research & Road Safety, or CARRS-Q as everyone knows them, in June of last year. The evaluation considered the safety effects of 357 verified projects. The report concluded that TRSP provided a positive safety impact on the average number of crash reductions per year, in terms of both total injury crashes and lives lost, and had an overall benefit-cost ratio from this evaluation of 8.77.

The Palaszczuk government is committed to maintaining a safe and resilient road network for all of our travellers. This is our government's seventh record rail and road commitment in the budget this year. A variety of MPs have used the debate to bid for more road funding, so let me remind people just to be very clear—I am sure that they have heard it before—where we are in terms of road and rail funding. We have nearly 50 per cent more in this year's budget than the last budget under the previous government. If you want road funding, it is this government that delivers it and no-one else.

Building on the \$29.7 billion QTRIP provides an increase of \$2.2 billion over the next four-year program, and I might add that for the last four or so years the Department of Transport and Main Roads has spent above our capital allocation for a given year, so we have absolutely delivered more than what we promised in terms of the budget. As a result there have been 25,200 direct jobs across that and 61 per cent of that—more than \$18 billion—goes outside the metropolitan region, representing an increase of three per cent compared to the previous QTRIP, with more than 16,000 jobs in those regional areas. In our current road and rail budget, we see a record nearly \$5 billion—\$4.94 billion—in terms of a maintenance, preservation and operations budget.

During the debate I heard a number of members being very critical about maintenance, but that is an increase of \$277 million on the previous year and is markedly higher than the \$2.77 billion under the last budget of the Newman government—an increase of more than \$2 billion on maintenance compared to the LNP—so let us not hear anymore nonsense about that. In this regard those opposite deliberately ignore their own record and the superior record of this government.

I want to acknowledge the contribution and supportive comments of the Palaszczuk government's sealing program by the member for Gregory, who in the debate thanked the government for the sealing of the Blackall Jericho Road and the Torrens Creek Road, so I thank the member for Gregory for his honesty. There was a billion dollars worth of stimulus coming into our roads here in Queensland and I ensured that \$100 million of that was allocated to sealing. Because we have the largest road network in the country, it was an incredible opportunity to get some of that sealing done and of course most of that was in regional and rural areas. The member for Gregory is benefiting from that and I know that there are other regional members—not all on my side—who have thanked me around the corridors for the commitment that we have made to regional roads through that stimulus.

Generally the issues raised by both sides of the House further illustrate what I have emphasised many times here before today, and that is that road safety is an issue that affects all of us. This bill will continue to ensure that CDOP funds are reinvested in road safety initiatives that will help Queensland achieve the road safety targets we have committed to in our Queensland Road Safety Strategy 2022-31—that is, a 50 per cent reduction in lives lost and a 30 per cent reduction in serious injuries on Queensland roads by 2031.

We need to support research and development, best practice, technical evolution and technological evolution, trials and the delivery of new solutions where trials are successful. We also need to be guided by data and evidence and tailor our road safety initiative to the needs of different regions and the types of road users throughout the state. These reforms include new and emerging targeted programs of work designed to reduce road trauma such as the trial and evaluation of distinct and increased drug-driving deterrents, education and driver awareness programs, anti-hooping technology and expanding the reach of the automated numberplate recognition technology.

Funding allocations will not be limited to where crashes have already happened and funds may be allocated proactively for sections of state controlled roads where crashes have not yet happened but where analysis shows a risk of serious crashes exists. This is an important reform because it was widely acknowledged by a range of members that this will see a much more proactive approach in terms of infrastructure for safer roads. The allocation of infrastructure funds will be prioritised using a risk assessment methodology.

This bill also includes positive changes for members of our community who rely on mobility scooters or motorised wheelchairs. Based on recommendations from the National Transport Commission, this bill will implement changes that will make it easier for people in Queensland to choose the mobility device that best suits their needs. These changes will assist people who require heavier and more powerful devices such as when the user requires special equipment attached to the device.

The bill also provides for legal protections from liability for health professionals who report on a non-Queensland driver licence holder's medical fitness to drive, and that is important as we see the ageing of the population. This amendment merely applies the same level of protection as would apply if they were reporting on a Queensland driver's licence holder. The amendments to evidentiary provisions relating to vehicle standard matters are simply a practical and sensible way of improving the efficiency of court hearings about uncontested and technical evidence for courts.

I want to make a couple of additional comments. Some of this revenue that the bill is subject to of course will go to speed cameras in construction zones and school zones based on risk. They will mean a safer work environment for our firies, for our paramedics, for our police, for our RACQ first responders, for our tow truck operators and for our school crossing supervisors. If you ask any school crossing supervisor if they support this, I bet they will say that they support it 100 per cent. However, what does worry me is that I have not yet heard an LNP MP or leader in this state back in this reform. We have heard a lot of good words about road safety in this debate, and I welcome them, but this is an important reform. If you are speeding through a school zone, we should throw the book at you as far as I am concerned. If you are whizzing past road workers at 80, 90 or 100 kilometres an hour and risking other people's lives, I likewise make no apologies for using technology to make workers and families and kids safer.

I say to the opposition sincerely that it should come out and support these reforms because they are important reforms—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr BAILEY: I have listened to the debate and those opposite have been very wobbly on this. They have not come out and said, 'We support this 100 per cent.' Road safety should be bipartisan. I say to the opposition: if you are sincere with your rhetoric, support the reforms because the reforms will save lives. It is as simple as that.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr BAILEY: Instead of interjecting, come out and say you are supporting it.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Martin): Order, members!

Mr BAILEY: The interjections are a concern. They do not tell me that the LNP is backing up its rhetoric with a firm position supporting speed cameras in school zones or construction sites. Let it clarify this issue.

I want to make a couple of further comments. We all have a joint responsibility on road safety. People look to members in this chamber, no matter who we are, as community leaders. As a government we have some influence over some of that debate, but of course every member does. If members support road safety it is good to say good things in this House, but it is really important—and I put this sincerely—to say these things on all of the social media platforms and get that message out there. To be quite frank, the member for Traeger will probably have more influence over people in his area than me, but I want that road safety message out in every part of this state. If all members support road safety, I ask them to think about what they might or might not have said and if they have not said enough on their socials get out there and say it on different platforms, because people look to the cues we put out there, particularly in regional and rural areas.

It was acknowledged by a range of members that there is a bias in fatalities in rural and regional areas and that affects quite a lot of members across this chamber. We have to get across the message on seatbelts. There are a lot of myths out there about seatbelts and people thinking that it is safer not to wear them, and that is what kills a lot of people in this state. If someone goes off the road, at speed or otherwise, there are often other factors at play, but it is seatbelts that save lives. This is a sincere challenge to everybody: let us get that road safety message out there and repeat it over time. We have to get that message out to our communities, because the number of people not wearing seatbelts for instance, aside from the others in the fatal five, is a concern.

I am disappointed at the amendments to be moved by the Greens party. On Monday we saw reports that the government is looking at a whole range of issues around road safety, including medicinal cannabis. We will take a very thorough, evidence based approach. As every member knows, as the minister for road safety I will not compromise in any way, shape or form. That process is already underway. The technology is changing. We have to have the evidence base. We have to have operational changes. We have to have everybody on board. We have to talk to stakeholders. We have to be thorough. When we make a significant change, it has to be robust, it has to be 100 per cent safe and it has to be defensible in a court of law.

I have had many people write to me about medicinal cannabis. Some of them have some very good points to make. As the minister, I need clear specialist advice on this issue. Work has to be done on the difference between somebody taking medication on one day and then driving immediately versus someone who might have taken it three or four days before. We currently do not know how to detect the level of impairment compared to alcohol.

For the Greens party to move these amendments without that work having been done is reckless in terms of road safety. It is political pointscore and it is disappointing. Any change has to be evidence based. There has to be a thorough reform. I have already announced that that is what we will do. I say very clearly to the chamber that to propose this cheap amendment two days after that announcement, without any work done behind it, is political and disappointing.

In closing, I thank everybody who has made a sincere contribution to this debate. I thank the parliamentary committee and the chair, the member for Kurwongbah. I thank all the TMR staff who worked very hard on this bill and the parliamentary drafting staff who worked so well on it. I think it is a very worthy bill. I think it will save lives on Queensland roads. I am proud of this bill and I commend the bill to the House.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Consideration in Detail

Clauses 1 to 13, as read, agreed to.



Mr BERKMAN (3.13 pm): I seek leave to move an amendment outside the long title of the bill.

Division: Question put—That leave be granted.

Resolved in the negative in accordance with special sessional orders.

Clauses 14 to 25, as read, agreed to.

Clause 26—



Mr BERKMAN (3.19 pm): I seek leave to move an amendment outside the long title of the bill.

Leave not granted.

Clause 26, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 27 to 54, as read, agreed to.

Schedule, as read, agreed to.

Third Reading



Hon. MC BAILEY (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (3.19 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a third time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

Long Title



Hon. MC BAILEY (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (3.19 pm): I move—

That the long title of the bill be agreed to.

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

Motion agreed to.

NATURE CONSERVATION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Resumed from 24 February (see p. 239).

Second Reading



Hon. MAJ SCANLON (Gaven—ALP) (Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Youth Affairs) (3.19 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

The Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill was referred to the State Development and Regional Industries Committee for review. Their report was tabled on 8 April 2022. I would like to thank the committee for its work. I would also like to thank the people and organisations who made submissions to the committee about the bill and who appeared as witnesses as part of the inquiry. I acknowledge Jo Martin, the state secretary of Queensland Beekeepers' Association, who is in the parliament today. The committee made two recommendations and I am pleased to advise that the government's response to the committee's report was tabled on 8 July 2022.

The Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill will make amendments to five acts and four regulations to deliver a number of outcomes regarding future management and administration of Queensland's wildlife and protected areas, such as state forests, recreation areas, marine parks and national parks.

One of the key components of the bill and the issue that received the most feedback through the committee's inquiry on the bill is the amendments to provide for an extension of beekeeping in certain national parks for 20 years. Beekeeping in Queensland's national parks has historically been considered inconsistent with the cardinal principle for the management of national parks under the Nature Conservation Act. The cardinal principle requires that national parks be managed to the greatest

possible extent for the permanent preservation of their natural condition and the protection of their cultural resources and values. Introducing any non-native animals, including honey bees, challenges the requirement for preserving the natural conditions of those lands to the greatest possible extent.

However, as part of previous processes involving the transfer of a number of state forests to national parks, in 2004 specific provisions were inserted into the Nature Conservation Act to allow existing beekeeping in state forests to continue to 31 December 2024. During this time it was intended that alternative sites would be found to relocate beekeeping from national parks. I understand that, while some initial work was undertaken in this regard, viable alternative sites are yet to be achieved. In recognition of this and with the 2024 deadline approaching, the government understands that the loss of access to apiary sites in national parks in 2024 without alternative resources available would put the apiary and broader horticultural industry in a difficult situation.

Consequently, prior to the last state election the Palaszczuk government committed to amending the Nature Conservation Act to extend the time for beekeepers to access national parks where beekeeping was an existing use prior to the transfer of land to national park. The proposed 20-year extension will provide such access until 31 December 2044. During this time the government will undertake further work to assist in transitioning beekeeping out of national parks and work with industry on ensuring best practice management of these activities is occurring in the meantime.

The committee received 29 submissions on the bill. The majority of those were from individuals and businesses within the beekeeping industry and organisations that represent the agricultural and horticultural sectors. There was strong support for beekeeping amendments in the submissions, highlighting the various benefits accrued from the extension of beekeeping in national parks. Many articulated the importance of maintaining access to national parks to not only ensure a continued supply of honey products but also continued support to the horticultural sector, which, with increasing expansion, has come to rely heavily on importing bees onto their properties to pollinate crops.

I note that several conservation groups provided submissions against the extension of beekeeping in national parks. Those submissions focused on the potential impacts to native flora and fauna, and that commercial beekeeping is not consistent with the cardinal principle for managing national parks under the Nature Conservation Act.

I accept that there are different views with respect to these amendments. I also note that there is a lack of specific research around the impacts of commercial beekeeping in Queensland national parks. In 2018 the Department of Environment and Science engaged the University of Sydney to undertake a broad literature review into the potential ecological impacts of commercial beekeeping. This independent review found that, while there is competition between feral bee populations and native birds and animals for nest sites, currently there is insufficient research and evidence to confirm the impacts of European honey bees that are kept in commercial hives. Opportunities for further research on the impacts of European honey bees in national park settings will be considered to ensure the government is informed by contemporary science.

I note from the statement of reservation in the committee's report that the non-government members have a view that the end date of 2044 should be scrapped and licensed beekeepers should be able to access national parks in perpetuity. The 20-year extension seeks to strike a balance between the opposing views expressed in the submissions that the State Development and Regional Industries Committee received in relation to the extension of beekeeping in national parks. The extension will minimise impacts to honey production and crop pollination services by providing the industry with continued access to those sites until 2024. The extension will also provide time to work together to investigate the options for transitioning beekeeping to other suitable lands outside of national parks—lands that may currently be inaccessible or under-utilised—and to work on solutions to the issues raised during the committee hearings, such as the management of feral colonies of bees in tree hollows in national parks.

Since the bill was introduced we have all seen the devastating news about the varroa destructor mite being detected in hives of European honey bees in New South Wales. Fortunately, the varroa mite does not target native bees. The mite is a parasite of the European honey bee and poses a significant threat to Australian beekeeping and the horticultural industry if it cannot be eradicated. I take this opportunity to encourage all Queensland beekeepers, whether they are commercial or recreational beekeepers, to monitor their bee hives for signs of the varroa mite. Details about how you can check hives and report the results can be found by visiting the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries website or the Business Queensland website. Early detection and reporting will provide the best opportunity to respond, contain and eradicate any incursions of the varroa mite.

As I mentioned earlier, the committee's report contained two recommendations. The first recommendation was that the bill be passed and I thank the committee for that recommendation. The second recommendation relates to amendments that will extend beekeeping in national parks. The report recommends that the department develop a clear and accessible guideline for beekeeping on sites in national parks within the next 12 months to ensure potential risks to the natural environment are appropriately managed. It also recommends that the department adopt a clear strategy and plan to identify and secure alternative apiary sites over the period of the 20-year extension.

As outlined in the government's response to the recommendations, the department has established an interagency working group to address those issues. The working group currently includes representatives from the Department of Environment and Science, the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, the Department of Resources and the Department of Transport and Main Roads. The interagency working group has commenced preparing a draft code to ensure best practice is implemented to minimise the potential impacts for beekeeping while it continues in national parks. I can advise that the draft code will be circulated for targeted consultation with representatives from the beekeeping industry, the conservation sector and relevant First Nations groups. I anticipate that it will be finalised in the near future.

The department will continue to work with the interagency working group to investigate opportunities that may exist on other land tenures to relocate beekeeping out of national parks. It will also consider whether there are any other initiatives that may support the industry to progressively relocate beekeeping from national parks over the next 20 years. The department is also working with the industry to develop a standard landholder agreement template. This will be for beekeepers operating on lands where there is no existing permit framework so that they may produce this agreement as evidence of the use of the land in the future, if required. This will support the continuation of beekeeping on the land if the land is dedicated as national park in the future.

I move on to the amendments in the bill that deliver a range of other outcomes within the portfolio. The bill will enhance the capacity of the Department of Environment and Science to respond to misconduct in Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service managed areas such as marine parks, state forests, national parks and recreation areas. In recent times there have been several instances of people misrepresenting themselves as a ranger in Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service managed areas. In one instance, a person claiming to be an off-duty ranger took the vehicle registration details of a visitor and threatened that they would receive a fine in the mail. In another instance, a person in a ranger-like uniform told people that they could not camp in a site they had booked and that they had to find another site.

Such situations have resulted in what should have been an enjoyable experience for these visitors to our national parks turning into an unpleasant one. These instances of ranger impersonation also tarnish the reputation of the genuine rangers of the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service who work hard to provide a pleasant environment for visitors in the state's national parks and play a critical role in managing these places, which generate \$2.6 billion in visitor spending annually, supporting 17,000 jobs. New offences are therefore being provided for impersonating a forest officer or a ranger.


Clarification is also provided that the existing obstruction offences under the Nature Conservation Act 1992, the Marine Parks Act 2004 and the Recreation Areas Management Act 2006 also apply when a person obstructs an officer appointed under these acts in the performance of their functions, not just when the officer is exercising a power under these acts. This will apply in instances such as when an appointed officer starts to make inquiries to ascertain the circumstances around an issue that has arisen and people become abusive, threatening or intimidating to avoid answering questions. The new and amended offences will provide a suitable deterrent to these inappropriate behaviours that are emerging in the community and allow the Department of Environment and Science to take action against this type of misconduct.

No concerns were raised about these amendments in the public submissions received by the committee. However, the statement of reservation from the non-government members of the committee expressed their view that providing for the issue of a penalty infringement notice for impersonating a ranger would provide a more streamlined and effective approach than seeking to prosecute a person through the courts. Based on current whole-of-government principles applied for prescribing penalty infringement notices, the complexity and seriousness of these offences makes them unsuitable to be prescribed as penalty infringement notice offences. As with similar impersonation and obstruction offences in legislation applying in Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service managed areas, the evidence and circumstances of each alleged offence will be considered on a case-by-case basis to determine whether a prosecution would proceed through the court.

Other amendments in the bill will correct several minor errors and relocate certain regulatory provisions to the Nature Conservation Act. These amendments will relocate into the Nature Conservation Act from subordinate legislation provisions relating to powers of conservation officers to seize and deal with seized things and administrative provisions relating to approved forms and internal and external review decisions. The relocation of administrative provisions into the act will streamline the legislation by removing replication across these regulations. The relocation of seizure provisions into the act will ensure powers are unambiguous and also not distributed across multiple statutory instruments. These provisions have been redrafted to be consistent with contemporary drafting standards but there are no policy changes associated with these amendments, meaning existing powers and processes are unchanged and there are no new powers or processes. No concerns were raised about these amendments in the submissions or committee report.

The amendments will also streamline the process for making consequential amendments to the Wet Tropics Management Plan 1998. This will remove a duplicative consultation process and allow consequential amendments to subordinate legislation to be made in a timely manner. An outdated version of the Intergovernmental Agreement for the Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area is also being removed from the Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993. The intergovernmental agreement will be replaced with a definition indicating that the latest version of the agreement can be found on the Wet Tropics Management Authority's website. This allows any future changes to the agreement between the state and the Commonwealth to be updated on the website in a timely manner without having to amend the act. The changes will also correct minor errors and omissions in the Wet Tropics act. No concerns were raised about these amendments in the submissions or committee report.

Overall, the committee was satisfied that all of the amendments in the bill were appropriate and fit for purpose. Passage of the bill will fulfil the Queensland government's election commitment to introduce amendments to the Nature Conservation Act to grant a 20-year extension to allow beekeeping in national parks, until 31 December 2044, in areas where beekeeping was an existing use prior to the transfer of land to national park. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr O'CONNOR** (Bonney—LNP) (3.34 pm): The Liberal National Party will be supporting the Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022, but I will be moving a simple amendment during consideration in detail to remove the arbitrary time limit proposed in the bill which will give more certainty to Queensland beekeepers. The primary objective of the bill is to deliver on the government's commitment to provide a 20-year extension permitting beekeeping in certain national parks to continue until 31 December 2044. The Nature Conservation Act of course exists to implement management principles to protect areas of ecological significance. Most activities occurring in these areas are not related to conservation—and are clearly contrary to that—which is why we need the exemption for beekeepers that is before us today.

At the outset, I thank committee members for their work on this report. They all know who they are, but I give a special shout-out to the members for Lockyer and Ipswich West, who I understand treated themselves to some honey tasting. I think they were the only two members who undertook honey tasting—all varieties! They also undertook some honey tasting in the Scenic Rim.

We also support the committee's recommendation that the Department of Environment and Science develop clear and accessible guidelines for beekeeping on sites in national parks within the next 12 months to ensure potential risks to the natural environment are appropriately managed. I welcome the minister's response with the establishment of that working group.

I will go through a bit of a history of managed honey bees in Queensland, because it gives us a good context for this debate. The European honey bee was successfully introduced to mainland Australia in 1822. It is disputed when they first came to Queensland after that, with some sources claiming it occurred just a couple of years later, alongside settlement in 1824, and others saying it took a decade or so, but by 1851 there is printed evidence that they were well established in our state.

From their first introduction it took roughly another century for them to become widespread, as beekeepers were able to travel across our state more easily. Initially they were introduced for honey and wax. While they were not primarily imported for pollination, they were seen to play a key role in providing complementary pollination services for the broader agricultural sector that we have had since European settlement.

Beekeepers are proud of what they do. As is the case for many in our agriculture sector, theirs is often a multigenerational practice. In the area of the Gold Coast that I represent we have a strong history of beekeeping. It is worth highlighting because it is emblematic of why the industry values so highly the sites we are discussing today. One Gold Coast story that I found was about the Mills family.

They got into beekeeping in 1890 when their son, who was 11 at the time, chased a swarm for nearly five kilometres before the bees finally settled. With the help of someone slightly more experienced than a kid just chasing some bees, he hived the swarm and built up further hives. One hundred years later, the Mills family is still operating this family business out of Southport.

