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FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

Tuesday, 25 October 2022

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TUESDAY, 25 OCTOBER 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.

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, having been passed by the Legislative Assembly and having been presented for the Royal Assent, were assented to in the name of His Majesty The King on the date shown:

Date of Assent: 21 October 2022

A Bill for An Act to amend 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

A Bill for An Act to amend the Health Ombudsman Act 2013 and the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act 2009 for particular purposes

A Bill for An Act to amend the Casino Control Act 1982, the Casino Control Regulation 1999, the Charitable and Non-Profit Act 1999, the Collections Act 1966, the Gaming Machine Act 1991, the Interactive Gambling (Player Protection) Act 1998, the Keno Act 1996, the Lotteries Act 1997, the Wagering Act 1998 and the Wagering Regulation 1999 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

21 October 2022

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 21 October 2022, from Her Excellency the Governor to the Speaker advising of assent to certain bills on 21 October 2022 [\[1732\]](#).

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT


Absence of Members



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I have received advice from the member for Bulimba, Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development, and also from the member for Ninderry as to their absences from the sittings of the House this week. The members' notifications comply with standing order 263A.

SPEAKER'S RULING

Same Question Rule

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I have considered the Public Health and Other Legislation (COVID-19 Management) Amendment Bill 2022 and the application of the same question rule. The same question rule is enlivened by clause 6 and schedule 1 of the bill. A motion to suspend standing order 87 would be required for this clause and schedule to be considered. I seek leave to incorporate my full ruling.

Leave granted.

SPEAKER'S RULING—APPLICATION OF SAME QUESTION RULE TO PUBLIC HEALTH AND OTHER LEGISLATION (COVID-19 MANAGEMENT) AMENDMENT BILL

Honourable members, I have considered the Public Health and Other Legislation (COVID-19 Management) Amendment Bill 2022 and the application of the same question rule.


Standing Order 87 provides the general rule of Westminster parliamentary practice that, once the House has resolved a matter in the affirmative or negative, the same question shall not again be proposed in the same session. Similarly, Standing Order 150 provides for the application of the same question rule in relation to amendments, new clauses or schedules of a bill. As previous Speakers have noted, the matters do not have to be identical but merely the same in substance as the previous matter. In other words, it is a question of substance, not form (Speaker Reynolds, Record of Proceedings, 9 September 2008, p. 2559).

Clause 6 and Schedule 1 propose amendments to Acts that are substantially the same as amendments previously considered, and agreed to, by the House in this session. This is contrary to Standing Order 87.

Accordingly, I rule that the same question rule is enlivened by clause 6 and Schedule 1 of the bill contrary to Standing Order 87. A motion to suspend Standing Order 87 would be required for this clause and Schedule to be considered.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

School Group Tours

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I wish to advise that we will be visited in the gallery this morning by students and teachers from St Joseph's College in the electorate of McConnel and Islamic College of Brisbane in the electorate of Stretton.

PETITIONS

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

Public Transport, Safety

Mr Boothman, from 586 petitioners, requesting the House to implement further measures to protect public transport drivers from assaults and to strengthen fare evasion laws [\[1733\]](#).

Corinda State High School, STEM Facility

Ms Pugh, from 525 petitioners, requesting the House to facilitate the construction of a new purpose-built STEM facility at Corinda State High School [\[1734\]](#).

Wilsonton State High School, Crossing

Mr Watts, from 202 petitioners, requesting the House to work with the Toowoomba Regional Council to investigate a scramble crossing for the Wilsonton State High School at the intersection of Richmond Drive and North Street [\[1735\]](#).

Petitions received.

TABLED PAPERS

PAPERS TABLED DURING THE RECESS (SO 31)

The Clerk informed the House that the following papers, received during the recess, were tabled on the dates indicated—

17 October 2022—

[1689](#) Major Sports Facilities Amendment Bill 2022, explanatory notes: Erratum

[1690](#) Community Support and Services Committee: Report No. 22, 57th Parliament—Annual Report 2021-22

[1691](#) Economics and Governance Committee: Report No. 34, 57th Parliament—Annual Report 2021-22

[1692](#) Wet Tropics Management Authority—Annual Report 2021-22

[1693](#) Wet Tropics Management Authority—State of Wet Tropics 2021-2022: The restoration economy: enhancing climate adaptation through natural capital markets

[1694](#) Public Trustee of Queensland—Review of fees and charges, 24 June 2022

18 October 2022—

[1695](#) Education, Employment and Training Committee: Report No. 26, 57th Parliament—Mount Gravatt TAFE Upgrade Project

[1696](#) Education, Employment and Training Committee: Report No. 27, 57th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 22 June 2022 and 16 August 2022

19 October 2022—

[1697](#) Legal Affairs and Safety Committee: Report No. 36, 57th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 22 June 2022 and 31 August 2022

[1698](#) Legal Affairs and Safety Committee: Report No. 37, 57th Parliament—Annual Report 2021-22

20 October 2022—

[1699](#) Office of the Work Health and Safety Prosecutor—Annual Report 2021-2022

21 October 2022—

[1700](#) Queensland Government document titled 'Statement of the Queensland Government's objectives for the community'

[1701](#) Overseas Travel Report: Report on investment and trade mission to Korea, Japan and Singapore by the Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment (Hon. Dick), 17 to 25 September 2022

[1702](#) Ministerial direction, dated 17 October 2022, from the Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement, Hon. Mick de Brenni, to the Queensland Building and Construction Commission under section 9 of the Queensland Building and Construction Commission Act 1991 and letter, dated 27 September 2022, from Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and the Minister for Public Works and Procurement, Hon. Mick de Brenni, to the Chair, Queensland Building and Construction Board, Mr Dick Williams, titled 'Statement of expectations for Queensland Building and Construction Commission—Initial year'

[1703](#) National Heavy Vehicle Regulator—Annual Report 2021-22

[1704](#) Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator—Annual Report 2021-22

[1705](#) Rail Safety National Law (South Australia) Act 2012: Rail Safety National Law National Regulations (Fees and FOI) Amendment Regulations 2022

[1706](#) Rail Safety National Law (South Australia) Act 2012: Rail Safety National Law National Regulations (Fees and FOI) Amendment Regulations 2022, explanatory notes

24 October 2022—

[1707](#) Transport and Resources Committee: Report No. 22, 57th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 22 June 2022 and 30 August 2022

[1708](#) Transport and Resources Committee: Report No. 23, 57th Parliament—Annual Report 2021-22

[1709](#) State Development and Regional Industries Committee: Report No. 29, 57th Parliament—Annual Report 2021-22

[1710](#) State Development and Regional Industries Committee: Report No. 30, 57th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 17 August and 30 August 2022

[1711](#) Health and Environment Committee: Report No. 25, 57th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 22 June 2022 and 16 August 2022

TABLING OF DOCUMENTS (SO 32)

STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

The following statutory instruments were tabled by the Clerk—

Work Health and Safety Act 2011:

[1712](#) Work Health and Safety (Psychosocial Risks) Amendment Regulation 2022, No. 141

[1713](#) Work Health and Safety (Psychosocial Risks) Amendment Regulation 2022, No. 141, explanatory notes

[1714](#) Work Health and Safety (Psychosocial Risks) Amendment Regulation 2022, No. 141, human rights certificate

State Penalties Enforcement Act 1999, Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995:

[1715](#) Transport Operations (Road Use Management—Road Rules) and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2022, No. 142

[1716](#) Transport Operations (Road Use Management—Road Rules) and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2022, No. 142, explanatory notes

[1717](#) Transport Operations (Road Use Management—Road Rules) and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2022, No. 142, human rights certificate

Major Events Act 2014:

[1718](#) Major Events (T20 World Cup) Regulation 2022, No. 143

[1719](#) Major Events (T20 World Cup) Regulation 2022, No. 143, explanatory notes

[1720](#) Major Events (T20 World Cup) Regulation 2022, No. 143, human rights certificate

Water Act 2000:

- [1721](#) Water Plan (Pioneer Valley) (Postponement of Expiry) Notice 2022, No. 144
- [1722](#) Water Plan (Pioneer Valley) (Postponement of Expiry) Notice 2022, No. 144, explanatory notes
- [1723](#) Water Plan (Pioneer Valley) (Postponement of Expiry) Notice 2022, No. 144, human rights certificate

Personal Injuries Proceedings and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2022:

- [1724](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 145
- [1725](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 145, explanatory notes

Legal Profession Act 2007, Personal Injuries Proceedings Act 2002, Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Act 2003:

- [1726](#) Personal Injuries Proceedings and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2022, No. 146
- [1727](#) Personal Injuries Proceedings and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2022, No. 146, explanatory notes
- [1728](#) Personal Injuries Proceedings and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2022, No. 146, human rights certificate

Planning Act 2016:

- [1729](#) Planning (Emergency Housing) Amendment Regulation 2022, No. 147
- [1730](#) Planning (Emergency Housing) Amendment Regulation 2022, No. 147, explanatory notes
- [1731](#) Planning (Emergency Housing) Amendment Regulation 2022, No. 147, human rights certificate

MINISTERIAL PAPER

State Finances



Hon. CR DICK (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (9.33 am): I table the report on state finances for the financial year 2021-22.

Tabled paper: Queensland Government: 2021-22 Report on State Finances of the Queensland Government—30 June 2022 [[1736](#)].

The report incorporates the Outcomes Report on a uniform presentation framework basis. The report also includes the financial statements prepared in accordance with Australian accounting standards. Both are presented on an accrual basis. Importantly, the report provides the final budget outcome for the financial year just concluded. In particular, the report shows that our final position for the 2021-22 financial year is a surplus of \$4.3 billion. I am advised by Queensland Treasury that this is the largest recorded surplus since these records began. It also shows we have achieved the largest infrastructure investment in more than a decade. As we approach a period of great economic uncertainty, I commend this report to the House.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Federal Budget



Hon. A PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympics) (9.34 am): As the Albanese federal government hands down its first budget, Queensland's economy is leading the way. There have been 106,400 jobs created over the last year. Exports of goods have hit a new record of 127.5 billion, more than New South Wales and Victoria combined. Australians are voting with their feet, with net interstate migration to Queensland at nearly 54,000 over the year to March—again leading the country. When it comes to annual growth even CommSec is backing Queensland, saying in its latest report—

Queensland is the growth leader.

Queensland has the strongest jobs market.

That strong economy, built on a strong health response, has flowed through to a strong budget position: a surplus last financial year of \$4.3 billion, up by \$2.4 billion compared to the budget. Well done, Treasurer!


Opposition members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Those opposite do not like good news. There is more to come. This has supported the doubling of the Housing Investment Fund to \$2 billion. The Housing Investment Fund will position Australia to partner on a housing accord with the federal government to deliver even more affordable housing. I look forward to further detail in tonight's budget, a federal budget that has already confirmed support for cost of living, including an additional six weeks of paid parental leave for families, taking the total leave to six months from July 2026; delivery of the commitment for more free TAFE,

backing our government's policy; another 20,000 university places nationally, focused on supporting people living in the regions; improved childcare subsidies for over one million families across the nation; and cheaper medicines under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme. The regions will benefit from \$2.4 billion of funding upgrades to broadband supporting 660,000 premises in regional Australia. There is another \$1.47 billion in infrastructure projects for Queensland, including upgrades to the Bruce Highway and an exciting new focus on critical minerals that will support more jobs in our resources industry.