In the committee process for this bill we also saw a diary extract from Charlie Stevens, the grandfather of Jacob Stevens, who is the current Queensland Beekeepers' Association president. I acknowledge Jacob's presence in the gallery today alongside the association's secretary, Jo Martin. In 1960 Charlie wrote—

Shifted 126 hives to Southport on Biggera Creek. Tea tree not budded well, doing well on blackbutt. Just about finished. 586 hives at Southport by 11/4/1960.

That was all happening around my electorate of Bonney. Biggera Creek is today in Biggera Waters, 'biggera' being a Yugambeh word mean 'red ironbark tree'—they used to line that creek. It goes through to Labrador as well. For someone living in these parts of the Gold Coast, it is strange to imagine that so many beehives were in those areas and that it was such an underdeveloped and remote site—the fringe of civilisation back then. It was not the sort of place you would imagine having an apiary site today.

In the neighbouring area of Southport we also had the birth of a staple of any household pantry, Capilano Honey, with Tim and Bert Smith setting up hives on their property in Radford Street. It is incredible to think that such a huge, nationally known brand started from a residential property in the middle of what is now modern Southport. It was founded in 1953. Capilano is named after the part of Canada where Tim met his wife, Jill. They packed their honey under the house and sold it through an honour box on the front gate. To think that this is where such a massive brand started is extraordinary.

Like many places, the urbanisation of these areas over those 60 years has been exponential and activities like beekeeping have been driven out. This is one of the challenges our beekeepers have faced, particularly in the south-east of our state where they have been pushed to different locations due to urban sprawl and the associated loss of trees and therefore loss of food sources for their bees.

Many beekeepers moved their hives into state forests as they provide the perfect source of food for their bees, which cause minimal disruption to the natural environment and in those areas the bees are protected from harmful chemicals. These sites became essential apiary locations. The complication came around 20 years ago when many of these state forests were converted to national parks. The further protections for conservation brought complexity for the apiary sites that were there.

I outline this history because I think it is important to remember that beekeepers did not set up sites in existing national parks. They were operating sites that were later converted into national parks many years after they first had apiaries in them. To support the transition of state forests to national parks under the South East Queensland Forests Agreement, the Nature Conservation Act was amended at the time to allow beekeeping to continue in these areas until 31 December 2024. This transition period was put in place to minimise the disruption to the beekeeping industry and provide time for the relocation of beekeeping to other sites.

That is how we ended up here today where we have commercial beekeeping occurring in 49 national parks at just over 1,000 locations with, I believe, 649 currently permitted apiary sites. The idea was that in the 20 years from 2004 alternatives would be identified. It is unclear just how much work has been done by the state government to find those potential alternative sites, but, regardless, they have not been found. From what stakeholders in the beekeeping industry have told me, they have gone to great lengths as an industry to find new sites.

As beekeepers travel thousands of kilometres across our state to check on and move their various apiaries, they knock on every door they can to see if a property owner has space for hives. This is not a case of beekeepers sitting back and expecting the government to accommodate them in national parks. They actively look for other sites. They do all they can to find them in alternative locations, but it is becoming more and more difficult to find sites that match these.

Apiary sites have very specific requirements. They need to be within proximity to high-value floral resources. They are often impacted by extreme weather events. They need to be away from harmful pesticides and monocultures. National parks also have a variety of trees that often do not exist on freehold land. The beekeepers I have spoken to say that this allows for happy bees because the trees flower at the right times, providing just the right food they need. While beekeepers work closely with the agriculture and horticulture industries, some farming practices can be hazardous for bees such as when pesticides and monocultures are used.

With the limited number of alternative sites, the ability for beekeepers to continue to use national parks is critical. Beekeeping Australia has said their businesses would not be viable without the use of national parks. In fact, apiaries in national parks are fairly normal in other states. Beekeepers in New South Wales and Victoria, for example, are not limited to historical approvals. They can establish new sites.

Our sites will only become more important in Queensland with the recent outbreak of the varroa mite around Newcastle in New South Wales. This is an important biosecurity aspect that we must consider. Until now we were the last remaining major beekeeping country in the world to not have suffered the devastating impacts of this parasite. New Zealand was the second last country to be free of varroa mite, but this changed in the year 2000 and it is now found across both islands and will never be wiped out. The long-term impact of the outbreak over there is estimated to be almost \$600 million. That includes wiping out the operations of around half of their beekeepers. I have been told so far the Australian outbreak has led to the destruction of over 8,000 hives, which is roughly only half of what will need to be destroyed as part of the 10-kilometre radius from each outbreak being cleansed. New South Wales is our nation's largest beekeeping state and the movement of bees over the border is, for the moment, rightly banned. This must be stringently monitored.

A recent story in the *Weekend Australian* outlined the effect this infiltration will have on just one part of our agriculture sector. The article referenced the Almond Board of Australia which said that their Victorian growers will be around 70,000 hives short of what they will need for optimal pollination. The \$600 million Victorian almond crop will now have only around half of the required number of hives it needs to be adequately pollinated. This biosecurity situation and the stopping of bee movements over state borders, which will continue until when—hopefully not if—the varroa mite can be eradicated from New South Wales, will make our shortage of hives even more challenging. We will need every apiary site we can get to help maximise the efficiency of our agricultural practices.

We also cannot underestimate the value of beekeeping more broadly. Beekeeping supports over \$2 billion in value to the Queensland economy each year. The Australian Food and Grocery Council has said that, on a conservative estimate, two-thirds of Australia's food crops rely on the pollination services of professional apiarists and the bees under their care. As our horticultural industries grow, reliance on pollinating bees is also growing, with many beekeepers turning away requests because they simply do not have enough bees to service the crops they are being asked to help grow.

The committee report showed the dependence on honey bees for pollination. Some 18 varieties of crops are 100 per cent reliant on pollinating bees. For the almond industry in our state, which is one of the crops that is 100 per cent reliant on pollination services, 275,000 hives were required nationally in 2021 alone. Around 30,000 hives travelled to southern New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia for those crucial pollination services.

The committee also heard from the Australian Macadamia Society that macadamias are Queensland's most valuable horticultural export—currently worth \$180 million to our state's economy, with 1,500 jobs supported throughout Queensland. The macadamia industry is undergoing the fastest growth in its history with around 4,000 hectares per year being planted, predominantly in Queensland. Production is expected to double in the next decade, which could add a further \$150 million to the Queensland economy. Pollinating bees will be essential to facilitating this growth. These crops are huge for Queensland and are only two of many more that are reliant on pollination through commercial beekeeping.

We have seen a considerable number of industry bodies come out in support of beekeepers through the committee process for this bill: Beekeeping Australia, Monson's Honey & Pollination, the Crop Pollination Association of Australia, Growcom, the Australian Food and Grocery Council, Melons Australia, Cotton Australia, the National Farmers' Federation, Ausveg, the Australian Macadamia Society, the Almond Board of Australia and the Queensland Beekeepers' Association—we would expect them to be supportive. That is just some of the groups that expressed their support in submissions to the committee.

Commercial beekeeping in Queensland is also migratory. Bee hives are transported to multiple areas to meet the nutritional needs of the bees. Hives will be in an area with significant floral resources—that is, flowering plants that provide nectar and pollen for bees—for a period as short as six weeks before being relocated as part of a two- to five-year cycle.

Within this migration, beekeepers will make their way through national parks, undertaking maintenance to access paths and trails as they go. There is no evidence to show that these beekeepers are environmental vandals in these practices. They care for our national parks and, in fact, it is in their interest to assist with these management activities. They help monitor the condition of our parks. If

there was any evidence that honey bees were doing damage to national parks, we would need to balance the needs of this industry and protect our national parks with incredible sensitivity. However, we are without evidence of the negative impact of honey bees despite two decades of the current system alone being in place.

I was not convinced by submissions to the committee from the Gecko Environment Council and the Wildlife Preservation Society of Queensland. They both essentially said they do not want this to happen in national parks, but are happy for it to occur elsewhere. They could not point to any evidence about the supposed impact of this activity on Queensland's national parks. In fact, one of those submissions only cited one investigation from New South Wales which specifically excluded commercial beekeeping from its consideration.

There is a big difference between feral bees and those managed by professional beekeepers. It is also a bit of a not-my-problem approach. If these groups are genuinely concerned about the impact this will have on our environment, why are they advocating for it to occur anywhere else but in the 8.21 per cent of Queensland classified as a protected area? Surely if this impact is what they believe it to be then they should not want it to happen in any part of Queensland's environment. I note there were no submissions opposing the bill or raising any concerns from other key conservation or environmental organisations such as the National Parks Association of Queensland or the Queensland Conservation Council.

A 2020 University of Sydney study for the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service on the effects of commercial honey bees on native flora and fauna found that the exclusion of commercial beekeeping from national parks would not materially impact the density of feral bees and that the impact of commercial bees over and above the impacts of feral bees is likely to be small in most cases. Under their recommendations, they believe that 'on the balance of probabilities the presence of commercial colonies is unlikely to pose additional stresses on ecosystems beyond those caused by feral bees.' They do emphasise, however, that they base this on an absence of evidence rather than evidence of absence. Until this changes, until evidence is produced showing there is an unmanageable and detrimental impact on our national parks and the precious ecosystems they contain, we should not penalise beekeepers and our wider horticultural industries.

As I foreshadowed, the LNP will be moving an amendment to remove the time limit on the exemption to the Nature Conservation Act. As I have said, beekeeping is often a multigenerational industry. As younger generations are coming through, many questions about the long-term viability of this industry in Queensland are being asked, and many beekeepers are choosing to take other paths. Victoria and New South Wales have no time limit on their provisions for beekeeping in national parks, just as I am proposing with my amendment. This has shown clear support for their industries and it has allowed them to grow, with Queensland beekeepers even looking to expand south of the border as there is increasing certainty and freedom for their businesses.

Despite the benefits of commercial beekeeping to our economy and many other related industries, beekeepers are still feeling there is a stranglehold over their industry with these ongoing 20-year time limits. Many beekeepers will openly tell you that they are telling their kids not to go into the business, to look at other options because they do not know if there will be a future for the industry in Queensland.

We have heard this week about the Queensland Workforce Strategy—*Good people good jobs*. Beekeeping supplies good jobs but the average age of beekeepers is, as I understand it from the association, about 55 to 75 years old. Of course Jacob and Jo are well below that and are some of the youngest in their industry! We need to support the next generation coming through. We cannot lose this industry to southern states because we cannot lose the pollination services that many other sectors rely on as well.


Again, until the evidence changes, there is no reason why Queensland beekeepers should be held back. If clear evidence does become apparent, that having these activities occur in national parks is harmful, then this should be reconsidered, which any future parliament or government could do. Until such time, there is no need for an arbitrary end date such as the one being proposed in the bill. Our amendment is a minor change, but it is important because it sends a strong signal to this industry, showing our parliament's support for them and the wider parts of the agricultural sector that they, in turn, support.

The secondary objectives of the bill are, as the minister outlined, administrative in nature, being: to enhance the Department of Environment and Science's ability to prevent and respond to misconduct in areas managed by the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service by creating offences for impersonating or obstructing forest officers; to relocate powers of officers to seize and deal with seized things from

subordinate legislation into the Nature Conservation Act; to amend the Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993 to reflect intergovernmental changes from the Australian government review of the COAG councils and ministerial forums; to remove duplicate consultation processes when amending the Wet Tropics Management Plan as a result of changes to the Wet Tropics Act; and to correct minor errors in the Nature Conservation Act and the Wet Tropics Act.

It is disturbing to hear recent examples where visitors in national parks have come across people pretending to be rangers, acting in a disreputable and threatening way, damaging the reputation of those hardworking rangers. I recently spent some time on K'gari which was incredibly valuable. I stayed for a couple of days and got a real picture of what life is like for the rangers who operate out of there. They work tirelessly on an incredibly diverse range of tasks from using heavy machinery and managing the wildlife to the maintenance of camp sites and barbecues. I hope to visit more national parks in a similar way in the near future to get an idea of how things are at ground level. Penalising people who impersonate and denigrate the work these rangers do is something that we strongly support.

The other objectives of the bill are administrative and do not change existing policy. To wrap up, I believe Queensland has the greatest environmental assets of our nation and we will always support its conservation. We want genuine measures that will make a real difference to ensure our environment is protected for generations to come. That will come through an evidence based approach. It is about getting the balance right. Here, with an absence of evidence of damage, we can enable the beekeeping industry to continue to do what they are doing without harming our national parks.

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (3.54 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. This bill contains a lot of common sense but, in thinking deeply about it, it is also a bill about transition. It is useful to reflect on this transition over the last 20 years.

Firstly, I thank the committee for the work they have done on this bill and also our secretariat. We really enjoyed examining this bill, and I thank the minister for that. We did meet some amazing and dedicated people within the industry. I acknowledge Jo and Jacob from the Beekeepers' Association who are here in the gallery today. I also give a shout-out to Charlie, the bee man, from Pomona who I met through the community in Deception Bay. He is another great advocate for the industry.

We did learn a lot about the industry. The committee made two recommendations: clearly that the bill be passed and, secondly, to make sure that we do everything we can over the next 20 years to get the land resources that are needed by the industry and that can be dedicated to the industry.

I talked about common sense before. Here are some things that we do know. We do need the extra 20 years to get this right. The hives, as we have heard, were there on lands that were part of state forests before they became national parks. The minister has addressed how we need to work—and have started to work—over the next 20 years to secure the land resources that are needed for the successful continuation of this industry.

Another thing we know is that these sites in national parks are of great benefit to the industry. As we have heard, it gives bees an opportunity to rest from their productiveness and it gives them an opportunity to access a range of floral resources that make them healthier. As we have heard, there is no insecticide in these areas so, once again, that contributes to happy and healthy hives.

Something else that we know and that became apparent during the examination of this bill is the benefits of the beekeeping industry to agriculture. As we have heard, we have this relatively new crop in Australia of almonds. They 100 per cent rely on bees to pollinate this crop. As we have heard, nearly 300,000 hives are needed to service this particular industry. In Queensland, avocados 100 per cent rely on bees to pollinate to produce fruit. The pollination services that this industry delivers create over \$2.1 billion in value to our agricultural industry.

We also know that the principles behind national parks are important, and that is the preservation of the natural condition of Queensland's natural estate. We are talking about the purpose of conservation. National parks are not there just to generate an economic return. They are not there just for recreation purposes. They are not there just to service our agricultural industries.

During the examination of this bill we were given an example of where commercial or feral bees in national parks may be in conflict with some animals who need those nesting hollows. We have heard that science is yet unsure of the impact of feral bee colonies in those areas. No doubt there will be some more work done on that in future years.

Having said all of that, we have seen that the beekeeping industry has minimal impact on our natural estate. We have seen them use existing tracts and existing clearings. As we have heard, there are currently nearly 1,000 sites in national parks. I have talked about why we know this bill is full of common sense, but this bill also highlights that we have gone through a state of transition over the


last 20 to 30 years. One of those transitions has been how we treat national parks. Ever since the Goss government back in the 1980s and 1990s, there has been a greater emphasis on protecting our natural estate. Under Labor governments we have seen more national parks declared, we have seen more land purchased to become national parks and more high-value state forest converted to national parks. That is a real transition, increasing the natural estate in Queensland and making sure it is used for conservation purposes.

Another part of the transition we have seen is the pressure on our natural estate, our natural areas. We know that the value of extractive resources is going up all over the world. Companies all over Queensland are looking for more ways to extract minerals and other resources from our land. We know about the pressures on forestry. We have heard the forestry industry talk about their need to secure access to hardwood resources and how they want to keep our state forests open so they can extract those resources. We have seen pressures especially in South-East Queensland. With the expansion of our urban footprint, we have seen that some of our best natural areas are needed for urban development. We know there have been some big bites and small bites taken out of that natural estate within South-East Queensland, but every bite puts pressure on the beekeeping industry and other similar industries.

Today we have heard about other pressures we may not have foreseen. We know that people love camping in our natural areas and national parks and we look at the pressures we are seeing on K'gari, Fraser Island. In fact, there is so much pressure that we now have people impersonating rangers in order to move people on from favoured camping sites, which is quite astonishing. We are now at a point where we need a law specifying that impersonating a ranger is now an offence. There are increasing pressures throughout Queensland. One of the things that we do know is that bees create \$64 million in honey production each year, and that contributes \$2.1 million to \$2.4 billion to our agriculture sector. The agriculture sector is worth \$23 billion to our economy. This bill does contain a lot of common sense, but it is also wise to reflect on the transitions that are putting pressure on industries such as beekeeping.

I want to conclude by addressing the LNP amendment that the member for Bonney circulated. I want people to understand that if that amendment is passed it would open up national parks in perpetuity forever. That does clash with the cardinal principle of national parks; that is, nature conservation. I want to address the primary purpose of national parks. The worldwide arbiter for protected areas categories is the International Union for Conservation of Nature. That defines category 2 protected areas, national parks, as protected areas that are large, natural or near natural areas set aside to protect large-scale ecological processes along with a compliment of species and ecosystems characteristic of that area.

The primary objective of a national park is to protect natural biodiversity along with its underlying ecological structure. That is an internationally accepted framework for national park management. An amendment such as this, even though its intentions are good, has broad and unknown implications for the management of national parks across all industries across this state. I do not know if members opposite have considered the implications of such an amendment, but I want to point out that this amendment has broad and unknown implications at this stage. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr McDONALD** (Lockyer—LNP) (4.05 pm): It is a privilege for me to rise and speak on the nature conservation bill. It was a pleasure for me to be part of the State Development and Regional Industries Committee and the inquiry process into this bill. I would like to pay my respects to the work of our secretariat and the committee as a whole. I thank my colleague, the member for Burleigh, for his deliberations and consideration in our preparation of the statement of reservation to the bill. As the chair of the committee said, there were only two recommendations, and one was that the bill be passed.

The concern that the opposition has is the issue of the 20-year extension. I would like to also pay tribute to Jo Martin and Jacob Stevens, who are in the gallery here. It was Jo Martin, Jacob Stevens, Brad Jensen and Robert Dewar who accompanied the member for Ipswich West and me on a subcommittee field trip to the Scenic Rim where we inspected a number of sites. It was through that process that we gained a very rich understanding of the apiary process. After that process I now refer to apiarists more as botanists. They certainly spend their days driving around looking at trees trying to find floral blooms and sources of nectar to feed their hives. It was also very interesting to understand just how much effort apiarists put into keeping their industry alive. I like to refer to them as the heart and lungs: the hive. They spend so much time making sure that their well-looked-after hives are fed and watered each time they move. That is why it is so important for us to have so many sites.

It was also through that trip that we gained a greater understanding. There was a stand of yellow box on one of the Stevens' family hive sites that had only been used once in 23 years because that was the only time it had bloomed and it was suitable to put hives there. Through that process we gained a great understanding of the necessity for a broad range of these sites.

We are standing here talking about this bill today partly because of a desire to see state forest moved across into national parks. I welcome that, but we also must not erode the principles of why those state forests were there in the first place and why the beekeeping industry has been so successful in those areas in providing all of those environmental services not only in our state forests and national parks but also to all of our horticulture industries. It is recognised that \$2.8 billion in pollination services are conducted by these bees. As our shadow minister properly identified, there are 18 varieties of nuts, fruits and vegetables that are purely pollinated by bees. If you have ever had a smashed avocado you will want to thank the bee industry, because they are helping those pollination services right across the country.

I will also just mention the threat of varroa mite and the importance of having such a broad range of sites available. As our shadow minister rightly said, without a buffer zone around each of those sites the number of sites available would be decimated if varroa mite was found to have come from New South Wales, where it is now, to Queensland. It is vitally important that we continue to ensure a diversity of sites right across the state.

One thing we also understood from this inquiry and I gained some understanding of from our site visit was the importance of the medicinal uses of honey. All of us in the House have probably heard of manuka and its medicinal uses against bacteria. It is an Australian product. Many people think that because of the name it might be a New Zealand product, but it is native here. There are only a few varieties of the leptospermum, the tea tree species, that are able to be used to produce manuka honey. It is a very good product. Robert Dewar explained a lot to us about that process while we had the opportunity to drive around with him in the vehicle.

This bill affects 49 national parks, all of which were state forests at one stage, and 1,100 sites in that. That might sound a lot, but those sites are absolutely necessary to allow the beekeepers to be able to move the hives to the source of food to keep those hives alive and provide the honey for us to consume. That process has been happening for hundreds of years.


I want to stress to the minister, however, that 100 of those 1,100 sites are not able to be accessed right now because of the lack of funding and lack of maintenance of the road network in the national parks. That is a key thing. I have been fortunate to travel to a number of states and New Zealand and visit their national parks and natural areas. They invest in those places to make sure they have well-activated visitor information centres and good road networks and trail networks, because all of that makes the experience. I want to see the Queensland government invest to make sure Queenslanders, Australians and overseas visitors coming to Queensland can enjoy them and have a great experience. It is vital that we maintain that road network.

In relation to that road network, there is something that members in the House might not be aware of—that is, the actual service the apiarists provide in terms of natural surveillance and making sure people do not do the wrong thing in our state forests and national parks. This is an important service, as well as the fire detection and fire prevention measures they provide. They are regularly the first people on site to see a fire and report it and get our great urban fires out to address the issue.

I want to stress again the importance of this bill in relation to those national parks. The chair mentioned the amendment that our shadow minister will move with regards to seeing these sites kept in perpetuity. I respect the cardinal principle of national parks, but we cannot allow the fact that these were state forests that have been rolled into national parks to mean that we cannot change the status of being able to use these parks for appropriate uses, just because of some lofty principle. If we want to see the best practice use of national parks, then it is about use—not just by tourists and visitors but also by apiarists and the like.