I am looking forward to seeing more funding in tonight's budget to support primary health care to take pressure off our hospital system. Our government welcomes support and systems solutions to achieve better use of hospital beds to relieve pressure on hospitals and improve patient outcomes. I will be listening to the Treasurer's budget speech tonight to see what the budget will deliver for Queensland. We now have a Prime Minister who listens and understands Queensland and a federal Treasurer from Queensland.

Housing Summit

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympics) (9.38 am): Last Thursday more than 170 people, representing both the state and federal government, local governments and others who work at the housing coalface, gathered for our government's historic housing summit. I again want to thank everyone for attending this important event, including members across the political divide from this chamber. We know how important housing is for families.


There is nothing more heartbreaking than the stories we have all heard recently about Queenslanders unable to find accommodation. We are facing unprecedented housing pressure. This issue is not unique to Queensland. It is being faced across the nation. But Queensland can find unique solutions—tangible, workable solutions—and we can achieve that by working together. There was so much goodwill in that room. Our government has already made significant decisions. We will double the size of our Housing Investment Fund from \$1 billion to 2 billion to help with the commencement of new homes. Additionally, there are now key outcomes from the summit that I am determined to become a reality.

Every idea presented at the summit is important. We have been approached by many organisations and individuals with offers of land and other contributions to help get more homes into the market quickly. This includes faith-based organisations that are doing a stocktake of their own landholdings to see what might be suitable for housing. As an immediate step, we will establish a portal where more of those ideas can be received at a clearing house within government, bringing together all departments to consider all these offers and work quickly and collectively to unlock their potential. We will undertake our own audit of government buildings and land. We have activated more emergency funding and support worth \$21 million and will continue to assess if we need to activate more.

We know we are looking down the barrel of a severe storm season. That is why our government will be cutting red tape to allow faster construction of emergency accommodation in disaster affected communities. This will be in place as a matter of priority ahead of the coming season.

The outcomes from the summit will be captured in a report to be tabled in the parliament next month. It requires we take our time but still act with urgency to analyse that data and present a suite of solutions to address this critical issue facing thousands of Queensland families.

Visy

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympics) (9.40 am): Finally, as Premier I have the privilege to attend a lot of sod turns, breaking ground on major infrastructure projects that benefit Queensland and Queenslanders and right across our state. Let me say, there is a lot happening. On Friday at Stapylton, along with the Treasurer, the Gold Coast mayor and Visy's Anthony Pratt, we turned the sod for early works to start on the company's new \$500 million glass and manufacturing facility. We did not just break ground; it was groundbreaking. It was groundbreaking for Queensland jobs, Queensland manufacturing, the environment and the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games. It is also part of Visy's largest ever investment in Queensland, worth \$700 million.

The new glass and manufacturing facility will support over 600 construction jobs and around 200 jobs once operational. When complete, it will manufacture one billion glass containers annually. It will support the growth of Queensland based beverage companies such as Queensland exporter of the year, Bundaberg Brew Drinks, as well as Asahi, CUB, Lion and Coca Cola. The new facility will not only make Queensland glass packaging self-sufficient, which currently it is not, but also sets us up—

Mr Janetzki interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: The member for Toowoomba South will cease his interjections.

Ms PALASZCZUK:—to be a net exporter. The new facility will recycle glass from our kerbside bins and from the Containers for Change deposit sites. I do not know what they have against recycling. It is good for the environment and for jobs.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Ms PALASZCZUK: More recycling happens over there. They recycle leaders. We have had about four or five.

An opposition member interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: We will come to your policies a bit later.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members to my right.


Ms PALASZCZUK: I will leave that one for the Treasurer. He loves that one the most.

Mr SPEAKER: Premier, you have the call.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I was being provoked. The Visy facility will divert up to 40,000 tonnes of glass from landfill, which is the equivalent of 200 million extra recycled beer bottles. It will also increase the amount of glass Queensland can recycle from 140,000 tonnes to up to 200,000 tonnes a year.

This all part of a broader deal I announced in April. It meant relocating and upgrading Visy's current South Brisbane glass factory to a new factory at Stapylton, which not only secured manufacturing jobs for the glass factory but also at two other sites, including a new cardboard box factory at Hemmant and an upgrade to its resource facility on Gibson Island. In return, we secured a key site for the 2032 Olympics International Broadcast Centre, where pictures of Brisbane and Queensland will be beamed around the world. It is also part of the ongoing urban renewal of the broader South Brisbane riverside precinct at Kurilpa. The new facility will help Visy and Queenslanders support our clean energy future by increasing recycling and reducing emissions and that is to be applauded. It is also another step in the journey to 2032 and the climate-positive games.

Housing Summit

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumbidgee—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics Infrastructure) (9.43 am): Yesterday, CommSec's State of the States report confirmed that Queensland is leading the country on population growth and on unemployment. Today, the Treasurer's *Report on state finances of the Queensland government* is further proof that Queensland is booming. The \$4.3 billion surplus for the 2021-22 financial year is the biggest surplus delivered in Queensland since the adoption of contemporary accounting methods. It is no wonder that people are choosing to live, work and grow their families here.


The Palaszczuk government's economic recovery plan has worked, keeping Queenslanders employed and our economy growing through one of the nation's most challenging times. 1994 was the last time interstate migration into Queensland was as strong as it is now. Before the pandemic, in 2019, just over 22,000 people moved to Queensland. To the end of last year, that number had increased to 50,000 people. That is the largest increase in 27 years. That population growth is set to continue with forecasts that a quarter of a million more people are expected to call Queensland home over the next four years.

The only way to drive solutions for housing supply and affordability is in partnership with all who have responsibility for housing, from all levels of government through to the private sector. That is why we brought all of those people together last week for the Queensland Housing Summit. The South-East Queensland regional planning committee will soon be discussing key regional issues such as connectivity, housing and priorities for an updated SEQ Regional Plan. In addition to doubling the Housing Investment Fund to \$2 billion to help build new homes for Queenslanders, we have fast-tracked planning changes to help people get into accommodation faster.

With storm season fast approaching, we are speeding up the delivery of emergency housing in communities that have been hit by a natural disaster. It means state and local governments can look at sites where demountable housing can be put in quickly, such as at showgrounds, to give people who have lost their homes in a disaster an immediate temporary housing solution.

We will also make changes so that social and affordable housing is treated as community infrastructure, allowing providers to use the infrastructure designation pathway for those important developments. Because of this change, we will see faster development of social and affordable housing projects across the state, getting more vulnerable Queenslanders into housing sooner. We will continue to work with the federal government, local councils and industry to deliver more housing for Queenslanders.

Economy

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (9.46 am): As set out in the ministerial paper I tabled earlier this morning, Queensland's economic performance is leading the world. The *Report on state finances of the Queensland government* for 2021-22 is the written proof that our strong health response to COVID-19, the strength of our health system and the strength of our people have led to a strong economic performance. The \$4.3 billion surplus is the largest Queensland surplus on record. In extraordinary times, this is an extraordinary result. This surplus is the result of two deliberate government strategies: our government's COVID-19 Economic Recovery Plan restored the strength and health of our economy; and our savings and debt plan helped restrain and better manage expenditure to restore the strength and health of our budget.

The drivers of the \$2.4 billion improvement in our fiscal position were higher revenue and lower expenditure. Taxation revenue increased \$510 million compared to the 2022-23 budget estimated actual, largely due to higher transfer duty. Payroll tax revenue was also higher relative to the estimated actual forecast due to the ongoing exceptionally strong labour market conditions in Queensland.

Stronger economic performance means lower debt. Net general government sector borrowings, as at 30 June 2022, were \$393 million lower than what was estimated in this year's budget. Furthermore, these net borrowings are \$13.75 billion lower than what was estimated in the budget I delivered in June 2021. Queensland's net general government debt is \$10.99 billion. That is barely one-tenth of Victoria's, which stands at \$100 billion. While the Liberal New South Wales government is yet to publish its final figures, its latest reported estimated actual borrowings were five times Queensland's at \$53½ billion.

While general government sector expenses were \$931 million lower than the estimate at the budget in June, I note one area where expenses rose: employee expenses. Employee expenses rose because the Palaszczuk government continues to invest in frontline services, especially frontline healthcare workers.


Our government has now delivered six budget surpluses, but we do not deliver budget surpluses for their own sake.

Mr Bleijie interjected.

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

Mr DICK: We put them to work to deliver infrastructure, services and jobs for the people of Queensland. We are going to put this budget surplus to work as well. This record surplus enables us to fund vital service delivery, like the additional \$1 billion for the Housing Investment Fund the Premier and I announced last week. That additional investment will help deliver 5,600 new social and affordable homes through innovative partnerships with the private sector and superannuation funds. Because of the strength of our budget surplus, we delivered this increase in housing investment without increasing borrowings, compared to our budget projections. However, given the extreme international volatility we face and the prospect of a third severe consecutive La Nina, it is important that we further strengthen Queensland's fiscal buffers. We will continue to fortify those fiscal buffers. As we protect Queensland's great lifestyle, we will continue to deliver the infrastructure, the good jobs and the better services that the people of Queensland deserve.

State Education

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (9.51 am): This week is State Education Week. I am sure that every member in this House will join me in placing on record their appreciation for our teachers, principals, support staff and P&Cs—our entire school communities—who make a huge difference to the lives of Queensland students. They truly are the foundation of the world-class education system we have here in Queensland, setting up our children for a great future. The Palaszczuk government is proud of our investment in state schools, ensuring there are good jobs and even better services for communities right across Queensland.

State Education Week culminates in the celebration of World Teachers' Day on Friday. Throughout the week, many landmarks across the state will be lit up in purple, blue and green, including Brisbane City Hall and the Story Bridge, the Court House gallery in Cairns and the Wharton Reef lighthouse in Townsville.

We know what a difference education and teachers make. That is why between 2015 and 2020 the Palaszczuk government employed more than 6,000 new teachers and 1,500 teacher aides, putting downward pressure on class sizes and helping to ensure we have among the lowest student-to-teacher ratios in the country. At the last election we made a commitment to employ 6,190 new teachers over four years. We are on track to meet that, with around 3,500 so far. We also made a commitment to employ 1,139 new teacher aides. We have already met that target, with more than 1,300 new teacher aides since 2020.

Our innovative \$20 million Turn to Teaching initiative is currently employing 50 aspiring teachers in targeted subject areas to complete a teaching qualification and undertake paid internship employment, finishing with a guaranteed permanent position in a Queensland state school. I am proud to say that we have already received 370 applications for our second round. Our Trade to Teach program, starting next year, for trade professionals looking to make the transition to teaching has attracted over 150 applications. The Palaszczuk government is also investing \$80 million over the next two years to fund around 500 frontline positions as part of the transition to our new, game-changing disability resourcing model.

We know that our teachers deserve more than our thanks, and I am pleased to inform the House that the negotiations on our excellent enterprise bargaining are finalised, with the ballot opening on 8 November. It includes some of the highest pay increases and best working conditions for teachers in the country. The Palaszczuk government is proud to deliver for our teachers, for our schools and for our students.

Ambulance Service



Hon. YM D'ATH (Redcliffe—ALP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (9.54 am): The Palaszczuk government backs our paramedics and our Queensland Ambulance Service staff. Since 2015 we have delivered more than 1,000 new ambulance operatives, including more than 500 ambulance operatives during this term of government.