In the short time I have left, I want to mention the issue of impersonating officers. Whilst the committee welcomed those new offences being there for the department to be able to use, we also highlighted the very cumbersome approach of a complaint and summons process. By the time officers get permission to take prosecution action and go through a complaint and summons process, the time has passed and they probably find it difficult to track down the offenders. That is why we made recommendations that a penalty infringement notice be used for those officers. It would be a very simple process for them to be able to address and I am sure the operational effectiveness of being able to take prosecution would be much better.

In closing, I want to stress the importance of the amendment to keep these sites in perpetuity, like what has happened in Victoria. The Victorian government has worked closely with their beekeepers to be able to see those sites kept in perpetuity. That is something the Queensland government should do. I ask the minister to go back and look at her diary to see how many times she met with the Queensland beekeepers. If she knew the importance of this being in perpetuity, then it would be.

 **Mr MADDEN** (Ipswich West—ALP) (4.15 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. The bill was tabled by the Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Youth Affairs on 24 February 2022. In accordance with standing order 131, the bill was referred to the State Development and Regional Industries Committee. The committee tabled its report No. 19 to the 57th Parliament in April 2022. The committee made two recommendations. The first was that the bill be passed. The second was that the Department of Environment and Science develop clear and accessible guidelines for beekeeping on sites in national parks within the next 12 months to ensure potential risks to the natural environment are appropriately managed, and that it adopt a clear strategy and plan to identify and secure alternative apiary sites over the 20-year extension period.

The bill will amend a number of acts, including the Forestry Act 1959, the Marine Parks Act 2004, the Nature Conservation Act 1992, the Nature Conservation (Animals) Regulation 2020, the Nature Conservation (Plants) Regulation 2020, the Nature Conservation (Protected Areas Management) Regulation 2017, the Recreation Areas Management Act 2006, the State Penalties Enforcement Regulation 2014, and the Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993 for particular purposes.

This bill deals with a wide range of issues concerning national parks, including the powers of rangers, but the primary purpose of the bill is to deliver on a commitment this government made to the Queensland beekeeping industry. This bill will provide up to a 20-year extension to existing arrangements that enable beekeeping to occur in certain national parks, those parks being where the national park was former state forest land. The extension applies to areas where beekeeping was existing prior to the transfer of the land into the national park estate.

The current arrangements are due to expire on 31 December 2024; however, the government is providing industry with greater certainty by extending these arrangements for up to 20 years, to 31 December 2044. In addition to providing certainty regarding future access to beekeeping sites on national parks, this extension will also provide time to examine options for transitioning beekeeping activities to other lands outside of national parks in the future—areas such as private forest land and water reserve land, just to mention two possibilities.

It was clear to the committee from the submissions it received that beekeeping plays an essential and valuable role in Queensland's horticultural and food industries. The committee also acknowledges that national parks provide the conditions necessary for honey bees to thrive. That said, the committee acknowledges the views of environmental groups that beekeeping is inconsistent with national park management. To that end, the committee recommends that the department develop clear and accessible guidelines for beekeeping on sites in national parks to appropriately manage any potential risks to the natural environment. The committee acknowledges the complexities associated with identifying alternative apiary sites outside of national parks but is of the view that more substantial progress should have been made over the past 20 years to identify and acquire alternative apiary sites. The committee therefore recommends that the department adopt a clear strategy to identify alternative sites. As the Queensland Beekeepers' Association said in their submission dated March 2022—

The Queensland beekeeping Industry is grateful for the extension to access National Parks until 2044. This extension will ensure the food security for 5.2 million Queenslanders for another 20 years. The extension period will also provide the Government and Industry additional time to reach a more secure and perpetual arrangement allowing beekeeping activities to continue in Queensland's crown land native forests, critical to the future of beekeeping in state, and indirectly benefitting everyone that calls Queensland home.

The Queensland Beekeepers Association (QBA) acknowledges and thanks the department of Environment and Science for their comprehensive independent review of scientific literature with relations to the effects of managed honeybees on native flora and fauna.

The QBA looks forward to continuing to work with government as part of the review of National parks Apiary sites going forward. The QBA also implores the government to perfect the legislation by committing to negotiating Indigenous Land Use Agreements with traditional owners and providing the Traditional Owners and Beekeepers certainty into the future.

The success of the Queensland's horticultural industry is underpinned by abundance of healthy bee colonies for pollination, resulting in contributions up to \$2.8 billion to the Queensland economy through managed honeybee pollination services...Whilst honey production has long been the major focus of beekeepers in Queensland, significant growth in horticultural industries have seen exponential growth in demand for paid pollination services.

One of the horticultural crops that is absolutely reliant on commercial bees is the almond industry. No bees means no almonds. As the almond industry said in its submission—

The Almond Board of Australia (ABA) would like to indicate their support for the above amendment.

The Almond industry has recently expanded to over 58,500 hectares in 2021. The industry continues to supersede annual production with 124,439 tonnes produced in 2021/22 and forecast for 2025 predicted to exceed 187,000 tonnes. The value of the almond industry to the Australian economy was recently assessed by consulting firm RMCG based on 2019/20 figures at 0.1% of the nation's GDP.

That is just the almond industry. The submission goes on—


The industry is heavily reliant on commercial beehives to pollinate more than 17 million almond trees across Australia. The almond industry estimates 275,000 hives were required to pollinate almond blossom in 2021 and is likely to need a further 60,000 beehives as recently planted trees mature.

I was interested to read the Bundaberg Fruit and Vegetable Growers' submission. They detailed the crops that are 100 per cent reliant on commercial beehives for pollination. They include avocados, blueberries, grapefruits, cucumbers, pumpkins, macadamias, rockmelons, watermelons, mangoes and, surprisingly, Brussels sprouts. Those crops cannot be produced without commercial beehives. I should mention that while avocados are a good source of honey, it is not particularly tasty. This is a good example where the farmer benefits more from the pollination service of the apiarists than the beekeeper does for the recovery of honey.

In its submission, the Australian Honey Bee Industry Council outlined the problems that the commercial bee industry currently faces, stating—

The Australian Honey Bee Industry Council Strategic Plan (2018-2023) states that National Resource security is the biggest issue facing the Australian Beekeeping Industry today. The loss of access to vital floral resources has had a significant impact on our industry for decades. This continues today, land clearing, timber harvesting, urban sprawl, broadacre chemical usage, fuel reduction burning and wildfires have all contributed to this loss.

It would be remiss of me not to mention the subcommittee apiary site inspection undertaken by myself and the member for Lockyer in April 2022. The facilitators were Jacob Stevens, president of the Queensland Beekeepers' Association; Jo Martin, the secretary of the Queensland Beekeepers' Association; Robert Dewar, past president, Queensland Beekeepers' Association; and Brad Jensen, member of the Queensland Beekeepers' Association. They did a great job and went to a lot of effort to accommodate myself and the member for Lockyer. We visited beekeeping sites on the Main Range National Park and kitted up completely to inspect hives at the Moonview Special Management Area. I would like to thank Jacob, Jo, Robert and Brad for a great experience, and I am very pleased that they are here tonight. I commend the bill to the House, but I do not support the amendment by the member for Bonney.

 **Mr KATTER** (Traeger—KAP) (4.25 pm): I rise to make my contribution on the Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. I was lucky enough to be on the committee for this one and gain some insight into the bee and honey industry. I should also thank Jo and Jacob. I thought they made an excellent account of themselves in the industry and put forward their arguments in a very succinct way. I also thank Scott Sheard, or Bluey the Beeman, as we call him in Mount Isa, who was always very forthcoming with his views on the industry, albeit modest industry in the North West.

I would like, in the initial part of this contribution, to share my reflections on part of the committee process which is a commentary on the government and the culture that is cultivated in our departments. I was really, I would almost say, angered by the fact that there was such a focus on the environmental impacts of this, as there should be—I have no problem with considering the environmental impacts—but then when DAF gave us their input into this bill, there was no acknowledgement of the potential impact or otherwise of what happens if there was not this 20 years granted or if there were not these sites available.

This is a pretty big deal—a \$2.8 billion contribution to the fruit and veg industry. It is pretty highly impactful on the performance of our agriculture in this state. That would be a time, I would have thought, for the department of agriculture, which I would say advocates that position, just as the department of environment advocates for the environmental attributes or impacts of that bill, to be saying, 'Well, hang on, this could be a problem because if we don't have these bee sites, it could do this, this and this to our industry.'

After poking and prodding, there was some reluctant response to that, but it really annoys me that that is not at the forefront of the information given to MPs. Not all of us are privy to conversations of farmers who have a natural acknowledgement or intuitive idea of what this could mean and the impacts involved. It could be really difficult for me to get across some of the big city issues and,

inversely, it is very hard for some city MPs to get across what this means out in the country areas. It is really annoying when officers in this parliament are not forthcoming and really up-front with this. I cannot help but say that that represents a bias against some of these industries out there. I make that comment because I was pretty wound up about that at the time.

I would say thanks to the government for the 20-year extension. That is a good move. We have to be appreciative that it is there. I would also agree that it should be in perpetuity, of course, but it is not all tears; we have 20 years left.

I will recap on some of the critical points from some of the early contributors. We are talking roughly around 1,100 sites over an ever-expanding national parks footprint about which the government has always been very up-front when it comes to their will in this regard. To put a bit of context around the footprints, we are talking about 600 square metre sites which, for Mount Isa, is a modest house block, but a house block size in hundreds of thousands of acres of national park in some cases.

In regards to the environmental value of national parks, it is great to have national parks and to try to preserve those environmental values, however the derogatory term used up north for National Parks and Wildlife is 'national sparks and wildfires'. Some of them are not maintained well and there are some questionable outcomes from the department of environment in those parks. They have the best intentions, with some great officers in there, but they are under-resourced, and you will get that from a hell of a lot of Parks officers out there, that they are under-resourced and that there are plenty of environmental problems there with pigs, cats and introduced pests and weeds.

There are enormous problems out there. We are talking about bees. However, we have not found any strong evidence of the damage they have done over the past 100 years, so I am not too sure why this was a big deal at all. It should have just been kicked straight through, but here we are again. I am grateful for the 20-year extension, but it should be longer.

Biosecurity is a big issue, so it makes sense to be expanding on that diversity by having that wider displacement. We are never going to be using all of the 1,100 sites. As much as we hope that agriculture will expand by that much, it is good to provide for that option. As was mentioned earlier when there is a blossoming and a flowering and a concentration of rainfall in the area, then the hives can go in there. It is the same with cattle stations; you do not use all of the cattle station all of the time. When you have an oversupply of feed, that is when you put the stock there to eat it down. There is plenty for everyone and then you take them out. We are talking only about the rotation of hives here. Quite surprisingly, they are placed for six weeks and then rotated every two to five years. That is a site of 600 square metres for six weeks every two to five years. That is a really minor footprint for something for which we cannot find evidence of its impact after 100 years. That provides a bit of perspective to what we are talking about here.

There is enormous benefit to the fruit and vegetable industries in macadamias, which seems to be exploding everywhere. Some of those numbers are really startling. This is an education for me about the impact of bees on productivity. For almonds and apples there is 100 per cent dependence on honey bees; for macadamias it is 90 per cent. This is from the report *Analysis of the market for pollination services in Australia* by the Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation. The dependence is startling.

One of the submissions stated that the contribution pollination makes to these industries is questionable. I found that curious because there seems to be a load of evidence that it does make a contribution. There is a large number of people spending a great deal of money on the pollination service for something that apparently has no impact, so that was a curious statement.

Another thing that has not been mentioned so far relates to backyard beekeepers. Not to be disparaging of the backyarders, but there is a pretty large number of backyarders—private beekeepers—doing their thing. There is a pretty big risk from that. We are focusing here on the operations of commercial beekeepers, who are a lot more invested in varroa mite and American foulbrood, some really invasive diseases for the bees. There is just as much risk of those diseases coming from those beekeepers in urban, peri-urban or rural residential areas. That is something else to be mindful of when making a decision on this.

Most of the other key points have been covered by other speakers. I just go back to the point about biodiversity and the huge threat of the varroa mite. One great way to diversify is to ensure those sites—they are not all necessarily going to be used. There is no great, big corporation about to expand and use 1,000 new sites immediately. It is fairly modest operators who operate within that space that contribute to a great industry overall. It is fairly well regulated and we would not expect a huge expansion in the near future beyond what is there now. We would hope for that, but we would not expect it. To be

able to diversify around those forests rather than have a diminished number of sites is a really important way to strengthen our biosecurity. I say well done on the 20-year extension. However, there is no reason it should not be done in perpetuity, and that is what I think we should do.

Mr SMITH (Bundaberg—ALP) (4.34 pm): I am glad we are debating this bill: firstly, obviously because it is good for our beekeepers and our growers that they will be able to see this happen; and, secondly, because finally committee members will no longer need to put up with all of the puns. 'Oh, member for Bundaberg, your committee must be a buzz.' 'Oh, it must be a hive of activity.' Finally that will stop.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SMITH: I will take the interjections. Does anyone have another pun?

Dr Robinson: Sweet.

Mr SMITH: It is sweet; I take that pun. Member for Oodgeroo, well done.

Mr Hunt: 'Be-hive' yourself.

Mr SMITH: We will move on, member for Caloundra. In all seriousness, this is an important piece of legislation because it does ensure that our beekeepers can continue to do what they do well, and that is create jobs within the agriculture and the horticulture sector. It is very important. I will probably talk about how this bill will have a positive impact in the Bundaberg community. I really do want to thank the Bundaberg Fruit and Vegetable Growers for their submission.

Mr Madden: An excellent submission.

Mr SMITH: It was an excellent submission; I take the interjection from the member for Ipswich West, who is not in his seat and should be kicked out for that! In all seriousness, the Bundaberg Fruit and Vegetable Growers are an excellent organisation. They look after our local growers throughout the Bundaberg community but also across the Wide Bay. It does not stop with just the growers. They are looking out for not only those businesses and growers in fruit and veggies as well as the nut and the herb growers, but also all of the businesses along the supply chain that support our agriculture and horticulture industries. It is very important that we do remember there is a supply chain to our growers. That is why it is so important that we are extending this by 20 years. The humble honey bee actually pumps billions and billions of dollars into Queensland's economy each and every single year.

I really enjoyed BFGV's submission because they spoke about the Wide Bay in particular, which is Queensland's most productive irrigated agricultural region. In fact, they state that we lead the state in our output of citrus and avocado and we are also the largest producing region in Australia for sweet potato, macadamia, chilli and passionfruit. It is vitally important for the good growers in the Wide Bay community that this bill is passed, especially when we talk about our economic recovery and moving forward out of COVID-19, a time that really hit our growers quite hard.

I know that the member for Hervey Bay is in the chamber. He loves the Wide Bay as well. I say to him that our Wide Bay region actually contributes \$1.5 billion to Queensland's economy through our agriculture and horticulture.

Mr Tantari: Huge!

Mr SMITH: I take the interjection from the member for Hervey Bay, who knows how important it is to support businesses across the Wide Bay.

What we know in Bundaberg is that we need to continue to support our agriculture growers. It is not just about what is on the farm; it is that value-added product as well. It is that advanced manufacturing innovation space that we need to continue to support. This bill actually does that with the 20-year extension. I note that the minister for regional manufacturing is in the chamber. I am really glad that he is because he was a part of the extension to NewFresh Foods. NewFresh Foods are based at the AustChilli site along Goodwood Road in Bundaberg and they have AvoFresh, which is a great product. It is the squeezy avocado which I am sure many members have seen—I know that the member for Burleigh is nodding enthusiastically; he is a big supporter. I did a video the other day promoting how important this product is. It saves 60,000 avocados that otherwise would not be picked up by the major retailers. They might have a blemish or it might not appeal to people who shop at Coles or Woolies. They value-add 60,000 avocados into a squeezy product. People can spread it on their toast or crackers—whatever they prefer. Not only are they preventing that food waste but they are generating more jobs as well.

It was absolutely wonderful that the minister was able to be there with me as we announced the Made in Queensland grant of \$1.91 million for NewFresh Foods so they can expand their capacity and support 52 jobs. We know this is on the back of that humble honey bee. It is all about the humble honey

bee, and that is why this bill is so important. Think about that in terms of the billions of dollars just because of one little insect. I point out to the member for Hervey Bay that it is an insect because it only has six legs.

Mr O'Rourke: That is correct.

Mr SMITH: That is correct; I thank the member for Rockhampton.

Mr Tantari: It is the teacher coming out of you.

Mr SMITH: It is the teacher coming out of me. I also want to say how important this bill is for Farmfresh Fine Foods, which is another fantastic organisation. They were supported through the Jobs and Regional Growth Fund. The Jobs and Regional Growth Fund—

Mr Hart: Back to the bees.

Mr SMITH: This is about the bees because the bees ensure we can have our growers. As Bundaberg Fruit and Vegetable Growers said, it is about that innovation and manufacturing space as well.

It is actually creating jobs. Bundaberg Fruit and Vegetable Growers were keen to submit to this bill because they understand that it creates jobs throughout the region. The Made in Queensland grant and the Jobs and Regional Growth Fund are supporting those value-add companies. Not only are they investing in farming; they are investing in value-add products as well. Through the Jobs and Regional Growth Fund, 24 jobs were created at Farmfresh Fine Foods—24 locals employed, all because of the bees.

Mr Tantari: They do heavy lifting.

Mr SMITH: That is right: they do the heavy lifting. You might even say that at Farmfresh Fine Foods they are 'busy bees'. The Deputy Premier and I visited and saw that they are doing an amazing job.

To drive home the importance of the 20-year extension in this bill, Bundaberg Fruit and Vegetable Growers cited that as at 2020 the state demand for bee colonies was 91,000 colonies, 40,000 of which were in the Wide Bay-Burnett region alone. That is why this bill is so important to the people of my community, as is advanced manufacturing and ensuring we are creating more jobs.

The member for Traeger spoke about macadamias. Bundaberg is in a state of revolution. For so long sugar cane was vitally important to that community and in fact grew the community of Bundaberg—it is still very valuable and important and we of course want to support our sugarcane industry—but more and more growers are moving into macadamias. While that does present a challenge in terms of the need for more water—I will talk to that in a moment—Marquis Macadamias and Macadamia Australia, two fantastic Bundaberg companies, are benefiting from us looking after the beekeepers and their hives and colonies, because it means more jobs. For instance, Marquis Macadamias are doing a \$13 million expansion that will increase their processing capacity from 12,000 tonne to 15,000 tonne—a major increase in capacity. The Palaszczuk government contributed to that expansion through the Jobs and Regional Growth Fund.

Mr NICHOLLS: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on the issue of relevance. I have read the long title and nowhere does it mention Bundaberg; it is about national parks. I accept that we have had a long foray into bees, but perhaps it might be appropriate to bring the member back to discuss the long title of the bill rather than the merits of Bundaberg, which I am sure we can all agree on.

Mr SMITH: I find it disappointing that the member for Clayfield does not find Bundaberg relevant.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Member for Bundaberg, I am listening to the point of order. Could you resume your seat, please. You are warned, by the way. Member for Bundaberg, not only are you warned under the standing orders; I advise you to come back to the long title of the bill, please. Remain relevant to it.

Mr SMITH: Bundaberg is very important to this bill. As I have mentioned, in submission 23 to the committee Bundaberg Fruit and Vegetable Growers talk about how important this bill is not only because of the growers but also because of the advanced manufacturing that allows for the value-add products that our Bundaberg growers produce. I am sorry if the LNP do not find Bundaberg relevant. I am sorry if they do not find our growers relevant. I am sorry if they do not see the importance of ensuring the bees are pollinating so that—

Mr NICHOLLS: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Again I raise the issue of relevance. With respect, the member is not addressing his comments to the long title of the bill. He seems to be arguing the point.

Ms PEASE: Point of order—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will take your point of order and then deal with both of them together.

Ms PEASE: My point of order is that the bill relates to the fact that bees are required to pollinate agriculture.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Lytton. That is not a point of order. It deals with relevance, which is the point of order I already have from the member for Clayfield.

Honourable members interjected.


Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The level of conversation has been getting a little high, so I would ask all members to please keep that to a minimum and respect the speakers on their feet.

Member for Bundaberg, having taken advice from the Clerk, in referencing submissions you are in safe territory. However, I would ask you to please bear in mind that this is about bees and national parks and remain relevant to that issue as it relates to the bill. I was listening carefully to what you said and you were speaking about submissions, but please bear that advice in mind. You have one minute and 22 seconds remaining.

Mr SMITH: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I will ‘bee’ very careful not to stray! The Australian Honey Bee Council has the motto ‘healthy forest, healthy bees and healthy people’. We want to make sure we are looking after our beekeepers so they can continue to look after our agriculture industry and our horticulture industry. This then ensures we are creating more jobs on the ground. Through our schools and TAFE programs, we are getting young people into the agriculture and horticulture industry, which simply does not exist without bees. In fact, there is no plan B without our bees!

As I mentioned, the submission from the Macadamia Society spoke about the importance of bees to macadamias. In fact, there is 100 per cent dependence by macadamias on pollination. That is important to my community. Water is also important. Water security plays a huge part in agriculture. One of the things we are doing to ensure water security is restoring Paradise Dam. I know that the LNP do not think Bundaberg is relevant—we heard it here today—but to me Bundaberg is very relevant.