Our Ambulance Service is the busiest in the country. Federal government data shows that Queensland has 233 incidents per 1,000 head of population. That is compared to New South Wales figures of 121.2 per 1,000 head of population. Part of the reason our Ambulance Service is so busy is the fact Queensland is one of only two jurisdictions in Australia that does not charge patients for the use of an ambulance. As our Queensland Health and Hospitals Plan notes, to meet this demand the QAS employs the highest proportion of qualified ambulance officers per 100,000 of the population in the country. In addition, our record QAS budget of \$1.1 billion is ensuring we can continue to deliver new and replacement ambulance stations as well as ambulance vehicles.


As well as investing in these frontline resources, the Palaszczuk government is committed to investing in innovative models of care. Last week I had the pleasure of announcing the expansion of the QAS Clinical Hub. The clinical hub started in 2020 and was utilised to support those in hotel quarantine who required health care. It has also been utilised to deal with the significant number of triple 0 calls for ambulances we have seen throughout the course of the pandemic, particularly at the start of this year with all of those people who were reporting positive COVID tests. It uses a multidisciplinary team to provide people seeking an ambulance with access to clinical advice, health navigation and referral pathways without requiring the use of an ambulance.

This model has proven to be an immense success. Having started with just five paramedics and two emergency medical dispatchers in 2020, an additional investment of \$42 million over four years will lead to the considerable expansion of this nation-leading statewide initiative. The investment will scale up the clinical hub to be a 24-hour, seven-day-a-week service with 64 specialist staff including senior paramedics, EMDs, emergency specialists, mental health clinicians and nurse practitioners. Already the clinical hub interacts with about 250 Queenslanders a day, with one in four of those people being diverted away from our emergency departments and receiving more appropriate care elsewhere. These figures are expected to be even better when the expanded services of the clinical hub are fully operational.

Our investment will ensure that more Queenslanders are able to access the benefits of this innovative service delivery. This type of innovation builds on a variety of diversionary measures including our QAS mental health co-responder model, our Queensland Health residential aged-care

support services and the Metro North virtual emergency department. These innovations can only occur because of the record investment the Palaszczuk government is making in health, and the Palaszczuk government understands that an investment in health is an investment in Queenslanders.

Gateway Motorway and Bruce Highway, Upgrade

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (9.57 am): Over the past week we have invited community feedback on the \$2.1 billion Gateway Motorway and Bruce Highway upgrade. Part of this process, based on department advice, includes notifying potentially affected property owners. My heart goes out to those people. It is always very difficult to be notified that your property may be required for a road upgrade.

We know that Brisbane's and Moreton Bay's northern suburbs are undergoing rapid growth, and with this rapid growth comes pressure on our transport infrastructure. That is why we are looking to increase capacity on the Gateway Motorway and Bruce Highway, to support this growth and unlock major housing developments in the area—like Caboolture West, which is predicted to be home to 70,000 residents in the future.

Eighty per cent of funding for part of this project was first announced by the former Morrison LNP government in 2018, with local MPs Luke Howarth and Peter Dutton publicly championing this upgrade—then and often since.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members!

Mr BAILEY: Let me reiterate—

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition will cease his interjections. I had just called the House to order.

Mr BAILEY: Eighty per cent of this funding for the project was first announced by the former Morrison LNP government in 2018, with local MPs Luke Howarth and Peter Dutton publicly championing this upgrade—then and often since. Both Howarth and Dutton—

Mr Perrett interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Gympie will put his interjections through the chair.

Mr BAILEY: Both Luke Howarth and Peter Dutton have strongly advocated for the north-facing on and off ramps at Griffin and Murrumba Downs, and that is a matter of public record. In April 2018 federal opposition leader Peter Dutton said—

Today the Coalition Government announced it will provide 80% of the funding for new Bruce Highway on-off ramps at Dohles Rocks Road. It is great news for our community ...

Those were Peter Dutton's words. To quote Luke Howarth, the federal member for Petrie—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr BAILEY: Mr Speaker, they run interference on this ministerial statement. I am merely stating the facts. To quote Luke Howarth, the federal member for Petrie—

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

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

Mr BAILEY: Luke Howarth, the federal member for Petrie, said in September 2018—

I was just talking to Jules ... she was absolutely supportive of it as are the people of Griffin. They've never been clearer. They want it built now. And as your Federal MP, I'm going to keep fighting for it.

Mr Minnikin interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Chatsworth!

Mr BAILEY: These are the words of Luke Howarth, and let me repeat them because—

Mr Mander interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Member for Everton!

Mr BAILEY: The pathetic attempt to drown me out by the opposition is ridiculous. Let me quote Luke Howarth again.

... she was absolutely supportive of it as are the people of Griffin. They've never been clearer. They want it built now. And as your Federal MP, I'm going to keep fighting for it.

Mr O'Connor: That was four years ago!

Mr BAILEY: Mr Speaker, the interjections are telling. These are the facts of the matter: they took this to the 2019 federal election. They were re-elected with a mandate to deliver the on and off ramps at Griffin, so in 2020 the state government started early planning for it. It was not just back in 2018 that these two federal MPs championed this project. Just last week the federal member for Petrie, Luke Howarth, was smiling via emojis on his Facebook page, celebrating the next phase of the Griffin on and off ramps and claiming credit for it.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Apologies, Minister. Members to my left, I have tried to give as much guidance as possible. There is a running commentary and it needs to cease. Members will be warned without any additional advice.

Mr BAILEY: The House will understand my surprise when days later Luke Howarth came out publicly against the next phase of the project which is in community consultation, consulting with local residents who may be impacted by the Griffin on and off ramps which he and Peter Dutton funded, designed and demanded in 2018. It was some of the lowest behaviour I have witnessed during my time in office towards people who are in a very vulnerable state.

It is a very unfortunate situation when federal LNP MPs politicise community consultation which they themselves were responsible for. Unlike the federal LNP, we are committed to a genuine community consultation process. We will continue to work with the community on this issue. At this early stage it is not clear which properties will be required, but we have done the right thing and notified all potentially impacted property owners based on the advice of the Department of Transport and Main Roads. Once further work is done we will have a clearer indication of the property requirements of this project. This is a normal part of the process. We will continue to work with those property owners through this difficult process.

Renewable Energy, Agriculture Industry



Hon. MC de BRENNI (Springwood—ALP) (Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement) (10.03 am): The Palaszczuk government's commitment to better services and more cost-of-living relief goes well beyond the borders of South-East Queensland. We are unashamedly a government for all Queenslanders. Just ask Minister Furner, the farmers' friend.

This morning we are excited to announce that Queensland farmers and landholders across the state will soon have a handy online toolkit to help them cash in on our renewable energy revolution. The opportunity for producers to coexist with renewable energy ventures could create new and reliable income. There is a major shift happening right now across regional Queensland, and a growing number of landholders are researching their options to lease part of their properties and coexist with renewable energy ventures, especially solar and windfarms. The opportunities are here and now, and they will keep evolving through the pipeline of investment outlined in the Palaszczuk government's \$62 billion Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan. For many landholders this presents a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to futureproof their family business—businesses that have been traditionally susceptible to changing weather patterns and fluctuating prices. Everyone from sheep and cattle graziers to horticulturalists and viticulturists as well as farmers across the cropping and beekeeping sectors has the opportunity to reap the rewards of the clean energy boom.

Today we can announce a new partnership with the Queensland Farmers' Federation that will help landowners navigate the opportunities our energy transformation presents. It highlights key considerations to take into account and helps guide rural producers in the right direction. Queensland Farmers' Federation CEO Jo Sheppard said that she was pleased to partner with the Palaszczuk government to develop the toolkit. In relation to Queensland's SuperGrid and the new toolkit she said, 'Coexistence with these types of developments can provide tremendous opportunities for landholders.' She said, 'This toolkit will provide practical information to help farmers understand how to navigate negotiations.' She went on to say, 'It will be an easy-to-understand guide of essential information to support them in their decision-making processes.'

We thank the Queensland Farmers' Federation for this partnership. Farmers are some of the most impacted by global price rises for fuel and power, but they also fundamentally understand the need to address climate change. That is why our plan delivers a partnership for better services and cost-of-living relief for Queensland farmers.

Housing Summit



Hon. LM ENOCH (Alger—ALP) (Minister for Communities and Housing, Minister for Digital Economy and Minister for the Arts) (10.06 am): Last week the Premier hosted the Queensland Housing Summit and opened with the key announcement that this government will double the size of our Housing Investment Fund to \$2 billion. The Palaszczuk government is now investing a record \$3.9 billion in social and affordable housing in Queensland. That means that since coming to office in 2015 the Palaszczuk government will have commenced more than 13,000 social and affordable homes across a number of programs by 2027. That is more than 1,000 homes a year—almost three commenced each and every day. Just last week I joined Senator Anthony Chisholm and local MP Jimmy Sullivan to cut the ribbon on 38 new social housing units in Lutwyche, marking the 4,000th social home completed by the Palaszczuk government since 2015. With the whole housing sector united and working together, even more can be achieved. The summit saw almost 200 stakeholders in the room—with many more live streamed—put ideas on the table to bolster housing and homelessness assistance.

The summit was held over a day and included plenary and breakout sessions covering: social housing; emergency accommodation and homelessness solutions; density, planning and housing diversity; construction challenges and innovation; and housing and rental affordability. We heard from stakeholders and those with lived experience that: more support is needed for homeless services; prefabricated homes are a fast way to get stock on the ground; and inclusionary zoning is an option to increase supply.

I am pleased to report to the House that we are already delivering several actions to help alleviate housing pressure, including: changes to enable better use of secondary dwellings, allowing home owners to rent out a granny flat to potential tenants outside their immediate family; working with the Catholic Church and other faith-based organisations that have identified properties which could be used for housing; working in partnership with Griffith University to deliver 200 unutilised student accommodation beds to be used as crisis accommodation; and recently going to market via an EOI for modern methods of construction, seeking suppliers of prefabricated homes to help source immediate housing solutions with a commitment to purchase 50 in the first instance.

In June this year the Premier also announced an Immediate Housing Response Package backed by a \$16 million investment to help families secure or sustain a rental property. This targeted response is helping families in urgent housing need across Queensland. We recently boosted it by \$5 million as an outcome of the housing round table. To ensure we keep the momentum going, we will table the outcome of the Housing Summit in a report in parliament. The report will capture the discussions and insights of those at the summit and detail how we action them. We know that Queenslanders are naturally resilient and optimistic. As we face a national housing challenge, Queensland is well-positioned to collectively build the solutions we need to house vulnerable Queenslanders sooner.

Housing Summit



Hon. MAJ SCANLON (Gaven—ALP) (Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Youth Affairs) (10.09 am): About 20 per cent of those experiencing homelessness in Queensland are young people. Young people who are couch surfing or staying with family or friends often have much higher levels of psychological distress and report poorer overall mental health. Those who experience homelessness and housing instability as children are more likely to disengage with education and training and face a range of other challenges. That is why it is vital that those young people are part of a conversation.

Earlier this week, I met online with young Queenslanders from across the state to hear firsthand their experiences. We heard from young people who have experienced residential care and people now working in the social services sector, through to others who are just feeling the pressure of the private rental market. Beyond being disproportionately impacted by housing stress, young people also have great innovative ideas and solutions, which is why it was so important that their voices and ideas were amplified at the Housing Summit convened by the Premier last week.