(Time expired)

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (4.46 pm): I rise to talk about the Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. It is refreshing to hear a Labor member talk in a positive way about agriculture, unlike a lot of city Labor MPs. It is great to hear the member for Bundaberg praise his region and his agriculture. I am sure that the gentlemen and ladies from the bee industry sitting in the gallery did not come to hear the member for Bundaberg wax lyrical about what happens in his electorate. They came to hear about the changes this bill will make to our laws and to the way we keep bees in this state. In fact, there are a couple of other issues in this bill that the member for Bundaberg did not touch on, including the impersonation of parks officers in national parks. The government is tackling those issues.

I want to speak about the committee process and about bees. That is what this bill is mainly about. With regard to the way the committee process works, government members can wax lyrical about this being a bipartisan position or a decision of the committee to accept or pass a bill, but we all know that the committees are structured with three members of the Labor Party and three non-government members, with the casting vote going to the government chair. Of course, committee reports always deliver the outcome the government wants to achieve. That is how the system has been set up by this government, and it will never change while we have Labor in government.

There are some other very important items in the bill apart from issues around bees. I have spoken briefly about that, but I want to return to the main issue, which is the \$2.8 billion bee industry. The government has known since 2004 that this was a problem. What if we had left this until later in the year? In 2024, this \$2.8 billion bee industry could be collapsing. We could be having no macadamias, no avocados and no watermelons. The member for Ipswich mentioned a whole lot of things that we could be having none of if the bee industry started to collapse.

Although national parks have been mentioned a lot tonight this bill is actually about some national parks, and they are the national parks that were converted from state forests over the last 20 years. Beekeeping was allowed in those state forests—it is still allowed in state forests—but those state forests had their names changed to national parks and all of a sudden they became a sacred cow where you could not keep a little bee. The issue is that tonight this government wants to extend this for another 20 years. The argument that the shadow minister put forward that we take that date out and make this a perpetual situation makes a lot of sense. In fact, I would take it a step even further and say let us bees into our national parks in total.

Before the minister starts spruiking wildly about national parks, the deputy director-general of national parks, Mr Klaassen, appeared before the committee and we asked him exactly why bees were being banned from national parks. He said that it was inconsistent with the management principles of national parks. We wanted to know why it was inconsistent with the management principles of national parks and he said that it was a policy position of the government. Our next question of course was, 'Let's find out from the government why they've chosen this as a policy position. Let's get the minister in here.' However, the leaders of the committee decided that we did not need to get the minister to appear before us and that it was all too hard. I would remind those opposite that when we were in government from 2012 to 2015 plenty of ministers briefed committees. When we were in government ministers appeared before committees and explained their positions to committees, but we do not have any Labor ministers come along and explain their positions.


Tonight the minister told us that research was carried out in 2018, remembering of course that this situation started in 2004 and it is supposed to be banning bees from national parks in December 2024, 20 years later. In 2018 there was some research into what effects there are on national parks from bees and, heaven help us, there is no information. There is nothing—there is zero—that tells us that having bees in a national park is a problem. If the government thinks that this is inconsistent with the way to deal with a national park—to have a tiny little bee in there—then why has it not done the research to prove that? I think that is a very good question.

It has had 20 years to do the research to prove that those little bees cause a problem. It has had 20 years to search for other places where these bees could be kept, yet it has failed at that as well. Twenty years and the government cannot find anywhere else for these bees to go. What makes us think that in the next 20 years it will find somewhere for these bees to live, because it has not managed to find somewhere in the last 20 years and it sure as eggs—sure as bees—will not find any places to put them in the next 20 years? People in the bee industry have hunted around trying to find places to put their bees. They cannot find any. Why not just leave them alone and let them get on with their business?

People in the bee industry have had this hanging over their heads now for the last 20 years, and it has been accelerating. It was going to be a problem in 2024. These people are running a business. They need to borrow money and convince banks that they are a profitable business and they need to know that they have a place to put their bees. They need to buy their bees and they need to shift them from one place to another, or otherwise this \$2.8 billion industry is at risk of failure. We have put these people under a lot of stress because we have given them no certainty to move on.

We are now going to give them another 20 years of certainty, but I do not want to see these people back here again in 20 years fighting exactly the same fight over and over again. Let us give them this in perpetuity. Let us pass the amendment that the shadow minister is putting forward. We need to let this industry know that it has more than 20 years of a business to go. Let us not kill the \$2.8 billion worth of industry. Other states have managed to do this. Other states do not have a problem with having bees in national parks. I ask members to think for a second about bees in a state forest beside a national park. Bees do not go very far—I admit that—but who has told the bees that they cannot cross that fence into a national park, because they do not know that? They go in there; they come back out.

Really, for the sake of pollination of all of those products that we talked about before, this government is going to take an environmental stance against a little tiny bee. Let us give people in this industry the certainty that they need. Let us pass the shadow minister's sensible amendment. Let us get on with this and let us leave the bee industry alone.

 **Mr McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (4.55 pm): It gives me great pleasure to contribute to the Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. It certainly is a pleasure to follow the member for Burleigh and his industrious contribution to this debate where he suggested that over 20 years there has been a lack of work undertaken to find alternative sites for apiaries and beehives. I would note that over that 20-year period there have been several changes of governments and I would like to know exactly what the LNP did in relation to that matter during the time it was in government. It is clear—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr McCALLUM: We will get to that a little bit later. It is clear that beekeeping does play an important and valuable role and that national parks are providing conditions that are necessary for honey bees to thrive. The primary objective of this bill delivers on an election commitment in 2020 that the government took to the people of Queensland and received a mandate for to look at allowing beekeeping in specified national parks to continue up to 31 December 2024.

With regard to beekeeping in Queensland national parks, there are currently around 1,088 apiary sites across 49 of Queensland's national parks, with the most common sites in those national parks being in natural clearings, logging dumps or gravel pits. There are many constituents in Bundamba who are active participants in beekeeping and aviary sites. I know that many members in this place will have constituents who participate as avid apiarists. When it comes to the Bundamba community, I note that the Gatton National Park currently has three sites and the Lockyer National Park has 38 apiary sites. I have had some discussions with Bundamba constituents around the issue of apiaries and the beekeeping industry in Queensland in our national parks.

At the beginning of my contribution I want to acknowledge that when it came to the committee inquiry process into this bill the majority of stakeholders who took the time to participate in the inquiry supported the bill. However, there were some submissions from environmental groups which raised concerns with the bill and that beekeeping in national parks was against some of the fundamental principles that national parks have and that it has a detrimental impact, and I will make some more comments about that later. However, it is clear that national parks do provide a safe place for bees that is free from chemicals which can be used for a range of activities.

Debate, on motion of Mr McCallum, adjourned.

MOTION

Australian South Sea Islanders



Mr ANDREW (Mirani—PHON) (5.00 pm): I move—

That the House:

- (a) acknowledges that next week marks the 22nd anniversary of the Queensland Recognition Statement, in which certain undertakings were made to the ASSI community;
- (b) acknowledges that most of those undertakings were never fulfilled;
- (c) acknowledges that ASSI people continue to suffer a level of disadvantage on par with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, who many ASSIs share a common ancestry with;
- (d) expresses sincere regret for:
 - (i) the cruel deportation of ASSIs in 1906, the only group ever forcibly deported from Australia;
 - (ii) the raft of discriminatory laws passed in this House against ASSIs; and
 - (iii) the misappropriation of monies from the Queensland Pacific Islanders' Fund, containing the wages of 15,000 men who died while indentured in Queensland.
- (e) acknowledges that researchers recently discovered ASSIs had been victims of the same human trafficking and trade in body parts as ATSIs;
- (f) seeks that an expression of regret be made for this inhumane practice and that the government assist the community in the repatriation of those remains for respectful burial; and
- (g) notes that the member for Mirani proposes to table a bill for the implementation of special measures to reduce ASSI disadvantage in Queensland.

Next year will be 160 years since the first ship carrying South Sea islanders arrived in Queensland. Between 1863 and 1904 more than 50,000 islanders were brought to toil in the fields of Queensland for white farmers. Many were cruelly exploited, chained, beaten, starved and whipped. In the 1870s Reverend JC Kirby described seeing a group of chained islanders walking through Dalby without shoes accompanied by armed men on horseback and said it was like a scene straight out of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. I grew up hearing the stories of my Kanaka ancestors, the backbreaking work they did and the suffering they went through.

The South Sea islanders had the highest death rate of any other immigrant group to Australia—an astonishing 30 per cent. The deaths at the government run Kanaka hospitals in the 1880s were even higher, although the exact numbers may never be known. Islanders were terrified of hospitals, saying they would rather die than go there. A story by Paul Turnbull revealed that a Mackay Hospital superintendent was engaged in the scientific trade of South Sea islander remains and body parts. Over 200 autopsies were done between 1884 and 1885. Dr Charles Clarkson provided skulls and full skeletons to the Queensland Museum and possibly other institutions worldwide. This revelation has caused a great deal of shock and distress amongst the community.

Sadly, the crimes against South Sea islanders did not end with the 19th century. One of the first acts passed on Federation led to the forced mass deportation of islanders from Australia. The harrowing event has been described by historians as a crime worse than blackbirding itself. There are many horror stories from that time. For me the worst were the accounts of boats leaving islanders on the reef at low tide to perish rather than incur the expense of the long journey back to the islands.

Queensland has more than 40 pieces of racist legislation in relation to South Sea islanders on its statute books. These include restrictions on employment, voting, land ownership and pearl fishing. Another injustice involves our ancestors' stolen wages. The Pacific Islanders' Fund held all the wages owed to deceased islanders. It was meant to be held in trust and paid to the men's families on their deaths. Only 15 per cent of those wages were ever paid out to their families. The rest was misappropriated by the Queensland government and used to pay office expenses and later the cost of deportation. A report submitted to the parliament in 1905 gave the final balance of the fund's accounts as £39,363—an amount equivalent to about \$40 million today. We have found in some other places that the amount is much higher. No apology or restitution has ever been made to the community for these stolen wages. A 1992 report described South Sea islanders as a black minority living on the fringes of white society that suffer persistent and pervasive poverty on par with Aboriginal people.


On 7 September 2000, the Queensland government recognised South Sea islanders and committed to ensuring that present and future generations of Australian South Sea islanders have equality of opportunity to participate in and contribute to the economic, social, political and cultural life of the state. The government also said it would require its departments and other agencies to act on this commitment through their policies, programs and services. I think it is fair to say that none of these promises have been fulfilled, until recently when a bit of money was given across and some of that was a government department job.

Last year I oversaw the drafting of a private member's bill which introduced a program of special measures to assist South Sea islanders. I wrote seeking the Premier's support in obtaining a message from the Governor so that the bill could be tabled in parliament. The response I received from the Minister for Health and Leader of the House was short and to the point—

Due to the current fiscal climate, it would not be appropriate ... for the Government to support a Governor's Message for your proposed Private Member's Bill.

It was a bitterly disappointing response for not only me but also the other South Sea islanders who helped draft the bill. South Sea islanders remain one of the most severely disadvantaged and neglected communities. We are not just another migrant group. The Kanaka story has been one long history of cruelty and injustice in Queensland. Real action is needed to bring this dark chapter in this state's history to a close.

This motion calls for the undertakings made in the Queensland recognition statement 22 years ago to be honoured. It should be honoured as soon as possible. I find it offensive and unfair that our people have to trade in their own identity to access any sort of funding. They are administratively ethnicised in government paperwork. Two years ago, a 97-year-old ex-serviceperson died on a dirt floor in Ayr, one of the richest towns in all of Queensland. It is a shame.

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

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

- (a) acknowledges that next week marks the 22nd anniversary of the Queensland Recognition Statement made by then premier Beattie and that the statement recognises Australian South Sea islander people as a distinct cultural group and that it received bipartisan support at the time;
- (b) acknowledges that Australian South Sea islander communities hold a unique place in the establishment of Queensland's cultural and economic fabric;
- (c) notes that the Palaszczuk government has made meaningful financial investment in the recent budget to support Queensland's Australian South Sea islander peak body and community; and
- (d) notes that Australian South Sea islander peoples have been included in the Queensland Multicultural Action Plan 2022-24.'

Australian South Sea islander communities hold a unique place in Queensland's cultural and economic fabric, with an estimated 6,800 people with Australian South Sea islander heritage living here in Queensland. Many Australian South Sea islander people are Australian-born direct descendants of around 50,000 people brought to Queensland from some 80 Pacific islands as sources of labour on cotton and sugar plantations. Many of these people were kidnapped from their island homes, a practice known as blackbirding. They experienced harsh treatment and discrimination during a shameful time in our history.

Next year will mark 160 years since the first South Sea islanders were brought to Queensland. Through the hardship and discrimination faced by the community, Australian South Sea islanders have shown tremendous resilience and courage as a community. They have contributed significantly to the social, cultural and economic development of Queensland as a state. Their labour contributed to the

development of farming and grazing as well as the maritime industry, pearling, mining, the railways, domestic services and child care. They have also served the nation as members of the defence force in times of peace and war and for that we thank them and we honour their service.


Twenty-two years ago, on 7 September 2000, this parliament came together in a bipartisan manner to formally and rightly recognise Australian South Sea islanders as a distinct cultural group and acknowledge and regret the unjust treatment their ancestors endured. The Palaszczuk government has worked with the Australian South Sea islander community to establish and fund the Queensland United Australian South Sea Islander Council, QUASSIC, under former multicultural ministers, Minister Grace and Minister Hinchliffe. Since its registration in 2019, QUASSIC has been seeking opportunities to provide support to Australian South Sea islander organisations throughout Queensland and to provide a clear voice to government about ways to move forward and address disadvantage in their community.

Since being appointed Minister for Multicultural Affairs this important work has continued. My department has been working closely with QUASSIC and I have met several times in the past year alone with the president of QUASSIC, Clacy Fatnowna, to ensure that our Government delivers on its commitment to supporting better outcomes for Australian South Sea islander communities. I have also met with a representative of the Australian South Sea islander community in Mackay with the member for Mackay and the member for Mirani to discuss the issues facing the community.

We heard the calls from QUASSIC, Clacy, Australian South Sea islanders and the member for Mirani that more needed to be done and we are responding. This year we are providing \$75,000 to QUASSIC to deliver a number of activities to support Australian South Sea islander organisations and communities, including the development of protocols to support respectful engagement with Australian South Sea islander people.

During budget week I also announced \$1.1 million over four years and \$170,000 per annum ongoing to strengthen recognition of and services to Australian South Sea islander peoples in Queensland through support for projects and activities to address current levels of disadvantage faced by the community. The funding will deliver specific measures including co-designed research into the current level of disadvantage experienced by Australian South Sea islander people; consideration of the adoption and implementation of cultural protocols for government engagement with Australian South Sea islander people; a dedicated position, the first of its kind, in my department that will work across all departments in Queensland and community to drive initiatives on behalf of community; and funding to assist QUASSIC to develop its role as a peak body.

We cannot right the wrongs of the past but together we can shape our future and build on the benefits Australian South Sea islander people bring to Queensland's lifestyle and economic prosperity. I would like to thank the member for Mirani for raising these important issues. I also warmly acknowledge the leadership of Clacy Fatanowna and QUASSIC as we continue to move forward and address many of the state and federal issues raised in the original motion.

 **Ms CAMM** (Whitsunday—LNP) (5.11 pm): I am pleased to contribute to the debate on the motion moved by the member for Mirani. On behalf of my community and Ray Braithwaite OAM, who was integral in gaining federal recognition for those he represented, as well as his family, I thank the member for raising what I know is an issue that he is very passionate about. I also thank him for sharing the stories of and engagements with our local Australian South Sea islander community.

As a former deputy mayor of Mackay, I know how important it is to the people of my community that recognition is more than just words and it is more than just statements made by a minister. Surely it is a whole lot more than just \$275,000 a year, which would barely pay for two full-time community coordinators let alone cover any of the issues that have been addressed in the motion moved by the member for Mirani.

I remind the House that Australian South Sea islanders were not officially recognised as a distinct ethnic minority group until the Commonwealth gave that recognition in 1994 following the advocacy of our then local member, Ray Braithwaite. The Queensland parliament formally recognised the Australian South Sea islander community in July 2000. I note, as did the minister, that that was bipartisan. That recognition was supported by Rob Borbidge from our side of the House, who was the then opposition leader.

I also remind the House that in that time I held government for less than five years. Let that be a testament to the Labor government, which has failed the Australian South Sea islander community in terms of committing real and meaningful resources to support a community that has given so much to this state. I look forward to hearing the contribution of the member for Mackay because our Australian South Sea islander community built our sugar industry. The shameful act of blackbirding, for which all of us in this state should hang our heads in shame, was the foundation of what is now economic

prosperity. We talk about wealth and economic prosperity. We would not have a sugar industry if it were not for the hard work of those men and women, whom my grandfathers and great-grandfathers worked alongside.

I recognise the continuing advocacy of MADASSIA, the Mackay and District Australian South Sea Islander Association. That organisation has done so much to educate our local community and people more broadly. One project that I was pleased to support was led by one of my colleagues, Councillor Fran Mann, and one of the most respected members of our Australian South Sea islander community, Starett Ve'a Ve'a. The coordinated unmarked graves project gave recognition to 114 unmarked graves in the Mackay cemetery. Panels and plaques recognised and honoured individuals' names and their passing. I acknowledge the enormous work done by the cultural and heritage committee that was set up to deliver that project in partnership with MADASSIA.

I also acknowledge another significant contribution that has been made by my local community with the production of a television series called *Black Snow*. The series will focus on and showcase Australian South Sea islander history. Not only did the South Sea islander community make an enormous contribution to the foundation industries in this state; every single day they continue to make an enormous cultural contribution to our community and to the state of Queensland. Filming began earlier this year. *Black Snow* will be released on Stan. It will tell the stories of the people. Recently filming occurred in my local town of Proserpine. I hope it brings awareness and greater education to people across our community.

The greater Mackay region has the largest population of Australian South Sea islanders in the state and I say to those opposite that they deserve more than lip service. I ask the minister to not just meet with the member for Mirani but come and spend time with my community. We ask for tangible and practical outcomes across all government departments. Across health, across education and across justice we need real engagement. This is an opportunity that has been ignored for far too long.

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Tourism, Innovation and Sport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics and Paralympics Sport and Engagement) (5.15 pm): I rise to speak on the minister's amendment. I acknowledge that next week marks the 22nd anniversary of the Queensland recognition statement made by then premier Beattie, that that statement recognised the Australian South Sea islander people as a distinct cultural group and that it received bipartisan support at that time. In fact, I participated in the events that occurred 22 years ago, along with a number of other people who were passionate supporters of the recognition of Australian South Sea islanders.

I also acknowledge that in 2020, as multicultural affairs minister, I joined the Premier to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Australian South Sea islander community being formally recognised as a distinct cultural group in Queensland policy. I acknowledge that the member for Mirani was part of that recognition and that celebration a couple of years ago. Along with other colleagues in the parliament, including the former leader of the opposition, we came together to reflect and celebrate with the Australian South Sea islander community.


The reality is that these acknowledgements do not erase the harm done to South Sea islanders in the 19th and early 20th centuries, the continued impacts of discrimination and the results of those acts in the decades since. However, they are crucial moments in righting those historical wrongs. They are the right steps to take. We have heard from the minister about the other steps we are taking to support QUASSIC to be a genuine holistic voice for a community that has been disrupted, dismembered and challenged as a consequence of the discrimination it has faced. A government empowering the community to have its own voice is a better way forward than having a group in this chamber make the decisions. Let us work with the groups. As a government, it is our responsibility to keep all of those wrongs fresh in our minds and to also keep the recognition statement fresh in our minds. We must ensure that its importance continues to be recognised and that we continue to value the role and contribution of the South Sea islander community in Queensland.

Our Australian South Sea islander people mostly were brought to this country as blackbirded indentured labourers to toil specifically in the sugar and cotton industries from the 1860s to the early 1900s. I acknowledge that the first group arrived and were set to labour in Logan Village. This is a whole of Queensland thing. I know a lot of areas in North Queensland have a continual community, which is very important and they make a very important contribution to the nature of those communities, but this is a whole-of-Queensland story.

The people came from the proud and culturally rich regions of the South Pacific—areas such as what we now know as the Solomon Islands, New Caledonia, Vanuatu and, indeed, the islands of Kiribati and Papua New Guinea. They lived in hardship and faced awful not just discrimination but also degradation. They did so as a result of decisions made by this place, without consultation with those

people, in the Polynesian Labourers Act 1868. We need to make sure that, going forward, we enact decisions in consultation with the community that will be affected and QUASSIC provides support for that process.

Historically, it is very important to appreciate that the success of agriculture—indeed, the success of industry—has been achieved, and huge amounts of wealth globally have been amassed, off the back of unpaid labour. That is a global phenomenon. The Australian South Sea islander experience is the local Queensland example of that global injustice. It is a global injustice that we need to be conscious of in everything that we do. All of the industries that are the beneficiaries of that should be conscious of and responsive to that globally. These are issues we need to be conscious of and focused on being responsive to globally. I highlight that I would love to see—I congratulate the member for Mirani for always being an advocate in space—his political party recognise that this is an issue of injustice to many peoples across the globe. I commend the amendment to the House.