At the summit we heard from young people like Jordanah Chan from the Queensland Youth Housing Coalition, who shared her lived experiences, both as someone experiencing housing insecurity and as someone who works with young people in the foster system. I want to thank Jordanah and everyone who attended the summit and the youth round tables that were convened. They made their voices heard and we are acting on solutions.

We have announced a \$30 million Youth Homelessness Strategy. I want to acknowledge Holly who joined Minister Enoch and me and who bravely shared her story in the hope it will help others to break the cycle and address the broad issues that often lead to homelessness for young people. That

is on top of the \$40 million we already provide to specialist homelessness services. We have added another \$1 billion to the Housing Investment Fund. We have completed our 4,000th social home, with more than 5,600 in the pipeline.

Safe, secure and affordable housing is vital in order to get the best possible education, job and start in life. There is no one size that fits all. We need all levels of government to work together to solve this very difficult issue. The Palaszczuk government will always listen to young people and make sure that we act for them.

Resources Industries, Jobs

 **Hon. SJ STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (Minister for Resources) (10.11 am): I rise to talk about the importance of the resources sector and the good jobs it creates and supports. Right now there are more than 75,000 people directly employed in the industry. Under the Palaszczuk government, there has been more than \$21 billion worth of new investment in resources projects, creating more than 8,000 jobs, and we continue to support more good jobs in the industry.


I can inform the House that last week the remaining approval for stage 3 of the New Acland project was granted by the Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water when it approved the associated water licence for the project, subject to a range of strict conditions. This last approval comes after I granted the mining lease for the project and an environmental authority was also granted. This was the process set out by the Land Court in a recommendation handed down in December last year. The government's position on New Acland stage 3 has been consistent—to wait for the conclusion of legal proceedings before progressing the consideration of remaining approvals.

As the Minister for Resources, I know there are many workers in the Darling Downs region who welcome this opportunity for good jobs and good jobs close to home that New Acland stage 3 will provide. This project is expected to support 300 construction jobs and a further 400 jobs once it is operational. It is also the indirect jobs that the resources industry supports, like the local mechanic, the hairdressers, the service station or the excellent bakery in Oakey.

The resources industry is important for local communities, and I saw that firsthand when I visited the region earlier this year. I know New Hope has been flooded with job applications since the approval was granted and it is great to see the company looking to support local jobs in the region, and they should be a priority. About two weeks ago, they had received 719 expressions of interest for jobs, along with 65 expressions of interest from businesses wanting to work with the company. What is good to see is that many of the people and businesses looking to work on stage 3 of New Acland are local and want jobs somewhere close to home.


As a government, we support the regions and we support good regional jobs. The resources sector and the coal industry are important employers throughout regional Queensland. Like we always have, we will continue to support resources projects that stack up environmentally, socially and financially.

ABSENCE OF MINISTER

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (10.14 am): I rise to advise that the Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development will be absent from question time in the House during this week's sitting due to medical reasons. I therefore wish to advise the House that Minister Grace will be acting minister for all of Minister Farmer's ministerial portfolios for this week's sitting.

MOTION

Suspension of Standing Orders

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (10.14 am), by leave, without notice: I move—

That standing order 87 be suspended to enable clause 6 and schedule 1 of the Public Health and Other Legislation (COVID-19 Management) Amendment Bill 2022 to be considered.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Mr SPEAKER: Question time will conclude today at 11.15 am.

Obstetric Services



Mr CRISAFULLI (10.15 am): My question is to the Premier. Women who had stillbirths were placed in the same ward as new mums and their babies at a Queensland hospital for nearly a year after the health minister said this practice was axed. Will the Premier apologise to these grieving women for the torture they have endured?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for the question. It is heartbreaking for any woman to lose a child and I feel that I do know how they feel, having lost a child myself. It is never easy for anybody. My understanding is that the clinicians make these decisions because severe complications can happen for the women in the hospital after losing a child. It can require further surgery, which at times is very distressing for the person involved. They need the best care, and that care is given by the specialists who are in the wards which are associated with obstetrics and gynaecology. These are the specialists who are needed because there can be unintended consequences and there can be urgent follow-up care. These are the facts.

The health minister has advised me that there were plans in place to upgrade that particular ward and a new ward will be opened. I just say to the Leader of the Opposition that when you raise these issues you are raising issues that have very deep, personal impacts on individuals. Clinicians make these decisions. It is not members of parliament and not the health minister; it is clinicians in the hospital. I think it is a bit disingenuous for those opposite—

Opposition members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: No, do not politicise this. These are serious issues. I remind those opposite that bringing up these issues is also very traumatic for a woman when you—

Opposition members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: No, for the woman involved.

Mr Bleijie: They're raising the issue.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Yes, and the clinicians make these decisions.

Ms GRACE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Two members on the opposite side are not sitting in their seats and are continually interjecting while the Premier is trying to make her comments. Can I suggest that if they want to interject they sit in their seats or they do not interject.

Mr SPEAKER: That is correct. Member for Everton, if you wish to interject, you should be in your seat. That is the practice in the chamber. I will ask for those interjections to cease.

Ms PEASE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take personal offence at the question delivered by the Leader of the Opposition. I personally experienced a child's death and I was in a ward. I took personal offence by politicising the tragedy for people who experienced that.

Mr SPEAKER: The practice is that members must be directly named to take personal offence. It cannot be broad.

Obstetric Services

Mr CRISAFULLI: My question is to the Minister for Health. Last year, the Minister for Health said the practice of placing grieving mothers and new mums and babies was—

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members to my right will cease all interjections. Questions will be heard in silence.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Last year, the Minister for Health said the practice of placing grieving mothers with new mums and babies was a temporary measure that had been permanently axed. What action did the minister take to ensure this torturous practice ceased as she promised it would nearly a year ago?

Mrs D'ATH: I thank the member for his question. To refer to this as a torturous act reflects on the decisions—

An honourable member interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Which member was interjecting? Did I hear unparliamentary language?

Dr Miles interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Deputy Premier, you are warned under the standing orders.

Mrs D'ATH: Clinicians have to make tough decisions every day. The issue that I took offence to last year I raised with the hospital and they immediately took interim measures. They are making decisions to refurbish the old ward to permanently relocate the gynaecology ward back to 6A. The fact is it was about permanently shifting that ward. It will always be, from time to time, that a woman who has lost a child will need to be situated in obstetrics which is often referred to as women's health units—it is not just obstetrics, not just maternity—where the specialists are and where they believe it is the most appropriate place for that person to be cared for.

With respect to the story that has been printed in recent days, the hospital has advised me they have gone back and reviewed the entire particular case and said that all decisions made were the correct decisions at that time relating to that individual's needs and circumstances. I understand that from time to time those women will be aggrieved by those decisions, but it has to be done on clinical grounds.

In fact, it is the Leader of the Opposition who keeps saying we have to put doctors and nurses back in charge, yet criticise them when they make clinical decisions about how situations should occur. It is really important that we should question where we believe those decisions are wrong, but we also must respect that decisions are made by these clinicians in the best interests of their patients, but the ward itself—

Mr Hart: Give them a choice.

Mrs D'ATH: I will take that interjection—'give them a choice'. This relates to a woman in January this year, in one of our busiest hospitals, where we had opened the borders and we saw a significant influx of COVID cases in our hospitals.

Opposition members interjected.

Mrs D'ATH: I hear the groaning from those opposite who fail to acknowledge the pressures that our health system faced. The bed pressures—

Mr Powell interjected.

Mrs D'ATH: I will take that interjection from the member for Glass House. Measures were put in place immediately to have temporary processes—

Mr Powell: It didn't work.

Mrs D'ATH: I thank the member for Glass House for his clinical advice, but I will take the advice—
(Time expired)

Water Rebate

Ms HOWARD: My question is of the Premier and Minister for the Olympics. Will the Premier update the House on the water rebate offered to south-east households and what it means for family budgets?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Ipswich for the question because on this side of the House we understand that there are cost-of-living pressures that households are experiencing. Whether it is the price of petrol, whether it is the rising costs of rents or payment of mortgages, our government is endeavouring, where we have levers, to pull those levers to ease those pressures for families. We saw that with the decision made to lower the dam to 80 per cent, it has allowed families in those catchment areas to receive a \$55 rebate on their next water bill. I can advise the House that the Minister for Water has advised me today that the dam level is now at 83 per cent. Can I also remind those families in that catchment area that they have this weekend to continue to get out the gurni and to make the most of the free water to clean out those gutters, to wash the house, to wash the car, to wash the dog, and wash anything else that they would like to as part of this initiative. This is equivalent to 13,000 litres for each household and 1.38 million households will benefit across the south-east grid, including Brisbane, Redlands, Ipswich, Logan, Moreton, Lockyer Valley, the Gold Coast and the Sunshine Coast.

Of course, it is not just the water rebate that our government is providing, it is also the electricity rebate because we also understand that energy costs are an issue facing families. That is why our government put in place the most comprehensive plan of this nation. Our Energy and Jobs Plan—

An opposition member interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Well, there are no plans from those opposite. Have a look at your own website. In fact, the backbench might want to look at their own website—

Mr SPEAKER: Through the chair, Premier.

Ms PALASZCZUK:—to see what plans are there. Are there any plans? No plans. No private members' bills. Lazy, lazy, lazy!

Opposition members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right, all these front benchers—no plans, no shadow cabinet meetings. Maybe a few. No private members' bills. When was the last private member's bill? We have been here for nearly two years. What private member's bill have those opposite put forward? Nothing.

(Time expired)

Obstetric Services

Ms BATES: My question is to the Minister for Health. On 21 November, the Minister for Health said putting grieving mothers in the same ward as new mums and their babies at the Royal would be permanently axed. One year on with the practice still happening, how can mothers trust the minister when she says the practice will now stop next year?

Mrs D'ATH: I thank the member for her question. Firstly, to correct, I have been advised that the date of the particular incident in the media reports this week was December 2021, and in relation to that particular individual, I am advised that the RBWH works with obstetric patients to identify outlying beds supported by outreach staff where possible to provide nursing care and support. In this particular case, a clinical decision was made to locate the individual woman in the gynaecology section as it was not clinically safe or appropriate to provide care in an alternative location. Metro North have had an open disclosure meeting with the woman since the incident.

Last year I made it clear that the proposal to permanently co-locate the maternity and obstetrics and gynaecology ward would not proceed and that options be immediately explored for a permanent solution in separate locations. We know that through that time, the RBWH has been dealing with COVID—three waves of COVID. Stakeholders, including gynaecology and maternity staff, as well as consumers and the QNMU, have been working towards a more suitable permanent solution throughout this period.

I have been advised that with the standing down of the COVID response at RBWH on 4 September, a final decision has been made to permanently relocate the gynaecology unit at its previous location of ward 6AN. A full refurbishment of that ward will be undertaken before we relocate it back early next year. In the interim, mitigating measures were established to physically separate the wards during the COVID response. Again, interim measures were put in place. The hospital immediately worked with stakeholders about those interim measures and also what the long-term measures should be. I am very pleased that we have been finally able to step down from the COVID response at hospitals like RBWH which means we can free up beds and take measures like this to get back to more business as usual.

There are many decisions—heartbreaking decisions—that hospitals had to make due to the pressures on our hospitals not just with over 1,000 COVID patients in hospital beds, but also over 3,000 staff furloughed as a consequence of COVID. They were extraordinary times in which our staff did an extraordinary job. Irrespective of that—COVID or not—clinicians will make decisions that they believe are in the best interests of those patients. They need to make sure they are communicating clearly with those patients as to their reasons why, but they need to make those decisions. It is the clinicians who are in the best position to make those decisions and give that advice.

Frontline Services

Ms PUGH: My question is to the Premier and Minister for the Olympics. Will the Premier update the House on how the Palaszczuk government is delivering frontline services, and is the Premier aware of any alternative approaches?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Mount Ommaney for that question. Of course, on this side of the House we know how important frontline services are. I would hate to think where we would have been 7½ years on if those opposite had continued in power. The cuts—there would be no-one left. There would be no nurses, no doctors and no ambulance officers. Everything would be privatised. They would be scratching around thinking, 'We might need a government owned corporation to control energy.' There would be no rebates and no understanding of pressures on households because when

they were in office they simply did not care. They did not care about the funding they cut. They did not care about the frontline services they cut. Of course, that budget when 14,000 public servants were axed, when people were basically tapped on the shoulder, given a box and given their marching orders, was a shameful chapter in Queensland's history.

On this side of the House we are always backing our frontline services. We saw that again just the other day when the Minister for Police and the commissioner waived the entry test fees for police recruits. That has been very well received. I say well done to the minister and congratulations to the commissioner on doing that.

Of course, we are adding 2,025 additional police personnel. We are going to be adding 357 extra firefighters over five years. On this side of the House we have a record health budget because we believe that families should have good quality access to health care. That is why we are building new hospitals; we are building the satellite hospitals, making sure their care is closer to communities. That is what we are doing on this side of the House. On that side of the House there are no plans, no private member's bills—nothing.

Dr Miles: No meetings.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Nothing—no meetings.

A government member interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right, just a few fundraisers in casinos. That is why we are delivering on a commitment of an extra 9,475 health staff. That is 9,475 health staff during our term in government. On that side of the House they cut the nurses and they cut the midwives. Then they come in here with this despicable line of attack and they cut the midwives. They cut them.

Mr Dick interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right. That was the legacy of those opposite. That is right, not recruiting midwives. They axed the midwives.

Mr SPEAKER: The Premier's time has expired.

Ms PALASZCZUK: The member for Clayfield was part of that team—

Mr SPEAKER: The Premier's time has expired.

Ms PALASZCZUK:—and so was the member for Broadwater.

(Time expired)

Mr SPEAKER: A reminder to ministers when your time has concluded and you are asked to resume your seat I would request that you do so.

Obstetric Services

Mrs GERBER: My question is to the health minister. Can the minister guarantee that grieving mothers who lost their babies are not being put in the same wards as new mums and their babies in any other Queensland hospital?

Mrs D'ATH: I thank the member for her question. It is disappointing that the member has not been listening to question time at all or paid any attention to this. I have answered that question. I have answered that question in both of my responses today.

Housing

Ms RICHARDS: My question is of the Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics Infrastructure. Can the Deputy Premier outline to the House what the Palaszczuk government is doing to address housing challenges across the state and is the Deputy Premier aware of any alternative approaches?

Dr MILES: I thank the member for Redlands for her question and for her attendance and contribution at the housing summit. I know that, along with the members for Capalaba and the energy minister, there has been a real focus on ensuring supply of affordable housing in the Redlands region. It is why the Palaszczuk government has stepped in to assist Redland City Council with their Housing Strategy to make sure that there is suitable, affordable housing available in the Redlands. It is just one example of how the Palaszczuk government is working with industry, with stakeholders and with local government to deliver homes for Queenslanders.

We are speeding up approvals for emergency housing after natural disasters. We are making the infrastructure designation pathway available to social and affordable housing projects, making sure that the not-for-profit social and affordable housing sector has the same access to fast-tracked development approvals as public housing projects do. We are working with Griffith University to repurpose student accommodation there. We are allowing Queenslanders to rent out their secondary dwellings to get more people into homes. We have commissioned a study on the impact of short-term accommodation services such as Airbnb on the longer term rental market. We have \$200 million available to the growth areas team for them to deliver catalytic infrastructure that will unlock 50,000 lots in the south-east, including 30,000 in Caboolture West.

Of course, the housing summit last week was all about determining what more we can do to address housing supply and affordable housing in Queensland. The good thing about bringing everyone together at a summit like that is everyone who comes along brings their own insights and their own experiences. That is why it was very valuable to have the Leader of the Opposition and the former LNP housing minister there at the summit. They have their own personal, firsthand experience of what not to do. They were able to share with us that you do not deliver more houses by having fewer houses. They were able to share with us that when they cut the social and affordable housing construction budget by 90 per cent we ended up with fewer houses. That was the result of their policy and the experience they were able to share with us. In fact, under the member for Everton's reign as housing minister the social housing stock fell by 428 dwellings.

On this side we have learnt the lessons of those opposite, we have taken on board their experience and we will deliver more houses for Queenslanders, including by doubling the Housing Investment Fund.

Obstetric Services

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: My question is to the health minister. Given grieving women have described their experience at RBWH—

Mr Brown interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: The member for Capalaba is warned under the standing orders. Please restate your question, member for Nanango.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: My question is to the health minister. Given grieving women have described their experience at RBWH as 'torture' what responsibility does the minister take for not stopping this practice, as the minister promised to do 12 months ago?

Mrs D'ATH: I thank the member for her question. As I have already answered this morning, interim measures were put in place while we went through the three COVID waves. We have now come off that COVID alert at the hospital and permanent arrangements are being put in place. Stakeholders were worked with throughout the entire time as far as those interim measures were concerned. However, at the end of the day, clinical decisions will be made about what is in the best interests of those individual women. As much as the member for Nanango wants to shake her head, it is the Leader of the Opposition who continually says that, above all else, doctors and nurses should be put in charge, yet the opposition refuse to accept the clinical decisions that are made at our hospitals.

CommSec State of the States Report

Mr POWER: My question is for the Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment. Will the Treasurer update the House on CommSec's latest State of the States report?

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Order, members.

Mr DICK: I am very pleased to update the House on the CommSec State of the States report because the most recent report ranks Queensland as the highest of all mainland states. CommSec notes that Queensland leads the nation on both relative population growth and relative unemployment—that is, low unemployment. Being able to sustain jobs growth as more people look to Queensland to call home speaks volumes about the confidence among Queensland businesses and workers. CommSec notes that we have gone from a situation where there was not much separating states to one where there is a clear ranking order, and who is ranked at the top for the mainland states? Queensland.

When it comes to the State of the States report, I understand that 'the methodology of CommSec is sound'. That is not my assessment; that is the assessment of the shadow Treasurer, the member for Toowoomba South. The shadow Treasurer must really believe it because he said it at least six times in the parliament. So has the member for Moggill, the member for Buderim, the member for Chatsworth and the member for Currumbin. Over and over and on and on they went about how good CommSec's methodology was. So has the member for Broadwater, but I do not think we will be hearing from the member for Broadwater about CommSec today. In fact, I bet you \$4.3 billion that we do not hear from the member for Broadwater about that. Just like his debunked claim on laptop raids, down the memory hole it will go, never to be heard of again.

We know what happened under the LNP 10 years ago because CommSec take a decade-long average. Some 10 years ago, the member for Broadwater and Campbell Newman were putting a wrecking ball through the Queensland economy. In that budget 10 years ago, they cut ongoing funding to 20 community groups, including Sands, the stillborn and neonatal death support group. They cut funding to an organisation that supports bereaved parents who have had a stillborn child—the member for Broadwater did that. He sat around that table and said that it was honest and responsible budgeting. I was proud to restore \$7.5 million in ongoing funding to those 20 organisations, but I should never have been required to do that because of the mean, small and narrow world view that people like the member for Broadwater have. Let us hope he never gets control of the budget again.

(Time expired)

Obstetric Services

Dr ROWAN: My question is to the Minister for Health. Grieving Brisbane mothers continue to be placed with new mums and their babies; Central Queensland women continue to risk having babies on the highway as maternity services close or are on bypass; and Mackay mothers who have lost babies or cannot have children again are calling for the minister to resign. Why will the health minister not resign?

Mrs D'ATH: I thank the member for his question. This is an individual who headed up the AMA and who was happy to take on fights with the doctors and who put them on individual agreements so that they did not have any rights in the health system. The Leader of the Opposition talks about putting doctors and nurses in charge. We know what they actually did to doctors when they were in government. Doctors know how the LNP treated them. They certainly remember, and the 1,800 nurses and midwives that were sacked by the LNP remember.

While those on the other side want to talk about mothers and services and health workers—

Dr Rowan: No ministerial accountability.

Mrs D'ATH: I will take that interjection. I have apologised on behalf of this government and your government.

Mr SPEAKER: Direct your comments through the chair, Minister.

Mrs D'ATH: I apologised; the Leader of the Opposition is too weak to do it. I stood up and apologised to those women. I met with those women. I spent last week listening to their trauma, their grief and their pain. It is atrocious what happened to them. It should not have happened; it absolutely should not have happened.

Ms Bates interjected.

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

Mrs D'ATH: Members know that this did not just happen under our government, yet there is no acknowledgement whatsoever from those on the other side of that fact. I think that is quite disgraceful. The shadow health spokesperson flies up to Mackay—

Mr Mickelberg interjected.

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

Mrs D'ATH:—to meet with these women and refuses an individual woman from the community access because she was allegedly not one of the women harmed. She was told that she was not allowed to attend the event. I want to know if the shadow health spokesperson apologised. Did she apologise for what happened when they were in government—one of those three babies died under their watch, as well—because I have unreservedly apologised to these women. I have listened to their grief. I am working with them to make sure that we learn from their experiences and that we listen to

them about what we can do better. We did that with them last week, and we will continue to work with them. I will continue to work with our hospital and health services to deliver the best health care for the people of Queensland.

Education

Ms McMILLAN: My question is to the Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing. Will the minister update the House on the Palaszczuk government's vision for education in Queensland, and is the minister aware of any alternative approaches?

Ms GRACE: I thank the member for Mansfield for her question. I know her passion. She is an excellent member for Mansfield and was a fantastic principal. I thank her for her work in developing our Equity and Excellence program that I launched two weeks ago at the Queensland Principals' Conference. In the same way that we on this side of the House will not be lectured to by those opposite on health, we on this side of the House will not be lectured to when it comes to education and when it comes to delivering for our students—no matter what school they attend and no matter where they are in Queensland. I am excited about the vision of the Equity and Excellence program that we launched. The post-conference survey found that 97 per cent of principals agreed that the strategy identifies the right priorities for schools, and 93 per cent agree our plans will make a positive difference in targeting the important areas that we have identified.

Those approval ratings are ratings that those opposite can only dream of. When it comes to alternative policies and knowing what they are going to do, what they did when they were in government is enough to scare anyone in Queensland. We know what they did in health when they cut, sacked and sold. We know what they did in education, where instead of employing additional teachers they did not employ any additional teachers. We have additional teachers in the classroom and we are delivering great education for the students no matter what school they go to.