 **Mr KATTER** (Traeger—KAP) (5.20 pm): I rise to speak in support of the motion moved by the member for Mirani. I make the observation that it must be a source of pride to have such a unique heritage and to be, as I understand it, the first South Sea islander representative in this place. What a unique privilege it is to represent one's heritage in this manner. I think most contributions to this debate have been respectful of that fact. Good on you for that.

A lot of this has been an education for me. My experience with South Sea islanders was pretty slim and related mostly to Rugby League fields. I remember 'Butch' Fatnowna gliding along the Rugby League grounds in the nineties. The member for Mirani introduced me to Clacy Fatnowna, a relative. The reach of South Sea islanders extends from the sugar industry through to culture and sport. Absolutely magnificent athletes have come out of that region. The extent of my knowledge was not great, and I have had a real education from getting to know the member for Mirani, who has always been in our ear about this issue and wanting some action.

I do know that there is nothing like having a person on the ground, a local MP, to see if things are working. There can be some good intention from the government to get that support there, but is it working, is it effective or can it be done better? That is why we are here today, because the member for Mirani would say that it can be done better. I would very much go ahead strongly with that. Some of the stories we have heard are absolutely horrific. To that end, on behalf of the member for Mirani I table the documents that outline the skeletal remains and the reports of the doctor in question associated with some of these horrific actions.


Tabled paper: Document, dated August 2022, titled 'South Sea Islander Mortality in Mackay' [[1253](#)].

Tabled paper: Bundle of documents relating to South Sea islander peoples' history in Queensland [[1254](#)].

It was a dark part of our history. I think it is important to recognise that. That brings us to the present. I reflect on my own experiences in Aboriginal communities with our First Australians. They are very different problems but, again, I see value in having a local on the ground, where the rubber hits the road, in order to help. Setting up a body or allocating money is great, but you want to know what tangible things will help. When you are at Doomadgee or on Mornington, you want to know about how to address things like youth crime, health services, grocery prices and the supply of fresh fruit and vegies for preventive health measures. Then there are things like home ownership, barriers to employment and blue cards, which we go on about ad nauseam. Where the rubber hits the road, certain things can make a meaningful difference. That can be put in a similar cultural context for South Sea islanders.

Measures need some context to have a material impact on the ground. I strongly believe that that is where the member for Mirani can add the value to the House, through this motion, and to the process. I know that there are a lot of things we can be doing better. I say that not from my direct experience of South Sea islanders, but there are similarities in the adversities or obstacles faced by our First Australians community.

I commend the member for Mirani for what I think is a pretty brave thing to come out on, addressing his own heritage in this place. I do think there are ways we can do things better. We do need to listen to local MPs on the ground, regardless of the party they belong to—KAP, One Nation, Labor or Liberal. It is important to listen to the debate on this motion and to the member. The KAP will be supporting the motion on that basis.

 **Mr SMITH** (Bundaberg—ALP) (5.25 pm): This is a unique opportunity to speak about a matter that is ingrained in our history but not always at the forefront of our minds in the present and as we move towards the future. I thank the member for Mirani for bringing this topic to what we call 'debate', but I think tonight it is more of a conversation. That is probably a better term for this. It is important that we have these conversations. The member for Mirani and I had a few conversations when we were


allowed into the Annexe. The member shared some of his family lineage and spoke about some of the differences in terms of South Sea islanders within the Mackay region, the Bundaberg region and across the Wide Bay. I thank the member for Mirani for bringing an important conversation forward. I note that even though members of parliament are in a privileged position, that privilege is not lost on the member. In fact, he is using that privilege to speak about those who have a history of having their privileges taken away. That is a very important element.

In saying that, I will not be supporting the motion; I will be supporting the amendment to the motion. I will outline my reasons. I echo the words of the minister in that Australian South Sea islander communities across Queensland hold a unique place in our history and in our cultural and economic fabric. There are approximately 6,800 people with Australian South Sea islander heritage in Queensland. While they are a unique element of our cultural and economic fabric, we cannot sugar-coat or hide from the past. We know that over 50,000 people, predominantly men, came from some 80 Pacific islands—primarily Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands—and that the majority were kidnapped. They were blackbirded or deceived into coming. On 7 September 2000, then premier Peter Beattie, with opposition leader Rob Borbidge and Speaker Ray Hollis, signed the Queensland government recognition statement, which recognises Australian South Sea islanders as a distinct cultural group.

It is sometimes said that, of those who reflect upon our history as a nation and as a state post European settlement, if we look negatively on the actions of some European settlers we have a black armband view of history. I do not believe that is so, because you cannot deny the past and have a strong modern Australia. You cannot deny the past and have a strong Australia of the future. I appreciate that the member for Mirani may well say that that is the intent of his moving this motion today. It is not about having a black armband view of the past but about acknowledging the past so that we can build a stronger modern Australia for a brighter future Australia.

I know that in the Wide Bay region South Sea islander communities were strong. We know that the horrendous practice of blackbirding did occur. They called it indentured labour, but it is not indentured labour if you are asking someone to sign a contract when they do not understand what they are signing or do not speak the language in which that contract is written. We know that blackbirding, even though it might have had a contract attached to it, should rightly be called slavery. We know that the actions taken on those South Sea islanders were the actions taken on slaves right across the British Empire. That was reflected in Queensland as well.

In my former role as a teacher I taught in Maryborough. Maryborough is a wonderful community. It is a strong community. What stunned me was that there were a lot of young people who did not know the history of Australian South Sea islanders in the Maryborough, Hervey Bay and Bundaberg communities. I took my school students to the cemetery and said to them that I wanted them to find the graves of South Sea islanders. They could not find them. Whilst Europeans have tombstones, the graves of our South Sea islanders are not marked. There is no trace of their name, history, heritage or culture, just a lot number. I appreciate that my five minutes are up, but I wish I could speak about this longer. I will be supporting the amendment moved to the motion today.

 **Mr BENNETT** (Burnett—LNP) (5.30 pm): We know that 150 years ago South Sea islanders were coerced, tricked and kidnapped before being bought to the shores of the Burnett River in Bundaberg for sale in the slave trade market. South Sea islanders were shipped to Queensland as indentured labour to work in the sugar, farming, railways and mining industries—all important industries that started with this labour. While some came willingly, many did not.

It is important that we acknowledge the contents of the motion moved by the member for Mirani as being significant and important. As has been said tonight, Queensland and Bundaberg became the reluctant home for more than 50,000 Pacific islanders. Of those 50,000 who were bought here, 16,000 died. That is a mortality rate of around 25 per cent. Sadly, the records for the islanders who were transported to our coast were destroyed.

Back in 2013 I worked with Brian Courtice and the then environment minister—the member sitting down the front—to commemorate 29 South Sea islanders who called Bundaberg home through obtaining heritage listing for their grave sites on Sunnyside property on Windermere Road. This is a property that is surrounded by a drystone wall that was built by these South Sea islanders. The 29 unmarked graves lie under two weeping fig trees planted by Edward Turner in 1874.

We cannot say for sure who lies beneath the ground on Sunnyside farm in my electorate, but we know that the South Sea islanders loved to come and sit under the historic fig trees. We also know that sadly one of their ancestors was hung from one of those trees. The heritage listing was a small step in the right direction to recognise the strong and special spiritual association that Sunnyside has with our

South Sea islander cousins whose ancestors lived, worked and died on the plantation. I acknowledge Brian and Marcia for their dedication to the historic recognition of South Sea islanders in the region. Having their property recognised was a tireless endeavour.

The dark days of blackbirding saw islander men and women live under extremely harsh conditions before the Pacific Island Labourers Act was legislated in 1901. This act made it illegal to import South Sea islanders after March 1904. We have seen Australian governments welcome islanders back over the years. We have had programs like SWP created in 2012 and the Palm program. That enabled more South Sea islanders to come to Australia for work.

I would have hoped that we would not see again the horrific practice of blackbirding in my electorate or anywhere in the world. Recently it has been revealed that a number of South Sea islanders have been subjected to slave-like treatment once again in the Burnett. The promise of better work and better pay meant several men were induced by non-approved employment firms to work illegally. It is alleged that the interstate contractor exploited workers after they came to Australia from Vanuatu with their families.


I am happy that the Minister for Industrial Relations is in the House. I have written to the minister today highlighting this practice. It is insidious. Unfortunately, these issues continue to plague our community. We should be embarrassed and upset by that. This employer has left those people with hardly anything to live on—no money. They are saying quite openly now that communication has been opened up that they feel like they have been used like their ancestors who were blackbirded under false promises in the 1800s.

I take this opportunity to thank motel manager Amanda Morris who has been working tirelessly with the Vanuatu community. She has been there every step of the way. She has uncovered exploitation and has helped the victims of this illegal operator wade through the chaos, bureaucracy and legal problems they face. Thank you Amanda for exposing these horrors. It takes people like Ms Morris to stand up for what is right, stand up against cruelty and stand up for the human rights of these workers.

That brings me to my final point about our South Sea islander relationship. It is important that we as a country do all we can to protect our neighbours and prevent modern day slavery. The recently signed security deal between the Solomon Islands and China has unleashed geopolitical convulsions of immense magnitude. There is a long history of shaping the recent deal, but questions remain. Most crucially, how can Australia correct the many past mistakes and move forward given the new regional reality? We cannot afford to continue to exploit people from these countries.

Now the geopolitical situation has become precarious, it is time to think about what major adjustments are needed to the way things are done. What is the most constructive way to offer foreign aid? It is time for Australia to offer nursing and education scholarships. It is time to try to compensate for the past wrongs through helping the South Sea islanders of tomorrow. It is time for Australia to take bold steps to reinforce its Pacific relationships and secure its strategic interests.

We have people living in the community who are scared and frustrated. This goes back to what the people who were brought here over 100 years ago and put into enforced slavery must have felt like. I congratulate the member for Mirani for bringing this motion forward. It has been a pleasure to have a five o'clock motion debate that is respectful and meaningful. I thank him for that.

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (5.35 pm): I rise to support the minister's amendment to the motion. Blackbirding is a shameful part of the sugar industry's history in the Queensland. People from the South Sea islands like Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands were forced or tricked into indentureships to work on the cane fields. I will talk about my experience with South Sea islander people in Mackay. We are talking about real people. We are talking about good people.

The first ships dropped their passengers off on one of the islands close to Mackay and they were brought to shore in small boats. Eventually when ships came up the Pioneer River they would land at the Leichhardt tree. This is where South Sea islanders marked the 150th anniversary of the first blackbirded people landing in Mackay. South Sea islander recognition day is also held each year. It is something I look forward to. Ship travel was not easy and many lives were lost. Life on the land was not easy and more lives were lost prematurely.

South Sea islanders who were not buried on farms were buried in the Mackay cemetery. It is the same history as Bundaberg. They are in unmarked graves. In 2016 with Work for the Dole program funding and community donations Starett Vea Vea and Elton Backo set about detecting the graves with metal detectors and placing headstones on each grave. Each headstone has a cane knife etched into it. The rows of little white headstones will ensure that the history of these people will not be lost. Sadly, not every grave was able to be named.

I was honoured to be invited to participate in the unveiling of these graves. This is one project that has embedded so much history into the lives of both the South Sea islander people and the wider community. The ceremony was bittersweet—remembering those who had been laid to rest and recognising the depth of talent that has descended from these ancestors such as doctors, nurses, a dancer in the Australian ballet, artists, musicians, teachers, principals and just about any career we can think of. The breadth of talent talked about at this ceremony and also the 150th anniversary was amazing. The talent continues on.


I had the pleasure of sponsoring Taleiyah Miniccon as the youth member for Mackay—a proud South Sea islander woman. She was also on the inaugural Premier's regional forum for Mackay-Isaac-Whitsunday. Not forgetting, she was also the school captain of Pioneer State High School and Mackay Youth Citizen of the Year.

Mabel Quakawoot, also a Mackay Citizen of the Year, was the first female South Sea islander of heritage to join the Women's Royal Australian Air Force in the signals department. She had a stellar career in teaching at Mackay District Special School and rounded off her teaching career in TAFE. She also told me that she was a great Rugby League player in her day and she played in the Rockhampton women's team against Mackay.

Elizabeth Warren was a recipient of a citizen of the year award and is a sister to the late Greg Sutherland. Greg, a Mackay great, was one of the team that was instrumental in getting funding for the Mackay Rugby League stadium in 2007. Greg championed education and training for disadvantaged youth. Sadly, Greg lost his battle with a long history of ill health in 2015. His commitment to the Mackay community was recognised with the major bridge crossing on the Mackay Ring Road being named in his honour.

Marcia Eves is passionate about preserving and marking South Sea islander history at the Rowallan Park trail with burial mounds. I have had the pleasure of having a tour through this area. Also, Marion Healy, a respected educator and talented artist, is teaching South Sea islander history in our schools. She has written a curriculum that can be easily picked up by any school. She was also a member of Mesh & Knots, who travelled to Brisbane in 2017 with me for an award ceremony. They won the highest award—the minister's award, which was awarded by Minister Grace Grace at the time. It was not just about the art; it was about the way that this group gathers the community together. I have so much to talk about but, unfortunately, I have run out of time.

(Time expired)

 **Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (5.40 pm): In speaking to the motion that has been put forward by the member for Mirani, I acknowledge that this issue is a very emotional one and close to the member for Mirani's heart, as a fourth generation South Sea islander. The member for Mirani is very protective of his heritage and in 2019 became an honorary Vanuatu tribal chief, which is a great honour.


Australian South Sea islanders are descendants of the Pacific Islands blackbirding trade that started in New South Wales in 1847 which resulted in the transportation of Australian South Sea islanders to Queensland in 1863. Between 1863 and 1904, around 60,000 Pacific islanders were forcibly transported to Queensland, where they laboured to create the sugar plantations of North Queensland. The member for Mirani's great-great-grandmother was one of those Pacific islander workers who was transported to Queensland to work in either the sugarcane fields or domestic services. As terrible as this period was, without the Australian South Sea islanders and the Italians, we would not have a sugar industry today.

From what I understand, there were at least 40 pieces of discriminatory Queensland legislation introduced between 1900 and 1940 which applied to the South Sea islanders who stayed on in Australia. Next week, 7 September is the 22nd anniversary of the Queensland government's recognition statement made in parliament by former premier Peter Beattie. I will not forget this date because I was born on 7 September.

I was very proud to have the opportunity to work with many South Sea islanders during my 20 years working on the Queensland railways. They were mates, extremely hard workers, tough as nails, very spiritual, had gentle natures and would do anything for anyone.

I was involved with the railway 'Silver Spike' team. One of the teams comprised all South Sea islanders who took out the Central Queensland championship and then competed in Brisbane at the Ekka and became the third best team in Queensland. During my railway and Rugby League years, I had the opportunity to work with so many South Sea islanders whom I have fond memories of and a huge respect for.

I commend the member for Mirani for his passionate representation of his people and for bringing this motion to the House. The KAP will be supporting the motion moved by the member for Mirani.

 **Ms LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (5.44 pm): I rise to speak in support of the amendment moved by the minister. I thank the member for Mirani for moving the original motion, which has brought on this dialogue in this place about a terrible part of Queensland's history but it is also about a very unique and distinct cultural group.

I acknowledge the 22nd anniversary on 7 September of the Queensland recognition statement made by then premier Peter Beattie. That statement recognises Australian South Sea islanders as a distinct cultural group. I am very pleased that the statement received bipartisan support at the time. I acknowledge the 28th anniversary of Australian South Sea islander recognition by the Commonwealth government on 25 August 1994. This is a very happy time for the Australian South Sea islander community in my electorate, with weeks of celebrations of this recognition all those years ago.

The Australian South Sea islander communities absolutely hold a unique place in the establishment of Queensland's cultural and economic fabric, with approximately 6,800 people with Australian South Sea islander heritage in Queensland. I was very lucky to grow up with many Australian South Sea islanders, playing netball and going to school together at Mount Archer State School. I have fond memories and I still have those friends today.

I am ashamed to say that, despite growing up alongside so many Australian South Sea islanders in my community, it was not until I was an adult that I learned the truth about what happened to them and their ancestors. Over 50,000 people, predominantly men, came from some 80 Pacific islands—primarily Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands—and the majority were kidnapped, blackbirded or deceived into coming here. It was absolutely terrible. I know, from talking with many of the people in my community, that there is ongoing intergenerational trauma that these people continue to experience as a result of what happened to their family.

I think it is important for all Queenslanders to know the truth about what happened to South Sea islanders who were blackbirded and treated as slaves in our state. I think of the quote—

Those who cannot learn from history are doomed to repeat it.

Those who do not remember their past are condemned to repeat their mistakes.

...

Those who fail to learn from the mistakes of their predecessors are destined to repeat them.

I think that quote is quite pertinent in this instance. Telling the truth means that we then know and understand our history and are less likely to repeat it and are less likely to be condemned to repeat it. We need to talk about what actually happened, be honest about what happened and have it taught in the school curriculum and education system as well. I learnt at school alongside many Australian South Sea islanders, yet I had no idea about what had happened to them and our history until well after I had finished school.

Despite the hardship and discrimination faced by the community, Australian South Sea islanders have contributed significantly to the social, cultural and economic development of Queensland. Australian South Sea islanders provided labour to help build local economies and key industries, including in Central Queensland. They contributed to the development of farming and grazing, as well as the maritime industry, pearling, mining, the railways, domestic services and child care. They have also served the nation as members of the defence force in times of peace and war.

I am incredibly proud to have a very significant Australian South Sea islander community in Keppel, in both Joskeleigh and North Rockhampton, and currently there is a month of recognition celebrations underway. The Australian South Sea islander community in Keppel are beautiful people. They are kind. They are very generous. They are family people. They are community people. They are gentle. They are connected. I love spending time with them. I am always made to feel so welcome.

On 21 August there was a combined church service at St John's Church in Ford Street. Then a flag-raising ceremony and elders luncheon was held at the Rockhampton Town Hall and the All Blacks Sports Club on 25 August. The Joskeleigh community celebrated on 27 August with a welcome to country by Aunty Sally Vea Vea and with entertainment by the Solomon Boys.

Then, on 28 August, the Rockhampton Australian South Sea Islander Community Association hosted its recognition day celebrations at the RASSIC Hall in Berserker. Uncle Boisy Little and Aunty Tarsha Bickey provided beautiful entertainment and an array of food. I am told that the cooks worked for hours to prepare all kinds of delicious dishes, which included a whopping 75 kilograms of roasted

vegies, 35 kilograms of five types of roast meats, yummy side salads and four hot dishes—chicken stir-fry, curry, spaghetti bolognese and rice. I thank the Australian South Sea islanders in my community and I commend the amendment to the House.

Mr HEALY (Cairns—ALP) (5.49 pm): I rise to make my contribution to this motion. I also support the amendment proposed by the minister. First and foremost, I would like to acknowledge the strengths, perseverance and courage of Australian South Sea islander people for surviving under the conditions in which they came to this country. Australian South Sea islander people have maintained a rich cultural identity throughout and across Queensland from beginnings that more often than not were nothing short of horrendous and absolutely deplorable. To the many Australian South Sea islander people who call Cairns and Far North Queensland home, I would like to say thank you for bringing so much to our community through so much hardship. Their contribution is significant and it is absolutely consistent.

I would just like to touch on a few points that the Minister for Multicultural Affairs touched on because this is important. Whilst it might not be seen as significant, it is absolutely important. Specifically, in this year's budget funding and projects were allocated and provided. This came about as a result of a number of people advocating. It includes \$1.1 million invested over four years and \$170,000 ongoing to strengthen recognition of services to Australian South Sea islander people in Queensland through support for projects and activities to address current levels of disadvantage faced by that community. These are telltale acknowledgements by government. We are investing in this. Also vitally important is a dedicated engagement officer who will be appointed within the Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs to develop and oversee the delivery of initiatives in collaboration with the Queensland United Australian South Sea Islander Council. This position will be an important link between government and Australian South Sea islander people to ensure their needs are understood across government.

This is all about engagement. It will build on existing work and see future opportunities, meaning better and more culturally appropriate service delivery. We understand the appropriateness of service delivery. It is something that we have been working on. I have been talking with the minister on a range of areas. The importance of understanding it is intricate to the delivery of it. We are also providing \$75,000 to the Queensland United Australian South Sea Islander Council for a number of programs and activities outlined in their business plan, including the development of protocols to support the respectful engagement of Australian South Sea islander people.

Next year, 2023, will also mark 160 years since South Sea islanders came to Queensland. I know that many of these islanders were brought to Cairns and Far North Queensland, and I am proud and honoured as the member for Cairns to be the representative of their descendants. I can tell you that I consider many of them close friends. Their involvement is integral to our community and the positive ongoing development of it.

The Queensland government also supported the establishment of the Australian South Sea Islander Community Foundation, which provides university scholarships for undergraduate students. I am proud to say that North Queensland's James Cook University is a participating university in this scholarship program and has been able to support a number of local scholarship recipients over the years. It is worth noting that since 2005 the Queensland government has provided funding through community action for a multicultural society program to support Australian South Sea islander communities. I can tell you that the LNP, who as you can see is not really here tonight, planned to cut that from their programs because that is what they do. They cut, they sack and they sell.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Pause the clock. Member, it is convention that we do not reflect on people's absence from the chamber.

Mr HEALY: On the other hand, and in the spirit of truth and healing, the Palaszczuk government is committed to building a state where everyone, regardless of culture, language or faith, is supported to connect, belong and contribute to the great Queensland lifestyle.

I also want to acknowledge the member for Mirani for bringing this to the attention of the chamber. I have discussed this with him. I know that he is passionate about it. I would suggest that he have a good, hard look at the party he is a member of if he really wants to pursue this. Thank you very much for the opportunity to speak on this matter.

Question put—That the amendment be agreed to.

Amendment agreed to.

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

Motion agreed to.

Motion, as agreed—

That this House:


- (a) acknowledges that next week marks the 22nd anniversary of the Queensland Recognition Statement made by then premier Beattie and that the statement recognises Australian South Sea islander people as a distinct cultural group and that it received bipartisan support at the time;
- (b) acknowledges that Australian South Sea islander communities hold a unique place in the establishment of Queensland's cultural and economic fabric;
- (c) notes that the Palaszczuk government has made meaningful financial investment in the recent budget to support Queensland's Australian South Sea islander peak body and community; and
- (d) notes that Australian South Sea islander peoples have been included in the Queensland Multicultural Action Plan 2022-24.

NATURE CONSERVATION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from p. 2390, on motion of Ms Scanlon—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mr McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (5.54 pm), continuing: National parks provide us with a place for bees which can be used for a range of activities including the preparation of hives for crop pollination, hive recovery after pollination, overwintering and generating honey to provide income when there is no pollination work to be done. It is acknowledged that there is the potential for negative impacts on beehives from agricultural pesticides and arrangements for land sharing involving the assessment of the use of those chemicals.

It is important to note the role that honey bees play in the horticultural and food industries. The Queensland honey bee industry produces honey and other products that are valued at \$64 million. Honey production has been the major focus of Queensland beekeepers for many, many years, but the significant growth in horticultural industries has seen a big increase in the demand for paid pollination services. In fact, the Queensland Beekeepers' Association advise that honey bee pollination provided an estimated average of \$2.1 billion in economic value for Queensland in the 2014-15 financial year.

As I mentioned in my earlier remarks, there are those submitters who raised concerns about the practice of beekeeping in our national parks; namely, that it is basically fundamentally inconsistent with national park management. Some conservation groups did provide submissions opposing the extension of beekeeping in national parks. Some of the issues that were raised included that honey bees are an introduced and exotic species and compete with native bees as well as the impact on vegetation from their presence in national parks and particularly the impact of honey bees on tree hollows. There was some discussion of the efforts to identify alternative sites for the bee industry. The member for Burleigh touched on this in his contribution, which could be described as an attempted pollination of this debate. However, it does appear that providing an extension of up to 20 years to existing arrangements for beekeeping to occur on particular national parks is appropriate. It is important to note that this extension only applies to areas where beekeeping was an existing use prior to the transfer of the land into national park estate.

That said, the committee did make some recommendations: No. 1 that the bill be passed; No. 2 that the Department of Environment and Science develop some guidelines for beekeeping in national parks within the next year and adopt a strategy to plan, identify and secure alternative apiary sites over the period of any 20-year extension.

It is also worth noting that, when it comes to a commitment to national parks, the Palaszczuk Labor government has done more for the expansion and protection of our national parks than has ever been done in Queensland, including: \$262.5 million for new national parks, which is the largest investment in Queensland's history; \$140 million over the next 40 years for national park management; and 148 hectares on the southern Gold Coast for what will be one of the biggest ecoparks in the nation. Last year we committed to 54 new First Nations rangers, which is further evidence of our commitment to national parks and, importantly, our commitment to a cultural connection to those national parks.

In summary, I would like to thank the minister for bringing the bill forward. I would like to acknowledge and thank the State Development and Regional Industries Committee, which is chaired by the equal best chair in the parliament, the member for Bancroft.

Ms McMillan: Be careful.

Mr McCALLUM: I did say 'equal best'. I will keep the House guessing as to who he is equal with. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr KRAUSE (Scenic Rim—LNP) (6.00 pm): Bees are vital to our environment, our food chain and our farms. Beekeeping and the apiary industry contribute many hundreds of millions of dollars, if not a billion dollars or more. I have heard the figure of over \$2 billion in the debate today. It is a significant contribution to the Queensland economy, and I wholeheartedly support the industry and the many hardworking people in it.

Nobody should doubt the passion for bees and honey of beekeepers. Indeed, nobody who has met and been lobbied by members of the Queensland Beekeepers' Association could be left with any doubt about that. The work of this association in getting the government to see sense should be commended. It has been a herculean effort. I have seen their members, especially secretary Jo Martin, pop up at events and in places one would not expect them. Sure enough, they are there to lobby and consistently put their case for a resolution to a problem that we in this House could fix permanently but which this bill without amendment will only fix temporarily. Well done to the Queensland Beekeepers' Association.

The only possible thing that could be said about their lobbying is that it has taken them the best part of seven years to get to this point. However, as I understand it, that is through no fault of theirs but is the fault of a government that was slow to see the value of the apiary industry and to bring forward this bill, imperfect as it is. On 10 November 2016 I spoke in this House about the need to give beekeepers certainty of tenure on state land, and I tabled media reports about these issues from 2016.

Tabled paper: Media articles relating to beekeeping [[1255](#)].

The apiary industry was facing the prospect of losing access to national park estate after 2024. At that time, it was beginning to create uncertainty from a financial and investment point of view because previous promises to ensure that beekeepers could move on to other portions of state land—not inside the national park estate—had not been adequately followed through on by authorities. It was well over 20 years ago when a former Labor government converted large packages of state forest into national parks. One does not need to look too far to ascertain the Green reason for doing this. They also legislated a 2024 exit date for beekeepers on these lands. The clock was ticking from that time.

Unfortunately, where other portions of state land had been found for hives to be moved on to, beekeepers were finding they had a permit to occupy issued by the department and then that same department was refusing them permission to undertake necessary land management around their beekeeping sites to actually make things work in a practical sense. Labor's vegetation management laws were well at work there. Nearly six years later, some of that financial uncertainty will be resolved by the passage of this bill—at least for another 20 years until 2024—by allowing beekeepers to remain in the estate that was former state forest reserves. But it has been a long haul to get to this point.

Let there be no doubt that beekeepers should be allowed in national parks. A scientific review commissioned by the government essentially confirmed that there is negligible to zero impact on the natural environment from this activity—and that is in a report—in that the impact of commercial beehives in addition to feral honey bee populations is negligible. I quote from *A report to the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service on the effects of commercial honey bees on native flora and fauna* carried out by Dr Nadine Chapman and Professor Ben Oldroyd from the University of Sydney. They said—

... the presence of commercial colonies is unlikely to pose additional stresses on ecosystems beyond those caused by feral bees.

In fact, I argue that the activity ensures that particular portions of the estate are managed better than other portions of the estate because this activity is being carried out by people who have an interest in looking after that part of the estate. Therefore, those areas are maintained much better than other parts of the national parks.

Amendments to be moved by the LNP to remove the restrictions on beekeepers operating in areas that they presently occupy in the national park estate—and I emphasise that they presently occupy these areas—should be supported by all members. Really, it is just common sense. I have heard members of the government lay claim to the fact that this bill is all about common sense. Well, a lot more common sense could go with this bill if the amendments to be moved by the member for Bonney were adopted.

We all love bees. We all love honey. They pollinate crops like avocados, nuts and many others. It is a seriously low-impact activity. Not allowing it would really be the ultimate act of locking up the park and throwing away the key. I acknowledge this bill pushes back the deadline to 2044, but why have that deadline? The government has come to the view that it can support beekeepers now by shifting

that time frame—after much of the tenure had a time frame put on it about 20 years ago—so why not make a decision here and now to support apiarists in the long term so they can actually have that certainty beyond the horizon of 2044?

Mrs Frecklington: So they can plan for the future.

Mr KRAUSE: I take that interjection from the member for Nanango—so they can plan for the future. Some of these commercial beekeeping operations are intergenerational businesses, and they really want to plan for the future. Why not make the decision to support the apiarists here and now in Queensland? Certainly, the demand for Queensland's fresh food will not be lower in 2044 than it is now. I fear—and no doubt the industry does too—that we will be having this same debate from about 2035 onwards about the future of beekeepers on state owned land. I say there should be no question about it: the beekeepers should stay.

The government and some lobby groups with deeply entrenched views might say that beekeepers need to find other places to place their hives. In response, I would say that commercial beekeeping has 100 years of history behind it in Queensland and they have searched every possible square metre of ground in this state for possible sites to place hives. If there were more available, they would be there already. As I understand it, even the Department of Environment and Science has stated that there are no further resources available with similar floral and biodiversity characteristics. I urge all members to support the LNP amendments. Let the bees buzz free.

There are four major commercial beekeeping businesses in the Scenic Rim electorate and all of them contribute to the food security of Queensland and Australia. Constraints on their operations are constraints on agriculture and achieving food security; it is also a constraint on jobs. I was reminded of this recently when I was told of a year 11 student in Boonah who had studied the contribution of bees to pollination and made the link between this activity and the existence of his job in the fresh fruit section of a local shop. He realised through his study that without bees our local fresh food supplies suffer, and that is why governments at all levels need to combat the varroa mite, for example, as well as support our beekeepers on state land. The varroa mite is a topic for another day.


I thank all of our beekeepers and note local Trevor Weatherhead, who invited me on a number of occasions to speak with the Ipswich and West Moreton Beekeepers Association, and his long involvement with the sector. There are many small-scale and hobby beekeepers. I must say that, like many people growing up in the country, I was fortunate as a youngster to be exposed to beekeeping. My grandfather loved the bees and we would rob them together. I have always liked a good fire, and operating the smoker to subdue the bees was always a tonne of fun. Sometimes it was less effective than others, and I can recall one occasion being chased by an angry swarm of bees and, in panic, taking my face net off. Big mistake, but luckily not too many bees got to me. I have heard similar accounts in relation to other locals around Boonah, including Robert Dewar, a former president of the Queensland Beekeepers' Association who has been spoken about by other members in the debate.

Mr Madden: He's a great guy.

Mr KRAUSE: I take that interjection from the member for Ipswich West. He is a great guy. He is a third generation beekeeper. He can also recall being chased by a swarm when he was barely out of nappies.

Robert was the key person who spoke with me five to six years ago to lobby for change to tenure issues to give certainty to his family and dozens of family businesses like his which need certainty to continue on in their business. Thank you, Rob, for your advocacy work.

I support the bill. In particular, I support the amendments to be moved by the member for Bonney. I support our beekeeping and apiary sector. All members who say that they support our apiaries should also support the amendments to be moved by the member for Bonney.

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (6.10 pm): I rise to speak on this bill. It really is the bee's knees. There has been a bit of a buzz around the parliament.

Ms Boyd: A buzz in the beehive.

Mr HARPER: Yes, the beehive. We will all 'be-hive' during this debate. I will start by acknowledging the beekeeper association in Townsville and the work that they do. We heard the history from the member for Bonney with the Southport third generation bee people—sweet, sweet! Beekeeping, as we know, plays an important and valuable role and national parks provide the conditions necessary for honey bees to thrive. Before I get into this, I do not want to get too controversial on the whole bees and honey debate, but being the only New Zealand-born MP, I say Manuka honey in New Zealand is pretty good. However, I do acknowledge that Manuka honey in Australia has many medicinal purposes as well. I think we are on par there. I might have a slight bias.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr HARPER: There you go, we have started a good debate. I start by noting the work of the committee. Did you get to taste any of the Manuka honey, member for Bancroft?

Ms Boyd: Yes, I had some. We shared some.

Mr Whiting: Yes, we sampled some.

Mr Saunders: Feel free to talk amongst yourselves.

Mr HARPER: Excellent. The committee recommended that the Department of Environment and Science develop clear and accessible guidelines for beekeeping on national park sites to ensure that any potential risks to the natural environment are appropriately managed. The committee also acknowledged the complexities associated with identifying alternative apiary sites outside of national parks. I note that the committee also recommended that the—

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr HARPER: Sorry, I missed that. I thought that was an interjection. Might get a bit of a sting in the tail. Anyway, I continue. At its core, the bill proposes to provide a 20-year extension to allow beekeeping on specified national parks to continue until 31 December. We heard from the member for Scenic Rim, 'Oh, why 2044?' I thought should the LNP be in government in 2044, they might actually get the opportunity to extend it again, but that is a big ask. Firstly, they would have to have a shadow cabinet meeting and then they would need to actually—

Mr Whiting: Premier Scanlon will deal with it.

Mr HARPER: True. I take the interjection. As we know, seriously, it follows an election commitment by the Labor government made in 2020, and it is good to see it in the House today. Currently, commercial beekeeping occurs in a number of national parks due to transfers of state forest to national parks which occurred predominantly in the early 2000s. Commercial beekeeping activities involved beekeepers utilising tracks and trails to transport hives of non-native European honey bees to designated locations known as apiary sites.


Commercial beekeeping is inconsistent with the management principles for national parks in the Nature Conservation Act, which requires that national parks be managed—and don't we do a great job of that on this side of the House? I do recall speaking to a number of rangers in Townsville after we were elected and the national park group up there had been decimated. They had lost so many positions in the management of national parks, they were glad to see that Labor had got back in and restored those positions in our national parks.

There were some secondary objectives to the bill: to enhance the Department of Environment and Science's ability to prevent and respond to misconduct on areas managed by Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service by creating offences for impersonating or obstructing forestry officers; to relocate powers of officers to seize and deal with seized things from subordinate legislation of the Nature Conservation Act 1992 to reflect current drafting practices; to amend the Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993 to reflect intergovernmental changes from the Australian government review of the COAG councils and ministerial forums; to duplicate or remove duplication consultation processes when amending the Wet Tropics Management Plan as a result of changes to the act; and also to correct minor errors of that act.

Other amendments in the bill will: enhance compliance capacity in Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service managed areas; relocate certain regulatory provisions from subordinate legislation into the act following advice from the Office of Queensland Parliamentary Counsel; and reflect changes current with the Queensland World Heritage area.

Beekeeping introduces non-native European honey bees into national parks and is therefore inconsistent with the management principles for national parks. Although there is sufficient evidence that the European honey bees impact on protected areas, they still compete with native honey bees for native fauna or flora resources. As such, beekeeping on national parks is inconsistent with the cardinal principle of preserving the natural condition of these lands to the greatest possible extent.

An existing transition provision which temporarily allows beekeeping to be authorised on specified national parks is scheduled to cease on 31 December 2024. It is predominantly a legacy issue associated with the 1999 South East Queensland Regional Forests Agreement and was intended to be phased out by 2024 as suitable sites for relocation outside of national parks were found. However, this has proven challenging. I know a few other people want to speak on this, so I might wrap up my contribution there. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (6.16 pm): I rise to contribute to the Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. The main focus of this legislation is to deliver a measly 20-year extension to allow beekeeping in Queensland's national parks. Can I say this bill misses the point by a bee's whisker? That is because we are at the end of a 20-year period which would have seen the Labor government ban the keeping of bees in national parks by 2024.

Beekeepers were supposed to transition to other areas in this time because the government believes beekeeping—and we have just heard it—is inconsistent with the management principles for national parks as outlined in the Nature Conservation Act. We completely disagree with that. For 20 years, Queensland beekeepers have been fighting for that to be overturned. For 20 years they have been thinking that they would lose access to this vital resource. For 20 years they have been worrying that eventually their industry and businesses would be completely decimated if they could no longer place their hives in national parks.

Interestingly, in this time, the Labor government have found little to no evidence of the detrimental impact of honey bees on native flora and fauna, and, over the last 20 years, no viable alternative locations to national parks have been found for beekeepers by this state government. I ask the Labor government why impose another 20-year time frame? Why not lift the time frame completely?

Commercial beekeepers deserve certainty. They do not want another deadline, because regardless of the fact it will not end for 20 years, it just starts another cycle of doubt, worry and frustration. An expectation will remain that, by 2044, the government will finally completely remove access to national parks. That is the concern. Queensland will be the only state—I will say that again—the only state in Australia with a sunset clause. It can only lead to people walking away from this vital industry or choosing to expand into New South Wales or Victoria where there is greater freedom in national parks and increased certainty for the beekeeping businesses.

I would like to congratulate the Queensland Beekeepers' Association—it is great to have Jo Martin here—and the many beekeepers who made submissions to the State Development and Regional Industries Committee's inquiry into this bill. A big shout-out again to Jacob Stevens, the President of the Queensland Beekeepers' Association, who I literally ran into in Inglewood just the other day outside the bakery with Lawrence Springborg and the local member, James Lister.

Jacob was in the middle of transporting. There was a truck full of beehives on its way out to Cunnamulla. He was literally stopping for a pie at the Inglewood bakery—I am not allowed to say it was actually a pie. The truck was sitting there full of bees. It is a vital industry. He had a couple of workers with him. This is an industry that employs people. My Nanango electorate is home to many commercial beekeepers. In fact, I have it on good authority that the South Burnett is almost the beekeeping capital of Queensland—it might be overtaking Warwick—with at least six commercial beekeepers in operation.

I would like to thank Brad Jensen of Beekeeping Australia based in Kingaroy, who keeps me solidly up to date about his industry. Brad is a third generation beekeeper and at just 32 years of age has grown his business to seven staff, including five trainees, and 2,000 beehives. He specialises in honey production along with the pollination of macadamias, avocados, canola and fava beans. Brad is obviously very passionate about beekeeping and, while he strongly supports the 20-year extension, he firmly believes that there should not be another deadline. He says in his submission—

... the date should be removed altogether to give the next generation confidence to pursue a career in bee keeping without them knowing their career will have an end date, as this is something I have struggled with personally for the last 16 years I have been full time beekeeping.

Brad explained to me that beekeepers work with the environment. They love a healthy forest and do no damage to national parks. It is the national parks that provide a place of good nutrition for bees to increase hive strength, particularly after working in pollination jobs. It is the commercial beekeepers like Brad and Jacob who want to work and keep that healthy forest going. Without bees, we would simply not have the food that we need and love. I will not go through it all because I know many other members have done that. Queensland's \$2.8 billion horticulture industry is underpinned by healthy bee colonies for pollination.

We know commercial beekeeping currently occurs in 49 national parks. The Queensland Beekeepers' Association notes that the footprint of apiary sites in national parks across the entire state of Queensland would be no greater than 54.4 hectares. That is it. For those opposite who have no idea how big that is, it is not very big when you are looking at the size of Queensland. It is 54.4 hectares. This equates to a physical footprint of less than 0.0004 per cent of the 14.3 million hectares of protected areas across this state.

Mrs Gerber: It is a bee's whisker.


Mrs FRECKLINGTON: It is a bee's whisker; I will take that interjection from the member for Currumbin. It is not much at all. Importantly, only 59.7 per cent of these sites have active permits. In reality, the actual footprint of current beekeeping in our national parks is minuscule. It is actually 0.00023 per cent.

In fact, it is the beekeepers who are improving the parks in which they operate. They are the ones who are undertaking the maintenance of the fire trails and access tracks. This is often part of their apiary access agreements and is undertaken at the commercial beekeeper's expense. I do want to point that out because we all know that the worst neighbour in Queensland when it comes to national parks is the state Labor government. In this I want to give a big shout-out to the commercial beekeepers who, through their apiary access agreements, actually look after the national parks. They are the ones who are actually doing that hard work.

In 2016 I advocated on behalf of my constituents Clinton and Rodney Ruge of Ruge Honey regarding reinstalling beekeeping sites on Boorara Station at Hungerford. This area was transferred to the Currawinya National Park and beekeeping was banned as no evidence could be found of previous beekeeping immediately before the transfer. Despite attempts by myself, the Ruges and others to convince the department of national parks to allow them to recommence beekeeping, the then minister, Steven Miles, stated, 'QPWS officers inspected these sites and can find no evidence to suggest that they had been previously used for that purpose.' It is so ironic.

The admission by the department that there was no evidence of 40 years of beekeeping on that national park at 11 sites at Boorara Station is the perfect example to make this point. Surely this suggests the environment had been well maintained and the activity was clearly sustainable in the long term. I acknowledge their submission to the committee detailing this experience and note that ultimately they were denied access to this precious beekeeping resource. Ultimately, that is our loss; it is Queenslanders' loss. As the Queensland Beekeepers' Association say, healthy forests equal healthy bees which equal healthy food which equals healthy people. We must fully support this vital industry. I will continue to stand by our beekeepers. They need confidence. They do not need another 20-year sentence.

I will be supporting this bill, but I will also be strongly supporting the shadow environment minister's amendment to this bill. It is much needed. I plead with those opposite: please listen to the submissions; please understand that the young commercial beekeepers deserve certainty for the next generation. Again, healthy forests, healthy bees, healthy food means healthy people.

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (6.26 pm): I rise to speak to the Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. I would like to point out that I will not be speaking in support of the amendment foreshadowed by the member for Bonney. It is pretty surprising that as an opposition they are actually able to come up with an amendment given that their shadow cabinet does not seem to meet.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on two bases: first of all, relevance and, second, I find the comments of the speaker personally offensive and I ask her to withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Thank you. I will take some advice.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: With regards to the second part of the point of order that was raised, there were no personal statements mentioning you as a member, so you cannot take personal offence at that. With regards to the first part of the point of order that you raised, the member is discussing the amendment put by the member for Bonney and the process of arriving at that amendment, so the matter is relevant.