Those opposite have the tenacity to come into this place and lecture us about service delivery. If we had followed the road that they had set when they were in government, I dread to think where we would be right now. There is not a public servant who walks these halls that they do not want to sack. There is not a school that they do not want to close. I have the member for Toowoomba North asking me about new schools. He writes to me, of course, because in Toowoomba they closed schools—that is all they did. Wyreema, the school that I saved, has now quadrupled in size. It is our party that delivers on new schools—21 since we have been elected. They cannot rely on themselves to make upgrades.

The piece de resistance is that we have air-conditioned every school in Queensland. We have solar panels on roofs that generate the electricity for those developing virtual solar farms in Queensland. It is only Labor governments that improve education for students, invest in infrastructure and always put our students first. Those opposite put health workers and teachers last.

Minister for Health and Ambulance Services

Mr BLEIJIE: My question is to the Premier. At what point will the Premier say enough is enough and sack the health minister?

Ms PALASZCZUK: Oh, please! Honestly, coming from the member for Kawana, please! I rest my case with the member for Kawana.

North Queensland, Health Services

Mr HARPER: My question is of the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services. Can the minister inform the House what the government is doing to improve health services in Townsville and North Queensland?

Mrs D'ATH: I thank the member for Thuringowa for his question. It was a pleasure to be in Townsville last week to join the member, as well as the member for Mundingburra, to launch the Townsville Hospital and Health Service Health Equity Strategy. We are very proud of our health equity strategies that are being implemented across every hospital and health service in Queensland. Why? Because the Palaszczuk government is the first government in this country to legislate to have representation on our boards but also to make it a statutory requirement to have these health equity strategies.

What is important about these strategies is that they are not a document; they are an action plan. They have clear actions that have been developed and co-designed with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the local community to set out these actions to make improvements not just in the

quality of health care that we deliver but also the representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within our own workforce and making sure that our hospital and health service and Queensland Health is a culturally safe and appropriate place to work, and I am very proud of that.

We also officially opened, with the member for Townsville, the refurbished new acute mental health unit. It is a fantastic facility and I want to congratulate the staff and also those who work there with lived experience. It was wonderful to meet a number of those individuals who have helped contribute to the redesign of these facilities to make them much more modern and suitable to deal with acute mental health. Of course our preference is to support people in the community with mental health, but we know that from time to time we do need to make sure that we have these facilities for when people have acute episodes.

That is in stark contrast to the LNP when it was in government which closed the Barrett centre, which cut \$120 million from Queensland Health community organisations including the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health service, cut funding from child and family therapy services, the Queensland AIDS Council, Deaf Services, the Cerebral Palsy League, Diabetes Australia, the stroke association—which we know is so important when dealing with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people—Family Planning Queensland and the Pyjama Foundation. There was no end to the harm that it was willing to cause by these cuts. When the Leader of the Opposition was a member in North Queensland he said that it was necessary; that it is hard but it has to be done and that everyone would understand, except those who were put in a room and told, ‘There’s a call about to come and you’re about to lose your job’—nurses and midwives who still feel that pain today who were sacked by the LNP.

(Time expired)

Hinchinbrook, CT Scanner

Mr DAMETTO: My question is to the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services. The TUH and local community advisory network have demonstrated a clear demand for a CT scanner at the Ingham Hospital. In 2021, 392 requests for scans during open clinic hours were made. This does not include after-hours requests. Hinchinbrook is in dire need of a CT scanner. Will the minister commit to delivering this lifesaving medical equipment?

Mrs D'ATH: I thank the member for Hinchinbrook for his question. I understand that the Ingham community does maintain access to a local imaging service, including a CT scanner, through Rural Medical Imaging. The Townsville University Hospital remains the primary CT-imaging service used by the Ingham Hospital for after-hours and emergency services and also provides routine CTs through its scheduled clinics. With regard to the introduction of new CT services, they must demonstrate a sufficient and sustainable level of demand to ensure clinically safe and sustainable services can be provided. A minimal level of demand is critical to ensure appropriate levels of staffing and ongoing maintenance of staff skills.

Planning for future healthcare delivery and reviewing services and facilities is an important part of the work of Queensland Health. Queensland Health carries out this work on an ongoing basis and will continue to monitor the situation in Ingham and other regional and remote areas across Queensland. In fact, in the past few months alone I have been pleased to announce with the Premier that we are installing a CT scanner at both Charters Towers and Thursday Island. The Charters Towers community currently does not have access to any local CT service which is why areas like this must be prioritised where they have no other access to CT imaging, and I know what a difference this service will make for their community.

Since coming to office in 2015, the Palaszczuk government has been focused on delivering better healthcare services across every corner of our state. We are committed to ensuring regional and rural communities like those in Ingham and surrounding areas have access to world-class health services as close to home as possible. That is why we are investing millions of dollars to deliver a renal dialysis unit with four treatment spaces in Ingham which opened in May this year and last year we announced a new Kidney Transplant Service at Townsville University Hospital so North Queenslanders can receive kidney health services closer to home.

We will continue to invest in our regions, in our rural and remote communities. Not only am I proud of our almost \$10 billion capital investment with the 11 expansions and three new hospitals; I am also extremely proud of our regional and remote capital plan of building around five new health or replacement health facilities every single year for the next five years. This is an incredible investment that these towns have never seen before and we know that it is not just for the patients but staff as well,

because if we want to attract staff we need to give them modern facilities that they are proud to work in and they know are suitable for delivering the health care that people in those communities expect. I am so proud of what we have already done: the Roma Hospital looks fantastic, the Blackall Hospital is fantastic and the Kingaroy Hospital is fantastic. We will continue to invest in the regions and I thank the member for his—

(Time expired)

Gold Coast Light Rail

Mr KING: My question is of the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. Can the minister provide an update on the Gold Coast's light rail project, and is the minister aware of any other approaches?

Mr BAILEY: I thank the member for Kurwongbah, who has been a strong advocate for roads and transport infrastructure from the day he arrived here. Saturday was a great day for the Gold Coast—the sod turned for another stage of the light rail from Broadbeach to Burleigh. Light rail is a proud Labor achievement on the Gold Coast. Every stage has happened because of Labor governments. There was a record time for stage 2 before the Commonwealth Games. It did a lot of the heavy lifting for the transport need of the games, and here we are at stage 3 all the way to Burleigh. It was a great day at the sod turn with federal Senator Murray Watt, the member for Gaven, GoldLinQ representatives and TMR—an historic day for the Gold Coast. People know what they get with light rail and Labor: they get more stages of it, infrastructure and jobs—760 Gold Coast jobs, which is fantastic.

Mr Hart interjected.

Mr BAILEY: I am glad that the member for Burleigh is interjecting because we know that he dictates LNP transport policy on the Gold Coast, not the member for Chatsworth. We know he wants the light rail past his brewery. He has railed against light rail every step of the way, so I was surprised to hear that the member for Burleigh recently asked us to accelerate stage 3, and with the sod turn on Saturday now we are working with the member for Burleigh! He wanted us to accelerate it after he railed against it for years and years, but, wait, there is more.

The member for Burleigh has advocated constantly for a route past his brewery out the back there, out the western dogleg as we call it, but there has been a change. He has changed LNP policy: he now wants stage 4 to go down West Burleigh Road—a windy, steep road that goes past the Tallebudgera Creek Conservation area and Fleays wildlife conservation park. It will require widening that will take out conservation area to build light rail on a road like that, so again what we see from the LNP is ridiculous LNP transport policies driven by the member for Burleigh. The hapless and hopeless member for Chatsworth does not get a shoo-in on transport policy on the Gold Coast; we know it is dictated by the member for Burleigh. We know that with the LNP and light rail we will always get lots of different positions: the member for Bonney wants it to go in his area; the member for Mermaid Beach calls it an infliction and says that it has been inflicted on the Gold Coast; and then we have multiple positions from the member for Burleigh, who said himself that public transport would be obsolete in five to 10 years.

In the *Gold Coast Bulletin* the member for Burleigh said that public transport would be obsolete in five to 10 years. With Labor you will get light rail, you will get heavy rail, you will get roads. We build infrastructure, we do not cut it like those opposite.

Resources Industries

Mr ANDREW: My question is to the Minister for Resources. With the clean energy future being introduced with unprecedented speed, would the minister be fast tracking new leases that will result in increased expansion concerning mining of nickel, cobalt, vanadium, zinc and rare earths here in Queensland?

Mr STEWART: I thank the member for the question. We know how important a role critical minerals will play going forward with our plan when it comes to energy and jobs. In our Queensland Resources Industry Development Plan we have highlighted the importance of those critical minerals. Queensland has an absolute abundance of these critical minerals, both in the North West Minerals Province and also in the North East Minerals Province. We are working hand in glove with industry, particularly around how we progress our critical minerals—the extraction of those critical minerals and the processing of those critical minerals—and working across government when it comes to manufacturing on Queensland soil.

I again thank the member for the question because it gives me a great opportunity to speak about what the critical minerals will do for us. We know that as the world decarbonises its economies there will be huge investment into these critical minerals, whether it is nickel or the vanadium that we see in huge abundance here in Queensland. In fact, the vanadium we have out at Richmond and Julia Creek is the third largest deposit anywhere in the world. Our biggest competitors in vanadium are China and Russia. When it comes to our competitors, we have a huge advantage when it comes to our ESG credentialing. In Europe in particular we are seeing the need for ESG credentialing is becoming more critical. With the investment that we have in our common user infrastructure, the vanadium processing plant in Townsville, we have a great opportunity for the kids sitting in our classrooms to be involved in our critical mineral mining and processing.

To dovetail into this is the investment that we are also making into our exploration sector. We have seen the largest investment in our exploration sector anywhere in our history. That is because we provide the information free of charge on our data lake when it comes to our critical minerals. Every time I talk to our critical minerals partners they continue to congratulate us on making that data freely accessible because it allows and encourages them to look for those exact minerals that you are talking about, member: the nickel, the vanadium and the cobalt. This is about investing in Queensland. We have the greatest resources, the greatest workers and the greatest future right here in Queensland for our critical minerals.

Women, Economic Security

Ms LAUGA: My question is to the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence. Can the Attorney-General update the House on how the Palaszczuk government is supporting women's economic security and is the Attorney-General aware of any other approaches?

Ms FENTIMAN: I thank the member for Keppel for the question and for her advocacy on behalf of women and girls in her community of Keppel. As I said last sitting, it has been an incredibly busy two years for our government. As the Minister for Women, I have spent every day fighting to improve women's economic security, close the gender pay gap and see more women in positions of leadership. In fact, we have invested more than \$163 million in women's economic security, providing support and specialist services to vulnerable people, including older women at risk of homelessness, and we have invested more than \$100 million in the Skilling Queenslanders for Work program, allowing tens of thousands of women back into the workforce—another program that those opposite scrapped—because women's economic security is the cornerstone of achieving gender equality. It builds the foundations for success and independence.

I was genuinely surprised but impressed when the Leader of the Opposition—who admittedly does not have the best track record of supporting women's workforce participation given he ousted a young woman to take the seat of Broadwater—announced last year the creation of a women's economic shadow portfolio. I thought, 'At last the LNP is going to start talking about women's economic security.' After all, the role of the shadow minister is to talk about their portfolio issues, but I guess again we are all in for a little bit of disappointment because how many times has the shadow minister posted about or even issued a media release about women's economic security? How many times this year? Not even once. Not one social media post. Not even a media statement. Nothing highlighting her vision, not even a tweet—no new policy. In fact, she has only mentioned the words 'women's economic security' three times since she got the job and one of those times was to say, 'I'm now the shadow minister for women's economic security. Can't wait to get lots done.' You cannot make this up.