Ms PEASE: I rise to a point of order. I would like for the member for Nanango to withdraw the comments that she made as she sat down after raising her point of order. I ask her to withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: You are asking that the member withdraw comments that you found personally offensive? I will just take some advice on that.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Members will cease their conversations across the chamber.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members will cease their conversations across the chamber. As the Deputy Speaker, I will rule on your point of order. The member has taken personal offence at statements you made. I would ask that you withdraw those.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I call the member for Lytton.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I would ask that the withdrawal be unconditional.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I call the member for Lytton.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Ms PEASE: Mr Deputy Speaker, the member continues to show disregard to the chair after you have directed—

Mr Mander interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I warn the member for Everton. That was uncalled for and inappropriate. Member for Lytton, I will manage the chamber. I would ask you to continue your contribution.

Ms PEASE: The purpose of this bill is to provide the Queensland Beekeepers' Association a 20-year extension to allow beekeeping on national parks to continue in areas where beekeeping had an existing use prior to the transfer of the state forest land to national park. Member for Buderim, do you understand what I am talking about now? Thank you.

Mr Mickelberg interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Through the chair, member for Lytton.

Mr Mickelberg interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Buderim will cease his interjections.

Ms PEASE: Further, the bill will make amendments to enhance compliance capacity in Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service—

Mr Mickelberg interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, member for Buderim!

Ms PEASE: Do I need to ask for him to withdraw? Calling out to say to me—

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

Ms PEASE: This will relocate certain regulatory provisions from subordinate legislation to the Nature Conservation Act following advice from Queensland Parliamentary Counsel and reflect changes to intergovernmental arrangements between the Commonwealth and the state in relation to the Wet Tropics and Queensland World Heritage areas.

I know how much we all enjoy local honey. I am spoilt for choice in my community with local honey produced, including offerings from QYAC. Its Minjerribah honey has the taste of the magnificent Quandamooka country to entertain our tastebuds. Beekeeping has introduced non-native European honey bees into our national parks and this is inconsistent with the management principles of national parks, which we are proud of and we want to protect. Although there is insufficient evidence of the European honey bees' impact on protected areas, they still compete with native honey bees for native flora and floral resources which go on to pollinate, as do European honey bees, our agricultural sector, and we recognise and value the importance of this. As such, beekeeping in national parks is inconsistent with the cardinal principles of preserving the natural condition of these lands to the greatest possible extent.

An existing transition provision which temporarily allows beekeeping to be authorised on specific national parks is scheduled to cease on 31 December 2024. It is predominantly a legacy issue associated with the 1999 South East Queensland Regional Forests Agreement and was intended to be phased out by 2024 as suitable sites for relocation outside of national parks were found. However, this has proven challenging. The beekeeping industry provides crop pollination services and produces honey and other honey bee related products. Loss of access to national park sites in 2024 would have had a detrimental impact on the supply of these products, and the Palaszczuk government recognises that.

The reliance of public lands for beekeeping correlates to around \$51 billion worth of contribution to Queensland honey production annually. The proposed amendments will provide a 20-year extension until 31 December 2044 while work continues to find alternate sites, support adoption of industry best practice and identify initiatives that may assist the industry to relocate off park over the next 20 years.

Subject to meeting certain criteria, the minister may recommend that national park apiary sites be prescribed in regulation which will allow people to continue applying for apiary permits in these areas for terms of up to five years. In addition to existing apiary areas, new sites will be able to be prescribed in regulation if beekeeping was being carried out on the land before it was dedicated as a national park.


An interagency group including representatives from the Department of Environment and Science, the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, the Department of Resources and the Department of Transport and Main Roads has been established to investigate opportunities that may exist on other land tenures to relocate beekeeping out of national parks. The Department of Environment and Science is also working with the industry to develop a standard landholder agreement template. This will be for beekeeper operators on lands where there is no existing permitting framework. The act has existing mechanisms that would allow the department to respond if there were any threats to the natural or cultural resources of protected areas.

Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service officers do amazing work in my electorate and all over Queensland. They operate in the Manly area out of the Manly harbour. They also operate out of Fort Lytton National Park. I remind everyone again that if they have not visited Fort Lytton National Park they really should do so. There are lots of great activities that are all managed by Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service officers, so it is a really great service. These hardworking, dedicated professionals put in so much time and effort managing our national parks and taking care of them, preserving them for our children, our children's children and their children, and we need to make sure that they are protected. Protecting these hardworking professionals is so important and recent investigations of incidents on Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service managed areas indicated flaws in the existing legislative offences which meant that enforcement action could not be taken in circumstances where a person falsely represented themselves as a ranger and a person obstructed a QPWS officer in the performance of the officer's duty.

Members need to keep in mind, as I have said, that in my electorate there is Fort Lytton National Park, Moreton Island, Minjerribah and Mulgumpin. These officers operate there and there are families and young kids and we do not want people going around impersonating Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service officers. There are existing offences for people impersonating a conservation officer and an authorised officer under the Recreation Areas Management Act 2006 and an inspector under the Marine Parks Act. However, currently there are no offences for impersonating a forest officer under the Forestry Act 1959 or a ranger where they are not specifically appointed as a conservation officer, an authorised officer or as an inspector despite interacting with the public and advising them on a wide range of matters as part of their day-to-day roles.

To overcome this oversight in terms of the current deficiencies in this legislative framework regarding this matter, the bill will insert new offences regarding the impersonation of a forest officer and a ranger. Further amendments will address an issue where, unlike the Forestry Act, existing obstruction offences in the NC Act, the RAM Act and the MP Act only apply if an officer is obstructed when exercising power under these acts. The bill will amend the existing obstruction offences to clarify that the offences will also apply to obstructing officers in the performance of a function under the relevant act.

Changes to intergovernmental arrangements are proposed to the Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993 to reflect the national cabinet changes to intergovernmental arrangements between the state and Commonwealth. These changes follow a review of the former Council of Australian Governments councils and ministerial forums by Mr Peter Conran AM. To enable these and other changes, the process for making consequential amendments to the Wet Tropics Management Plan 1998 will be streamlined and an outdated version of the management scheme intergovernmental agreement for the Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area will be removed from schedule 1 to the act. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (6.38 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. This bill is all about continuing the practice of beekeeping in national parks. The primary objective of the bill is to grant a 20-year extension to allow beekeeping in specified national parks to continue until 31 December 2044. The bill further aims to enhance the Department of Environment and Science's ability to prevent and respond to misconduct on areas managed by the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service by creating offences for impersonating or obstructing forestry officers; relocate powers of officers to seize and deal with seized things from subordinate legislation into the Nature Conservation Act 1992 to reflect current drafting practices; to amend the Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993 to reflect intergovernmental changes from the Australian government review of the COAG councils and

ministerial forums; remove duplicate consultation processes when amending the Wet Tropics Management Plan as a result of changes to the Wet Tropics act; and correct minor errors in the Nature Conservation Act and Wet Tropics act.

Presently commercial beekeeping operates in 49 national parks. The majority of these were not always national parks. In the early 2000s their status was changed from state forest to national park. The commercial beekeeping activities in this bill include beekeepers utilising tracks and trails to transport hives of non-native European honey bees to apiary sites. Due to the activities of commercial beekeeping conflicting with the management principles of the Nature Conservation Act, an exemption is required. National parks need to be managed for the permanent preservation of their natural condition and the protection of cultural and natural resources, but parks also need to be managed. The tracks and trails that we talk about that the beekeepers use to transport their hives need to be maintained and be trafficable when necessary.

The Nature Conservation Act was amended approximately two decades ago to allow beekeeping to continue in these areas until 31 December 2024. This transition provision was agreed to minimise disruption to the beekeeping industry and provide time for the relocation of bees to substitute sites. Beekeeping contributes approximately \$2.4 billion to the Queensland economy each year. With the growth in our horticultural industries, reliance on pollinating bees is increasing. Broadacre crops like faba beans and sunflowers also utilise the services of bees to pollinate at flowering time. In the south of this country we are seeing farmers wondering how they are going to manage the pollination of crops with the threat of varroa mite. We need to be very vigilant to make sure it does not come into Queensland because Queensland may have to do some of the heavy lifting as far as honey production in this country.

Without the ability for beekeepers to utilise national parks for their apiaries, industry representatives have stated their industry, and those industries that rely on them, would be decimated. Beekeepers actively seek sites on private land and have been doing this historically. However, there is not sufficient land with the specific requirements that they need. I remember when I was farming at Cecil Plains, sunflowers in particular seemed to be a crop where beekeepers would call in and ask if they could locate hives in that area just to carry their bees through. With different farming practices they would always have to be aware of chemical application and so forth.

Queensland Beekeepers' Association would like the 20-year extension removed to continue the permits in perpetuity. Victoria and New South Wales have no time limit on their provisions for beekeeping in national parks, which has demonstrated support for the industry and allowed growth. Queensland beekeepers are looking over the border to expand as the New South Wales and Victorian governments are providing the certainty they need to continue to grow their business. Any business needs certainty. The LNP as a party has always supported those in the agriculture and horticulture industries and the industry bodies that represent them. Here is another opportunity for the government to provide an industry with some confidence, not to continually challenge it.

The LNP understands the importance and reliance upon the commercial bee industry to ensure our food requirements in the future, both domestically and internationally, are safeguarded. This is supported by the Australian Food and Grocery Council which stated that based on conservative estimates two-thirds of Australia's food crops are reliant upon the pollination services of professional apiarists and the bees in their care. Some crops are almost completely dependent upon bees pollinating them for fruit and nut production. As we produce more food crops we will need more bees to pollinate them. There is already a shortage of commercial hives. During times of drought, cropping is obviously limited by the lack of irrigation water or rainfall events. National parks provide a source of food to keep the bees alive.

The commercial beekeeping industry needs our support and to be valued by this government, as it should be. Without certainty, future generations of beekeepers may not come to fruition. There is a very real fear that one day the government will remove their ability to access national parks. Without access to the national parks there will be nowhere for beekeepers to make sure the nutritional needs of their bees are met during certain times of the year. The Condamine electorate has several national parks, including Crows Nest and Geham national parks, which are apiary sites. Although not large in size, these parks play an important role in providing flowering plants which supply nectar and pollen for bees to feed upon during certain times of the year.


Beekeepers are assisting in improving the state of our national parks by ensuring access is maintained. They are concerned about the lack of funding allocated by this government to maintaining national parks, particularly in view of the upcoming fire season and the enormous amount of fuel after

six months of above average rainfall. It is in the best interests of commercial beekeepers to continue to care for the national parks they use and there is no evidence to suggest that they have a negative impact on the flora or fauna within the parks.

The LNP supports this bill with the amendment to remove the end date for the apiary permits in national parks. This will provide the commercial beekeeping industry with the certainty it needs and provide it with the capacity to keep our food production industries going. The bill also proposes new offences for misconduct on areas managed by Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service such as state forest, marine parks, recreation areas and national parks.

During the public briefing the committee heard from the deputy director-general of the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service and Partnerships who advised that there had been a number of recent examples where visitors to national parks have had negative interactions with people holding themselves out to be rangers and behaving in a disreputable or threatening manner. If someone has committed the offence of impersonating a ranger an investigation will occur, proceedings will be brought in a Queensland court and the offence must be proved beyond reasonable doubt before a finding can be made against that person. The bill also includes amendments that would support Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service officers in the event that they are obstructed in performing their duties.

While the LNP will be supporting the bill, the shadow minister, the member for Bonney, will be moving an amendment to extend the proposed 20-year time limit to allow beekeepers to remain in these specified national parks for perpetuity. All business needs certainty. Over a number of years we have seen this in national parks with the timber industry. It is only now that they are starting to get some guaranteed source of supply so that they can invest and grow their business. Apiaries are no different. The larger apiaries need staff, trucks and handling gear to manage their business. To invest in that they need a guaranteed time frame and there is no reason this should be limited to 20 years. I cannot for the life of me see how the government can say that this is good for 20 years but it is not good for any longer than that. One argument counters the other. I see no reason there should be any opposition to the amendment to be moved by the member for Bonney and I support this bill with that amendment.

 **Hon. ML FURNER** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities) (6.47 pm): I rise to support the Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. Firstly, I congratulate the Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef for introducing this legislation. It is an important body of work that appropriately recognises the vital measures to protect our environment while ensuring a real threat to our nation's farmers is appropriately managed. This bill is the correct path to take. I also recognise the members of the State Development and Regional Industries Committee for their report on the legislation, particularly the member for Bancroft, the chair, who I know had a particular interest in examining this bill.

Our agriculture industries are a source of great pride for Queenslanders, and rightly so. For the 2021-22 financial year the forecast gross value of production of \$23.5 billion is a remarkable achievement, even more so when one considers just two years ago we were in the darkest days of the COVID pandemic, with government and industry working side by side to make sure our supply lines remained open and great Queensland produce could still be enjoyed around the nation and, where possible, around the world.

Horticulture production is a significant part of this effort and it plays a key role in our agricultural economy. While the beekeeping industry's \$64 million in honey production is certainly important and a sweet contribution on its own, up to \$2.4 billion worth of our state's agriculture production is reliant on pollination services to grow our fantastic Queensland produce.

As I travel around the state in my position as agriculture minister, I see firsthand our rapidly growing macadamia industry, which is reliant on pollination; our citrus production, which is worth hundreds of millions of dollars across the state, is reliant on pollination; and stone fruit and avocados—you guessed it—are also reliant on pollination by our hardworking bees. Many of our agricultural crops rely on this critical process and it is not something that just happens. Queensland's beekeeping industry plays a critical role in providing pollination services to our agricultural industry. Well over 100,000 commercial beehives are in demand right across the state to ensure that we can all enjoy the great food that we grow here. In fact, they are in such demand that each year some 40,000 commercial hives are transported from Queensland to other states, including New South Wales and Victoria, to provide critical services in those places.

As we have heard in the debate this evening, a recent outbreak of the deadly varroa destructor mite in New South Wales, particularly around Newcastle, brought home to us how critically important beekeeping services are. We have put in place appropriate movement controls and a permit system to

minimise any risk that contaminated bees, bee products or beekeeping equipment could bring that dangerous parasite into Queensland. I congratulate Biosecurity Queensland for moving so quickly not only to support the Queensland industry but also to offer its support and expertise to New South Wales authorities as they work to eradicate that invasive pest.

I reflect back on a situation that arose in Townsville with a mite. It was not the varroa mite but another mite. I put on record my appreciation for the work that was done in that instance. The secretary of the Queensland Beekeepers' Association, Jo Martin, was in the chamber today. I know that she also commended Queensland Biosecurity. In particular I acknowledge Rob Stevens for his work in eradication and his interest in making sure that we kept Queensland safe from that particular mite. We are also making sure that we protect the industry through our control measures in relation to the varroa destructor mite.

That brings me back to the purpose of the bill. The bill will deliver on the Palaszczuk government's 2020 election promise to provide a 20-year extension to allow beekeeping on specified national parks through to December 2044. Certainly government members know that when you make an election commitment you deliver on it. The Palaszczuk government is delivering on our election commitment. If you want to make changes in this House, firstly you need to put forward a commitment and not just make a statement. You need to give a commitment and then deliver on it.

In the debate this afternoon and this evening, claims have been made that the LNP would do this and do that. That is only as good as their word. This evening is historic as we are delivering on a commitment that will protect the industry for the next 20 years. From conversations that I have had this afternoon with the Queensland Beekeepers' Association, I know for a fact that they are extremely happy with the Palaszczuk Labor government's commitment in this regard. That is what happens when you engage with industry. You engage with them to reach an outcome that they are satisfied with. That is what we have done here today and it is what we did leading up to the 2020 election.

I also put on record my appreciation for and acknowledgement of Minister Enoch in her role as the environment minister. She and I as the minister for agriculture met with the Queensland Beekeepers' Association and we brought forward the bill that we are debating today. That is what good governments do. It is what Labor governments do. They deliver on their promises. They engage with industry. We are seeing the results of that today, regardless of those opposite who are all talk and no substance whatsoever.

Opposition members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Bush): Order!

Mr FURNER: There is not one bit of substance. Permits for beekeepers to keep hives in designated areas of certain national parks date back to transitional arrangements put in place through the 1999 South East Queensland Regional Forests Agreement process. While the intent to find alternative sites for those hives outside of national parks was certainly there, it has proven to be more difficult than first imagined. Therefore, the extension is a sensible move to ensure that our beekeeping industry can continue to support the billions of dollars worth of agricultural production that supports thousands of good jobs right across this state. We will work with the industry, as we have shown and demonstrated in the lead-up to this bill.

Mr O'Connor interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Bonney will cease his interjections.

Mr FURNER: Over the coming years we will make new efforts to identify those alternative sites as agricultural production in our state continues to grow and prosper. The reality is that—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr Mickelberg interjected.

Mr FURNER: Madam Deputy Speaker, I am not taking the interjections. The member for Buderim keeps interjecting, like the thug he is.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Pause the clock. Member for Buderim, I am cautioning you. The next time it will be a warning. I ask that you stop interjecting across the chamber.

Mr FURNER: The reality is that we are going to need our beekeeping industry to grow if we are to achieve our goals for a bigger and more productive agricultural industry. Jo Martin from the Queensland Beekeepers' Association has said that, on current trends, in the next decade the Queensland beekeeping industry will need to increase its size by over one-third, such is the demand from berry fruit growers, nut growers and horticulturalists for pollination by bees.

Mr O'Connor interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Bonney, I have cautioned you. You are now warned under the standing orders.

Mr FURNER: Once again I use this opportunity to praise the incredible work of Jo Martin and Jacob Stevens from the Queensland Beekeepers' Association for what they have done over the past couple of years. Today I proudly stand here wearing their badge, which I have worn to many of their conferences. I support their industry through and through. Through the pandemic we worked extremely closely with the association to ensure that beekeepers in the state could continue to carry out their critical work through border crossings to ensure the sustainability of the industry. They again stepped up to the plate through the varroa mite issue in New South Wales not only to protect their membership but also to ensure that crops as far afield as Victoria could still be pollinated and billion-dollar losses could be avoided.


Our beekeepers are the quiet achievers. They transport their hives during the night while most of us sleep. The Queensland Beekeepers' Association submission makes it clear that there are 1,088 sites designated for beekeepers to have their hives throughout Queensland. However, currently there are occupancy permits for just 649 of those. Those occupied sites take up a total of 32.45 hectares of national park space across the entire state.

At the extreme other end of the argument we have the dissenting report from the LNP and the Katter party members of the committee. Their report advocates a *carte blanche* for beekeepers in national parks, with no effort to find alternative sites. That is hardly a balanced approach for the management of our national parks. The Palaszczuk government will work closely with the Queensland Beekeepers' Association, as we have through the process leading to the bill before us today. We will work to accommodate the expanding needs of beekeeping services across our great state. This legislation gets the balance right, ensuring that the agricultural production for which our state has a growing reputation around the world is protected while ensuring our national parks remain protected as well. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Furner, adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

My Berries; Ghost Soldiers; PIEEC

 **Ms KING** (Pumicestone—ALP) (6.59 pm): Pumicestone produce is spectacular, especially our strawberries, raspberries and blackberries. Even better, Pumicestone has innovative producers such as My Berries, a small but growing family business run by Allison and Stuart McGruddy. My Berries already supplies frozen fruit to independent grocers across Australia, but now Allison and Stuart are ready to launch their innovative Berry Bites range. Their berries are freeze dried to lock in flavour, creating sweet, crunchy, nutritious snacks. Just 12 grams is equivalent to a 125-gram punnet of fresh berries. Look out for Berry Bites in your local IGA or supermarket.


My Berries give farmers a market for surplus berries in peak season, value-adding while reducing food waste. That is why Minister Furner recently named My Berries Queensland's 21st #eatqld champions. Our Palaszczuk government's #eatqld program spotlights Queensland produce, encourages Queenslanders to eat local and supports good jobs in the agricultural sector. Congratulations to My Berries and thank you for showcasing our beautiful Pumicestone produce.

Derek Patey and the Bribie Island community men's shed recently brought more laurels to Pumicestone with their extraordinary Ghost Soldiers. After seeing wire sculptures of World War I soldiers at Slimbridge churchyard in England, the Bribie Island RSL sub-branch commissioned our men's shed to recreate them. Over four months, men's shed members wrangled 600 metres of chicken wire, coping endless scratches and ruining 20 pairs of leather gloves, to sculpt eight diggers.

Derek Patey broke new territory by sculpting the iconic stretcher bearer John Simpson and his donkey Duffy tending a wounded digger. Our Ghost Soldiers stood their first vigil in the dawn light of the Bribie Island Anzac Day service this year. They were utterly haunting. I was moved to tears. Derek says that seeing the reactions of veterans and their families to his work was the highlight of his life. When Derek entered Simpson and his donkey in the Ekka art challenge, I was delighted but not at all surprised that he won the grand championship for sculpture. Derek and the Bribie men's shed team created a legacy that eloquently evokes the human cost of war. Our ex-service personnel and the Bribie community will appreciate their work for decades to come.

While I am on my feet, I also want to acknowledge the work of PIEEC, the Pumicestone Indigenous Education and Employment Council, led by elders such as Aunty Flo Watson and her daughter, Michelle Watson. PIEEC builds community and improves outcomes for First Nations families in our area every single day. I look forward to walking alongside PIEEC on our Path to Treaty. I am keen to hear from those opposite whether they will join us in a bipartisan moment in this historic part of Queensland's history.

Currumbin Electorate, Flood Mitigation

 **Mrs GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (7.02 pm): During the February-March floods, homes around the M1 construction in the Tallebudgera Creek catchment area and throughout Elanora flooded at levels never seen before. It caught locals by surprise, and they never want to experience this again. The message the member for Burleigh and I heard from our community is clear. Leo said to us—

We have lived on Nineteenth Avenue in Elanora for 22 years ... but never has our house been affected until now. We don't know how we were flooded when we have experienced more rain in the past. Does the M1 upgrade have anything to do with it?

Michele said—

We have lived in our current home for 32 years ... and have never experienced anything even close to this before. If the cause isn't addressed, then we live with the possibility it will happen again.


Locals are pointing to the existing box culvert drains being filled with M1 construction rubble, to the Tallebudgera Creek being narrowed to construct the bridge as part of the M1 upgrade, to the spillway being obstructed by construction material and to the western side of the M1 being raised as part of the upgrade causing a dam wall. Locals are pointing to all of these as factors that may have caused or magnified the flooding of their homes—homes which have never flooded like this before.

There is a precedent for state construction works being at fault for flooding. In March 2010 a Brisbane City Council report into the devastating 2009 floods was released. It revealed that construction on the Clem7 tunnel caused the 2009 floods to be eight centimetres higher in Breakfast Creek suburbs. We are experiencing more rain, and our community deserves answers. Locals are scared that if action is not taken to properly look at the causes the flooding will happen again.

The member for Burleigh and I have held town hall forums, asked questions on notice and written to the minister, but are yet to see any action. My community has asked for the hydraulic report pre construction and during the construction phase but have been told it is commercial-in-confidence and will not be released. Our residents have written, emailed and called the offices of the Premier and the Minister for Main Roads begging for a meeting. The Premier referred them to the minister, and the Minister for Main Roads has flat-out refused to meet with them. The minister has stated in correspondence to me that analysis, including by hydraulic specialists, is underway, but he has failed to provide the scope of this analysis, failed to provide any indication about when we will see it and failed to commit to making it public.

My community is demanding that the state government makes an independent analysis and that that analysis specifically determines if the M1 construction caused or magnified the flooding of their homes. They want the state government to show some leadership in this and investigate so that any faults can be mitigated, because unless this is investigated properly the fault cannot be determined or mitigated and these homes stand at risk of flooding again when they have never flooded like this before. Our community deserves to feel safe in their homes and deserves to have this state government listen to them. Give us an independent report and make it certain to determine whether or not the M1 roadworks are at fault.

Mount Cotton State School, Upgrade

 **Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement) (7.05 pm): Members will not be surprised when they hear me say that the Springwood electorate is the best place in the state to live, work and raise a family. It is what my mum and dad chose to do back in 1972. It is what my wife and I are doing right now. Our local schools are a big part of what makes it such a terrific community. Tonight I am very pleased to announce that we have broken ground on the construction of Mount Cotton State School's brand new oval.

The community at the school can take special pride that the oval upgrade is in fact happening, because it is another project that we have been able to deliver by working together as a community. If you drive down Mount Cotton Road and past the school at lunchtime, you will see kids chasing their

soccer balls down a slope. It is quite curious. Fixing this was a key project that the Mount Cotton P&C and I took to the election, and now we are delivering. The project is in the starting blocks, so to speak, and we have just fired the starting gun on its development.

The layers of why this project matters are many. Currently, Mount Cotton's older students travel over to Sheldon College for their sports day, with all of the inconvenience and expense that entails. The size of the oval and the curious slope that you do not often see on school ovals means that kids do not have a 100-metre or 200-metre athletics track to compete on. They do not even have a level soccer pitch. Combining the two will benefit all of the students at the school, allowing both junior and senior sports carnivals to be held—and perhaps even club sports—on site in the future. It will provide a better experience all around—to students, parents, families, teachers and staff.

We are very proud that the Palaszczuk government has been able to invest \$2.4 million into delivering this next stage of the master plan at Mount Cotton State School. Plus, in really terrific news, it will support six jobs in its construction, including an apprentice. I am very proud of what the Mount Cotton State School P&C has been able to deliver. It builds on a terrific record. Lauren, the president, and Ms Steward, the principal, have delivered air-conditioning in every classroom, in partnership with the government. They have delivered road safety improvements. Together they have built a new prep building and a new admin building. They have installed solar panels on the roofs. They have refurbished classrooms, playgrounds and walk areas.

What we are doing in our schools in Springwood is giving kids the best start. By investing, we are supporting our schools, teachers, teacher aides and the school cleaners who keep them clean and safe. It all adds up to better access to education, better equipped schools and better outcomes for Queensland students. It is all part of our plan to deliver good jobs, better services and a great lifestyle.

WindsorFest



Mr NICHOLLS (Clayfield—LNP) (7.08 pm): Last weekend two events were held in the Clayfield electorate that demonstrated the community spirit and resilience of some of our most flood devastated local communities. Last Saturday, Windsor State School held its biannual community festival, WindsorFest. WindsorFest is a much loved community event held on the grounds of Windsor State School. WindsorFest returned this year after a four-year COVID induced absence, with thousands of local residents, parents, students and teachers enjoying the community stalls, live entertainment, food trucks and a host of carnival rides and attractions.

Residents of parts of Windsor, especially along the banks of Breakfast Creek, were some of those most badly affected by the floods earlier this year, so it was an honour and a pleasure to be a gold sponsor for WindsorFest this year, sponsoring the community and local business marketplace as well as providing free marquees for many of the stalls. I also recognise the support of Councillor Andrew Wines for this great local festival. I have always been a strong supporter of Windsor State School since it became part of the Clayfield electorate in 2017.

WindsorFest organisers, Rebecca Tuplin and Sabrina Risby, deserve special mention for the outstanding job they did over many months to ensure the event ran like clockwork and with military style precision. As a result of their long nights and enthusiasm, together with the hardworking army of volunteers, early indications are WindsorFest will raise over \$95,000. This money will go to part of the cost of the million-dollar-plus refurbishment of the school's 100-year-old swimming pool.


Highlights of the day included Windsor State School principal Grant Baker taking a dive in the dunk tank. I, of course, was unavailable to be dunked at that time. Aunty Sharron from Indigenous Insights also ran a fantastic concert for all the kids, highlighting the importance of looking after the land and the environment, as well as being an active member of our local communities. There was live music from the Smashing Bumpkins, Benjam Band and, most importantly, performances from the students themselves. Overall, it was a fantastic event that brought the community together for the first time in four years to support Windsor State School. Congratulations to all involved!

The Kalinga Park playground in Clayfield also had its reopening last Saturday, spearheaded by hardworking Councillor David McLachlan, the councillor for the Hamilton ward. After being damaged severely by the floods earlier this year, this much loved playground could finally reopen. The Brisbane City Council has worked hard to facilitate Kalinga Park's refurbishment at a cost of \$55,000. Hundreds turned up to enjoy a morning of fun and activities, including face painting and live music. While there it was interesting to note the flood marker which hails from after the 1974 floods is noticeably underdone and an extra three metres of height will be needed for it to mark the 2022 flood event.

Terrific events such as these show us that community resilience is really what holds us together during unforeseen challenges. I am proud to say that in Clayfield we continue to build resilience and strength through grassroots efforts to keep our community strong.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Bush): I also back in the Smashing Bumpkins. They are a fantastic local band.

Historic Leyburn Sprints; Lakeside Raceway

 **Mr KING** (Kurwongbah—ALP) (7.11 pm): I rise to talk about something other than music for a change. I will talk about another passion of mine—motorsports. At the outset, I thank the minister for once again asking me to represent him at the running of the Historic Leyburn Sprints—the 26th running. It is becoming a bit of a tradition for me to go out there and represent the minister. I really enjoy it.

For anyone who does not know about the Leyburn Sprints and what they are about, they are in the electorate of Southern Downs. I often meet the member for Southern Downs out there—

Mr Nicholls interjected.

Mr KING: Sadly, I no longer have a GT, member; I have other cars. Leyburn Sprints commemorates the running of the 1949 Australian Grand Prix at the nearby airstrip. It is an amazing event in this small town. They bring in concrete barriers and hay bales and it is a race against the clock around the town. There are lots of other attractions. I sound like a tourist guide; I love it that much. Everyone should go and check it out. There are historic campers and vans. There is the Leyburn pub that was formerly owned by Shane Webcke.

It is a motoring enthusiasts mecca. People can see an old GTR Torana. The next car will be a family car. Then there will be an open wheel formula 1 style car. Then there will be a GT Falcon, as mentioned by the member. There are all sorts of cars.


An opposition member interjected.

Mr KING: I take that interjection. There were BMWs too, and some quite quick ones. Dean Amos was the winner again. It was his seventh title in his British built Gould GR55B V8—an impressive car. What is more impressive about his story is that he saved the car when he lost his home and his business in the Lismore floods. I understand the priority. Poor Dean! He still won. That is seven years in a row. Good on him.

I thank Trish Chant and the committee for all the hard work they do to put this event on. It has been a difficult few years with COVID stopping it and postponing it. Trish not only organises the event but also competes with a Ford V8. This year there were over 200 entrants. It was bigger than ever. There were thousands of people there. Next year maybe we will see some other faces from here out there. I will be there. It is an amazing time.

I cannot talk about motorsports without mentioning Lakeside raceway. If anyone is looking for something to do on Father's Day, it is the all Aussie day out there. If anyone has an Aussie car, head out to Lakeside. For \$150 people can cruise this classic racetrack—with their family because it is Father's Day. What better thing to do on Father's Day. I will probably be out there. I recommend it. I thank John Tetley and the crew for what they do to keep this track so people are not just spectators but can enjoy it and drive it themselves.

Project Red Socks

 **Hon. SJ STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (Minister for Resources) (7.14 pm): I rise this evening to speak about something that is very close to my heart—that is, Project Red Socks. I hope that everyone has received a pair of red socks that we have distributed in the chamber.

Mr Healy: I was wondering where they came from.

Mr STEWART: They are from me. I encourage everyone to wear these socks in the chamber tomorrow if they can. The other thing I ask is that members take a photo wearing them and post it on their social media.

This is about prostate awareness. September is Prostate Cancer Awareness Month. It is timely given it will soon be Father's Day. If people are not over the age of 50 then they have a great pair of red socks that they can give to their dad as a Father's Day present. With it comes an absolute commitment that they need to go and get checked.

This is about the early detection of prostate cancer. This is about going to get the blood test done. If people go and get that done then early detection could save their life. For us old blokes who are over the age of 50 we should be getting tested every year. If people have a partner who is over 50 then they should be getting tested every year. If they have an uncle, dad, son or brother they need to be tested. These red socks sitting in the drawer are a reminder to either get tested or to remind one's significant other to go and get tested. That is why these bright red socks are bright red.

It is imperative that we recognise that early detection can save lives. We know that one in nine males in Australia will get prostate cancer, but early detection will help save lives. Just to give members an indicator, my dad died from prostate cancer, his dad died from prostate cancer and my mum's dad died from prostate cancer. Given genetics, I think I am a pretty good chance of lining up and being diagnosed at some time in my life so I get tested every six months. It is not something that I like talking about. I do not like mixing politics and family. I am usually a pretty private bloke who keeps that sort of thing private. This is about making sure that every person in this House who has these red socks gets tested or makes sure others around them are tested. It could save someone's life.

The socks are from Townsville Rotary. A lot of members have supported me and worn them in the past. I thank you so much. I hope you continue to support this great cause.

Great Keppel Island

 **Ms LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (7.17 pm): Great Keppel—Wop-pa—Island is the jewel in the crown of our region and I am pleased to provide an update on the master planning of the island which is currently underway. The master planning of GKI recommenced on 8 August at the fifth workshop with the community-based project reference group held in Yeppoon. The workshop was generally positive, with aligned aspirations and community commitment to the project reaffirmed. Thirty-two people attended and participants comprised members of the PRG and Queensland government representatives across key state agencies. Mr Anthony Aiossa from Tower Holdings Pty Ltd participated virtually in this forum for the first time in the master planning process.


The workshop included a refresh of the draft illustrative concept plan and an update provided to the PRG from the department on the progress of the technical investigation into the location and design of a jetty for GKI, which was identified by the PRG as the highest priority for common-user infrastructure. PRG members were updated on the project governance, noting that an executive-led project control group has been established with representation from DOR, Queensland Treasury and the office of the Coordinator-General. The project team is working on the draft illustrative plan for community consultation, delivering the draft master plan for public consultation, conducting market sounding to test the market for investors interested in development aligned with the master plan vision, developing an investment strategy and delivering the agreed priority common-user infrastructure.

A draft master plan will be completed by December 2022, with the intention of releasing it for public consultation in February next year. The master planning project will also be informed by the Queensland parliament Transport and Resources Committee's inquiry into the economic and regulatory frameworks for Queensland's island resorts, which is currently underway. I thank the chair and the committee for visiting Yeppoon and GKI last week as part of the committee's inquiry.

The department of tourism is delivering the Queensland government's \$30 million commitment for common-user infrastructure for GKI and is currently working closely with experts in Maritime Safety Queensland to evaluate options for improving access to GKI which was identified by local stakeholders as the top priority. The options being considered include various safe-landing designs and locations on GKI, with the preferred solutions and delivery time frames to be informed by further design work, technical studies, approval requirements and local stakeholder consultation. The department advised that MSQ will be conducting targeted consultation before the end of this year on the jetty location.

The vision and principles in the draft illustrative concept plan have now been affirmed and it was agreed that the five vignettes require refinement. Next steps include updating the draft illustrative concept plan to incorporate the PRG's feedback, publication of the fifth workshops consultation report and further engagement with the Indigenous stakeholders. I look forward to the next meeting of the PRG on Monday, 5 September 2022.

Mudgeeraba Electorate, Roads

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (7.20 pm): I rise tonight to give some good news about Mudgeeraba, because after 17 years there is no longer a Mudgeeraba car park! I first stood on exit 73 back in 2005, inhaling carbon monoxide fumes, begging Paul Lucas at the time to start upgrading the

M1 from Nerang all the way down to Tugun. I also stood on the roundabout at exit 75 with John Howard back in 2007 when he announced matching fifty-fifty funding of \$500 million to eight lane the M1 from Nerang to Tugun. It is really great that after all of these years I no longer have a car park, but unfortunately Burleigh still does. It is really good to see this happen but, as I said, it has taken 17 years.

One of the other issues—and I wish the Minister for Main Roads was here to hear this—is the upgrade of Worongary Road. We have had almost \$12 million of upgrades on Worongary Road since I was elected over 13 years ago, but we still have one three-kilometre section between the Mudgeeraba showgrounds and Woodvale Drive. That is a really important stretch of road. Anybody who has come to the Mudgeeraba show knows that that is a very busy intersection when the show is on. In fact, pre-COVID we would take 40,000 people through the gates over two days. That is a stretch of road that I really want to see upgraded.

I am still waiting for the flashing approach lights to the intersection of Mudgeeraba Road and Tallai Road which were supposed to have been built early last year. I am also asking the minister to please change the current set of traffic lights there to a pedestrian crossing. Now the Gold Coast City Council have reconfigured the road at Old Coach Road and Tallai Road, where there was a lollipop pedestrian crossing which is no longer there, we can change that set of lights into a pedestrian crossing which will be much safer for the kids. Apparently the Gold Coast City Council are just waiting for the minister to knock on the door because they are prepared to build a footpath to the approach to it.


Austinville causeway is still the No. 1 issue in my electorate. When you see the signs and the Facebook posts that say, 'If it's flooded, forget it,' and there is a photo of a car going across a causeway, that is my causeway at Austinville. We have had the hydrology study done—

An honourable member interjected.

Ms BATES: Yes, absolutely. That is the photo. That is the Austinville causeway. We had the hydrology study done five years ago. The rains are coming again. I implore the minister to do something about the Austinville causeway before someone's car is swept away with someone in it.

(Time expired)

New Acland Coal Mine

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (7.23 pm): We have all left things to the last minute. We get busy. We put things off. We can only assume that is what happened for the resources minister last week when he just did not get around to letting us know that they had approved the New Acland thermal coalmine until a two-sentence media release at 3.30 on a Friday afternoon. I am sure the timing had nothing at all to do with avoiding scrutiny over this shameful decision!

Before I was elected I represented the farmers opposing this coalmine in the Land Court. It is a crazy and destructive project that will trash some of Queensland's best cropping land, threaten farmers' groundwater supply and contribute to dangerous climate change. It will not even add anything to the state coffers because the New Acland coalmine is exempt from paying any royalties!

To meet our obligations under the Paris agreement, to limit warming to 1½ degrees or even two degrees, we cannot approve any new coal and gas projects. Denying this is denying the science. Queensland Labor have just shown themselves to be climate denialists with this approval and with every other. They have bent over backwards to appease the fossil fuel lobby. They are still hoping the LNP and News Corp will just leave them alone if they do what they want and approve new coal.


In fact, it has been said a few times this week that the Greens are bringing more policy ideas to this place than the LNP. Never a truer word has been spoken here I suspect! Maybe they could learn something from us about putting forward their own policy instead of just taking on the LNP's. Queensland Labor's emission reduction targets are the same as the LNP—net zero by 2050, 30 per cent by 2030, just like the failed federal Morrison government.

Delay is denial, and if the LNP are climate denialists then so is this government. Everyone else can see that coal and gas are on the way out and we need a transition plan to avoid lost jobs and deserted towns across Queensland. We could phase out coal and gas without a single worker losing their job, but we need the government to end the cowardice and denialism and get real.

Our newest Queensland Greens senator Penny Allman-Payne, who lives up in Queensland coal country, is moving a bill to establish a national energy transition authority that would fund and approve locally developed plans for coal and gas communities to transition away from fossil fuels, create new economic activities and ensure that every coal worker is guaranteed a job at the same or better pay.

It could help coordinate a transition plan for workers at Queensland state owned coal and gas-fired power stations and a plan to replace fossil fuel exports with new industries. I hope Queensland Labor will choose this kind of common-sense climate action instead of the denialism and the hollow fairytales we keep hearing about a never-ending coal boom. I sincerely hope, for the sake of every person in Queensland now and into the future, that we get a plan instead of more Friday afternoon media releases about their approval of new coal and gas projects in the state.

Bruce Highway Connection Road, Palmview

 **Mr MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (7.26 pm): I rise to address the Bruce Highway connection road at Palmview in my electorate—a road which should have been built by 30 June this year. Work has just started today on the construction of that road, a road that will provide a second access to a suburb containing more than 5,000 people.

We have seen a series of failures from both local and state government and a lack of desire from developers to build a road that should have been conditioned in an infrastructure agreement put in place by the Sunshine Coast council in the first place. The result is that the local community has been dealing with congestion day in and day out on the single road leading in and out of a new community of more than 5,000 people.

The community has borne the brunt of failures of planning at a state government level and at a local government level. I have spoken about this issue multiple times in the parliament, calling on the Minister for Transport and Main Roads to deal with this problem.

Mr Smith interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Order, member for Bundaberg!

Mr MICKELBERG: This road was conditioned as a consequence of the advocacy of my colleague the member for Kawana when he was the local member representing that area. The Sunshine Coast council should have conditioned this road as part of the infrastructure agreement when they decided to approve the master planned Palmview community. Nonetheless, we have got to the point where it is conditioned. It is now conditioned for work to start today—so just in time. It is good that work has started, but it is due to be completed by 28 February 2023.

Mr Smith interjected.

Mr MICKELBERG: I rise tonight to place on notice the fact that I will be holding this state government, the Sunshine Coast council and developers to account to ensure that that road is built by 28 February 2023. It is eight months too late but better late than never. The consequence of this road not being built—

Government members interjected.

Mr MICKELBERG: I hear members opposite yelling about the fact that they do not want to see roads built to support the Sunshine Coast community—one of the fastest growing areas in the state and we are not seeing the infrastructure investment from this state Labor government.

Mr Smith interjected.


Mr MICKELBERG: The message is very clear: the Sunshine Coast community needs investment in new roads and infrastructure like rail infrastructure. We have a single-lane section on the Sunshine Motorway—on the Mooloolah River Interchange section—that has not been funded and there is no plan to fund the upgrade of this section of road. The entire Sunshine Coast community suffers because of Labor's lack of investment in roads, rail and critical transport infrastructure right across the Sunshine Coast. Sunshine Coast residents deserve better than the lack of attention that they have been getting from this state Labor government.

(Time expired)

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Before I dismiss the House, member for Bundaberg, you were on a warning. The only reason I did not throw you out is that there was only 40 seconds to go—you had been repeatedly interjecting and I did not realise you were on a warning—and the member was not taking your interjections. I wanted to let you know that if you are on a warning you are not to interject.

DEPUTY SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

Radio 4MBS, Evening of Classics

 **Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): On a lighter note, members, the evening of classics that was scheduled to be in the red chamber tonight has now been moved to the Premiers' and Speakers' Hall. I hope you will join us for radio station 4MBS evening of classics, classical music and classical Shakespeare. The arts has definitely come to parliament and we are all ready for it.

The House adjourned at 7.30 pm.

ATTENDANCE

Andrew, Bailey, Bates, Bennett, Berkman, Bleijie, Bolton, Boothman, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Camm, Crandon, Crawford, Crisafulli, D'Ath, Dametto, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Frecklington, Furner, Gerber, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Hart, Head, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, Janetzki, Katter, Kelly, King A, King S, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Lauga, Leahy, Linard, 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, Purdie, Richards, Robinson, Rowan, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Simpson, Skelton, Smith, Stevens, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Watts, Weir, Whiting