It seems though that on social media the shadow minister has plenty of time to post about judging dad bod competitions—I did not know that was a thing; or posting with 'Deb's Kitchen' signs made by the Nanango Men's Shed, but no time to improve the economic wellbeing of women in Queensland. Are we surprised? Clearly the shadow minister is taking her lead from the Leader of the Opposition who has absolutely no policies, not one private member's bill, not one initiative to help get women into leadership positions.

Mr Lister interjected.

Ms FENTIMAN: This is an opposition that does not stand for anything, that does not even say anything about their shadow portfolios. They do not stand up for Queenslanders.

(Time expired)

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

Gateway Motorway and Bruce Highway, Upgrade

Mr MINNIKIN: My question is to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. When did the minister first know that dozens of families could be losing their brand new houses to make way for roadworks in Griffin?

Mr BAILEY: I thank the member for the question. I am happy to give a full-time line of pertinent facts for the benefit of the House. In April 2018 there was a joint press conference with Peter Dutton and Luke Howarth to announce the federal government would provide \$120 million for new Bruce Highway ramps at Dohles Rocks Road. In April 2019, during the federal election campaign, a Gateway Motorway upgrade was also announced. The federal LNP was re-elected at that election and the mandate for the ramps at Griffin were secured by them. The state committed matching funding in its state budget in June 2019 with the project now totalling \$1 billion.

Mr Hart interjected.

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

Mr BAILEY: In May 2020 Peter Dutton and Luke Howarth were briefed on the north-facing ramps. In June 2020 the state agreed to merge the project funding with the projects formerly known as the Bruce Highway Pine River to Caloundra Road Project and the Gateway Motorway Project. It became a \$2.1 billion combined project.

Mr Minnikin interjected.

Mr BAILEY: We will get to that. Ramps formed the scope of the project planning. In June 2020 the planning layer was added by TMR to the land titles searches to the entire study area. In July-August 2020, 34,000 newsletters were distributed that showed the footprint of the project, including funded work only featuring short on and off ramps. On 17 November 2021 I was briefed and on 10 December 2021, based on department advice, I gave approval to begin consultation on the first tranche of properties following that. On 13 December 2021 Luke Howarth's and Peter Dutton's electorate offices were briefed. On 2 June, based on department advice, I gave approval to begin the second tranche of consultation in terms of affected properties. On 7 October this year, based on department advice, I then approved that consultation should go with a third tranche of properties. These are the issues that we are talking about. Luke Howarth was briefed on 18 October on that project and Peter Dutton's electorate office was briefed on 20 October. I note that Luke Howarth and Peter Dutton have a long list of commitments to the on and off ramps from 2018.

Mr Powell interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Glass House will cease his interjections.

Mr BAILEY: Let us not hear the hypocrisy from those opposite. On 3 April 2018 Luke Howarth said—

Luke Howarth here ... I have some exciting news for the people of Griffin ... This morning, Peter Dutton ... and myself announced here that we will commit \$120 million to the building of on ramps ... so right behind me there will be an on ramp ... for the people of Griffin ... when they want to head up the coast ... So this is really exciting news.

Thank you to the people of Griffin who have contacted me and spoken to me about this.

Mr Powell interjected.

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

Mr BAILEY: I table that for the benefit of the House.

Tabled paper: Transcript, dated 3 April 2018, of a video from the Facebook page of the Federal member for Petrie, Mr Luke Howarth, regarding on ramps at Griffin and Murrumba Downs [\[1737\]](#).

I have a long list, so keep asking me questions about it.

(Time expired)

Police Resources

Mrs McMAHON: My question is to the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services. Can the minister please update the House on this government's commitment to increase police numbers and whether the minister is aware of any alternative approaches?

Mr RYAN: I thank the member for the question, for her service as a member of the Queensland Police Service and for her service at the police academy. She provided instruction to new police recruits and, of course, those police recruits are now out and about in the community keeping us all safe.

Mr Speaker, you know the facts, we know the facts and the community knows the facts, which are that under Labor there will always be more police in Queensland. While we have a record of delivering, those opposite have a record of cuts. When we are cutting fees, they are cutting police numbers. I commend the Police Commissioner for the announcement yesterday to cut fees for those seeking to join the Police Service. Recruits seeking to join the Police Service will not have to pay the administration test fee for the next six months. This is always about encouraging people to join the Police Service and providing as many opportunities as possible for them to do so.

We have a very proud record on delivering for the people of Queensland and also the Queensland Police Service. At the last election we made a very clear commitment and it was a commitment that the Police Union welcomed very strongly. What did the Police Union say about this? Their representative said—

I try and get the best deal regardless of which party will form government. That is my job. I am not sided with one side or another. What I got out of the LNP was a commitment of 400 new police across the state. What I got out of Minister Ryan and Annastacia Palaszczuk was 1,450 new police over the same period.

The extra 1,000 police that this government will deliver for the people of Queensland will go a long way to keeping the community safe. It does put into context what would have happened if those opposite were in power. One thousand fewer police in Queensland would mean: 130 fewer police in the Brisbane Region, 150 fewer in the North Coast Region, 125 fewer in the Central Region, 90 fewer in Cairns and the Far Northern Region, 90 fewer in Townsville and the Northern Region, 70 fewer for the Gold Coast and the South Eastern Region, and 150 fewer police for Toowoomba and the Southern Region.

Under Labor, there will always be more police in Queensland, keeping the community safe. We know those opposite like cuts and under them there will always be fewer police in Queensland. How do we know that? Because they said so at the last election. We keep our commitments. I commend the Police Commissioner for being proactive around recruitment and ensuring, wherever possible, we are recruiting people to the Queensland Police Service to keep all Queenslanders safe.

Gateway Motorway and Bruce Highway, Upgrade

Mr POWELL: My question is to the Deputy Premier. As planning minister, when did the Deputy Premier first know that dozens of families could be losing their brand new homes to make way for roadworks at Griffin?

Mr SPEAKER: Deputy Premier, you have two minutes to respond.

Dr MILES: I note that the transport minister has in great detail outlined the chronology of events that led to the confirmation this week that some properties would need to be resumed to build the northbound on and off ramps that Peter Dutton insisted should be built. As the transport minister outlined, there has been a process underway to deliver the on ramps that the LNP wanted built and the result of those on ramps is that properties will need to be resumed.

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

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

Dr MILES: At the exact time at which it could be confirmed which properties may need to be resumed, the transport minister, as he just outlined, authorised TMR to consult with the affected residents. That is precisely what has happened here. It is the process by which communities are consulted when resumptions need to occur to deliver infrastructure projects.

Mr POWELL: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order under standing order 118(b). The question very specifically asked when the planning minister knew.

Mr SPEAKER: The minister is being responsive to the question as I hear his answer.

Dr MILES: The widening of the highway between Dohles Rocks Road and Anzac Avenue will provide additional capacity that the member for Glass House would well know is much needed at peak hour. It will certainly be needed if there are additional northbound ramps that, as we have outlined, is what Peter Dutton promised the local community and delivered funding for. While of course my heart goes out to those families affected, I am disappointed to again see the LNP misusing their heartache for political—

(Time expired)

Mr SPEAKER: The period for question time has expired.

MOTION

Business Program



Hon. YM D'ATH (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (11.15 am): I move—


1. That the following business will be considered this sitting week, with the nominated maximum periods of time as specified:
 - (a) the Racing Integrity Amendment Bill, a maximum of three hours to complete all stages;
 - (b) the Public Health and Other Legislation (COVID-19 Management) Amendment Bill, a maximum of five hours to complete all stages;
 - (c) the Major Sports Facilities Amendment Bill, a maximum of three hours to complete all stages; and
 - (d) the Industrial Relations and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, to complete all stages by 12.25 pm on Friday, 28 October 2022.
2. The following time limits for the bills listed in 1. apply:
 - (a) the ministers to be called on in reply:
 - (i) for the Racing Integrity Amendment Bill by 30 minutes before the expiry of the maximum hours;
 - (ii) for the Public Health and Other Legislation (COVID-19 Management) Amendment Bill by 30 minutes before the expiry of the maximum hours;
 - (iii) for the Major Sports Facilities Amendment Bill by 30 minutes before the expiry of the maximum hours; and
 - (iv) for the Industrial Relations and Other Legislation Amendment Bill by 11.25 am on Friday, 28 October 2022.
3. If the nominated stage of each bill has not been completed by the allocated time specified in 2., or by 12.25 pm on Friday, 28 October 2022, Mr Speaker:
 - (a) shall call on a minister to table any explanatory notes to their circulated amendments, any statement of compatibility with human rights or any statement relating to an override declaration;
 - (b) shall put all remaining questions necessary to either pass that stage or pass the bill without further debate;
 - (c) may interrupt non-specified business or debate on a bill or motion to complete the requirements of the motion; and
 - (d) will complete all stages required by this motion notwithstanding anything contained in standing and sessional orders.

Members will note that there are four bills the subject of the motion before the House: the Racing Integrity Bill, on which debate will resume; the Public Health and Other Legislation (COVID-19 Management) Amendment Bill; the Major Sports Facilities Amendment Bill; and the Industrial Relations and Other Legislation Amendment Bill and I am very keen to hear what those opposite have to say about that bill. As we all know, due to the passing of Queen Elizabeth, we postponed the three-day sitting week as it fell during the official mourning period. Last sitting week, the House considered a motion to rearrange the timings for the remainder of the scheduled sitting weeks, meaning that this week will be a four-day sitting week with extended hours to allow for various non-government and government business to be made up.

Wasn't it interesting to listen to the debate and see the carry-on of those opposite during the last sitting when we debated the motion for the timings of the sitting week? I will put aside the fact that many of the speeches were completely misleading and that the Manager of Opposition Business knew that when claims were made, over and over again, that there was agreement on the sitting hours for the remaining sitting weeks when there had only ever been agreement on the first sitting week and the remainder were to be consulted on. Putting that aside, the Manager of Opposition Business, the former manager of opposition business and the wannabe manager of opposition business, the member for Maroochydore, all jumped up to protest the motion. They said all manner of things, including, 'The opposition will not be supporting this motion', 'We will not stand for it' and 'I stand with my colleagues in opposing the government's motion'. They argued strongly and vehemently that they would not support the motion.

About a minute after the conclusion of the contribution of the member for Maroochydore, the motion was put and guess what happened? Was a division called by the opposition? Was there even a peep out of them? No! There was nothing. The motion was put and the House agreed. It was unanimous. It seems that by Friday afternoon the opposition had run out of puff and could not even muster the strength to say a two-syllable word, 'divide'. You might ask why the members for Glass House, Kawana and Maroochydore all mislead the parliament potentially when they said they did not support the motion yet did not divide.


I have a theory. We have heard on the grapevine that some of the members of the opposition had already checked out of parliament for the afternoon. They had left the precinct. If the opposition had called for a division—and, in fact, later there was a division with fewer numbers—they would have exposed what we already knew: that, despite arguing strongly that they wanted to sit late every single Friday, they had already checked out. They were gone. They had had enough for the day. We do not even have to have our suspicions. We know for a fact, based on the later division, that there were fewer numbers in the parliamentary precinct. All we can say about those opposite is that they are the laziest, most ill-disciplined and hypocritical opposition in living memory. I commend the motion to the House.

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (11.19 am): As with just about every sitting week when we have these business program motions, the LNP will be opposing this motion for the same reason we do each and every time. It is a sham. It is a guillotine by another name.

Mr Harper interjected.

Mr POWELL: The only ones checked out are the Labor government, who cannot sit long enough to do what they are elected to do and debate legislation. The only one checked out is the Premier, who wants to take off early on a Friday to spend more time on red carpets around the state. The LNP will not be supporting this motion.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Before I call the next speaker, I want to remind the House of those members on a warning. They are the members for Kawana, Nanango, Murrumba, Capalaba, Mudgeeraba, Buderim, Southern Downs, Burleigh, Glass House and Broadwater.

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (11.19 am): Those opposite are so chagrined that the member for Glass House gave about a 37-second speech. They were caught cold leaving early last week, scarpering out of the parliament before it adjourned, after they vehemently said, 'We need more time. Democracy! We have to speak more. We're being denied. We're being cut down. This is antidemocratic.' When it came down to it, a bunch of them scarpered off early, before parliament had risen—lazy, lazy, lazy. They have no discipline.

The Leader of the Opposition said that he would be different. It was one of the first things he said. What we see is that those opposite always oppose this motion for ridiculous reasons. This is the ordinary management of a parliament. They put up spurious arguments like, 'We need more time to speak. There is not enough time for debate,' and then they leave early! Either opposition members are not listening and do not care—that shows that they are not a real team and are not disciplined, which is quite possible—or they are openly defying any orders. Maybe they do not have any orders to stick around until the end of parliament. That is even worse. Which is it? It is lack of discipline? Is it ignoring the Leader of the Opposition? Does the Leader of the Opposition have no standards whatsoever when it comes to members leaving before the parliament rises?

This is one of the most embarrassing attempts at opposing the business program motion I have seen, and that is saying something. I have heard a lot of speeches from the member for Kawana that have been embarrassing. The member for Glass House spoke for about 37 seconds and sat down, hoping that this would blow over. He knows that the opposition has been humiliated and embarrassed. They were caught cold during the last parliamentary sittings when we had a late division and some of them were gone. They were not here earning their salary; they were out of here. The LNP had checked out.

Let's not hear this nonsense from those opposite. If they wanted to be different, the LNP would stop wasting the parliament's time with arcane tactics set by the member for Kawana when it comes to the procedural business program motion and would do something that is professional.


This is the normal management of parliamentary business. LNP members should stay to the end of the parliamentary sittings. They should earn their money for a change. All members are elected to sit in this House, not leave the parliamentary precinct to go wherever they went—to the pub, to the cafe, to a restaurant or wherever. They left early. They were not doing their job. The lack of discipline, focus, effort and commitment from those opposite is humiliating, yet they want to run this state. They will not even do the basic job of sitting—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr BAILEY: It is not even a case of sitting in the House. They only had to be on the precinct. Members can be productive and do whatever they want in their office—do research or develop a policy. They could do that!

An honourable member: Sit on Twitter all day.

Mr BAILEY: You could even be on social media. I take that interjection. Give us a tweet or a social media post. You only have to be on the precinct. The opposition failed miserably during the last sittings. Opposition members are all quiet. They all suddenly have something else to do. They know that they have been embarrassed and humiliated. I support the motion. The opposition has been exposed as a rabble, ill-disciplined and lazy. You can see it on their faces.

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (11.23 am): We talk about incompetence and embarrassment. This is a government that has brought into this House bills that it has refused to debate. It cuts debate, denying people the opportunity to talk, then gazettes the bill and puts it out into the public space, only to have to come running back into this place to burn more time because it could not get the numbering right. The numbering of the bill was incorrect. How is the law going to work? There was no consideration in detail.

Mr BAILEY: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. This motion is about the parliamentary business for this week. The member has clearly strayed off the topic and gone into ancient history.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Order! I will hear the point of order in silence.

Mr BAILEY: He is not addressing the motion, which is about the parliamentary business for this week.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will take some advice. I find that the member is making a broad and general point that is relevant to the overall tenor of the debate.

Mr WATTS: It is interesting that I am not supposed to talk about what has happened in the past in this place, according to the minister, who takes great offence at being part of an incompetent government, yet he was talking about what happened in this place last week. If we are not supposed to talk about what has happened in the past, what was the minister going on with in his contribution? Clearly, he needs to concentrate more on being in this place and less on tweeting.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member, I do not believe it was your intention, but I think you were going close to reflecting on the chair. I ask you to come back to the motion.

Mr WATTS: I think this House has a very serious responsibility to the people of Queensland. When pieces of legislation are brought in that outline the rules that will govern their lives—govern the way they operate, govern the way that businesses operate, govern the way that we will manage and spend their hard-earned taxpayer dollars that have been collected by this incompetent government—I think the people of Queensland, who elect each and every one of us here, expect us to have the opportunity to speak on a bill if we so choose. Whilst the government is busy trying to manage perception, it is critical that silly errors are not made, such as in the numbering of legislation that has to be corrected, wasting more time in this place. It is critical that legislation gets full analysis. Not all bills will be spoken on by all people, but all people in this place have been elected to serve and represent their communities and they should have their voices heard.

In addition to that, the bills this government tries to suppress and hide are the ones they do not really want people to talk about. They do not want people to have the opportunity, representing the people who elected them, to discuss certain bills. I note that the minister will often take their time in the discussion. If time is so critical and not required, why doesn't the minister sit down and let the members representing their people speak? The minister clearly knows what is in the bill. They have tabled the explanatory notes. They have received submissions. They have had lots of opportunities to have input. For members of this House, this is the place where bills should be debated.

Mr Harper: Why don't you table one?

Mr WATTS: I can answer that question. The people of Queensland elected this rabble to represent Queensland. They elected this incompetent government to bring bills into this place. I think it is only fair that members are given time to show just how incompetent this government is. Let me assure the people of Queensland: after nearly two years it is glaringly obvious how incompetent this government is. It cannot even get bill numbering right!

They want to talk about coming into this place and having our voices heard, having this debate and controlling the narrative. They took away various other opportunities for people to speak in this place and changed the sessional orders. If they really want to make sure we have more time to debate things why don't they cut down ministerial statements? They do not want to do that because it is all about power and control. It is not about the people of Queensland and it is not about the people of Queensland's money: it is all about Labor and how it looks. It is not how it is: it is all about how it looks. They play with this place for their own manipulative advantage rather than letting the people's voice be heard.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Member, you did use some unparliamentary language. I ask you to withdraw.

Mr WATTS: I withdraw and apologise, Mr Deputy Chair.

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

AYES, 48:

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

NOES, 37:

LNP, 31—Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Crandon, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Gerber, Hart, Head, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister, Mander, McDonald, Mickelberg, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, O'Connor, Perrett, Powell, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Watts, Weir.

Grn, 2—Berkman, MacMahon.

KAP, 3—Dametto, Katter, Knuth.

PHON, 1—Andrew.

Pairs: Farmer, Purdie; A. King, Stevens; Saunders, Camm


Resolved in the affirmative.

RACING INTEGRITY AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from 14 October (see p. 2880), on motion of Ms Grace—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (11.35 am): I rise to make a contribution to the Racing Integrity Amendment Bill 2022. At the very outset I will say that the LNP will not oppose this bill as it is long overdue.

For many Queenslanders racing is a way of life. Whether it is a trip to the track on the weekend with family and friends or your livelihood working in the industry, racing contributes much to the social fabric of our state. That point is of course extremely pertinent to our regional and rural communities. Race meetings in those locations can be the lifeblood of the town, an occasion for people to gather from far and wide. It brings together communities and provides an economic injection to those regions. For some it puts food on the table; it pays the bills for many more. It is not just the racing industry directly that benefits from these jobs: there is a spillover into tourism and hospitality, just to name two more sectors.

On this side of the House we acknowledge and respect the contribution the racing industry makes to Queensland. The racing industry in Queensland now has more than 43,000 individual participants across all three codes and supports over 13,500 full-time-equivalent jobs. It is not insignificant. It is because of this contribution and status that the industry here must be beyond reproach. Having safeguards and rules and laws in place to uphold the integrity of the industry is an absolute must. It is also important to have a judicial process that is fair, well-informed and timely. Unfortunately, the industry has not experienced that in this term of government.

I would like to point out to the House that in 2018 the government released a discussion paper titled *Racing integrity reforms: review of the Racing Integrity Act 2016*. On page 1 of the explanatory notes to this bill it says that these reforms are in response to concerns raised in that discussion paper. It is a discussion paper from four years ago. Since that time and longer we have had an industry that has been in turmoil with regard to penalties, appeals, procedural fairness, natural justice and the timeliness of decisions. There are countless examples of where people's lives and livelihoods have been placed on hold or in some cases turned completely upside down because of the failure of the appeals process. Some decisions took an eternity. People with little understanding of the industry were making significant decisions that affected people's lives. There was the perception that Caesar was judging Caesar when appeal decisions were heard internally in QRIC and the system was also being played by others. The failings of the previous system caused incredible stress in the industry, more specifically with people's lives.

Despite the cries and pleas of people who have been in racing all their lives, this Labor government has moved to act at a snail's pace. I know that those opposite are happy to talk up racing, but when push comes to shove four years is an appallingly long time to sit on a discussion paper before addressing the concerns of the industry.

It is also important to remember that this is not a one-off either. Take the Greyhound Racing Industry Commission of Inquiry. That report was handed down in 2015 with 15 recommendations. The report went to the heart of racing integrity in Queensland—which is obviously what we are talking about in the chamber today—yet seven years later, according to an answer to a question on notice from the minister late last year, only 10 of the recommendations were fully implemented. I invite the minister to give an update on the implementation of those recommendations and whether the remaining five are now implemented. It is typical of this government that they are quick to make announcements but hopelessly dismal at taking action in a timely manner after the fact.

Let us look at the Eagle Farm racetrack. The latest figure we have been given for the track is \$14 million, yet there are still some trainers concerned about its condition. If the racing industry is important to this government, the government certainly do not show it by being quick out of the gates to address key industry issues.


I want to thank the Education, Employment and Training Committee for their consideration of the bill, in particular my colleagues the member for Southern Downs, in his capacity as deputy chair, and the member for Theodore. I note that those opposition members did not submit a statement of reservation or a dissenting report.

The main objective of the bill is to reform the review processes for decisions made by stewards under the rules of racing by: one, replacing the current internal and external review processes for decisions made by racing stewards under the rules of racing with review by an independent panel; two, ensuring reviews are finalised within a reasonable timeframe; and, three, reducing serious welfare, human safety or integrity risks from being stayed pending hearing of an appeal by the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal, QCAT. I note that the appointment of the chairperson, deputy chairpersons and members of the independent panel will be by Governor in Council. In establishing such a panel, Queensland will follow the approach taken by New South Wales and Victoria. If it is proven to be successful in those other jurisdictions, it would seem apparent that having such a panel in Queensland is a sensible decision.

It is incredibly important that the composition and make-up of this panel is given very serious consideration. It is important that the chair and the deputy chairs of the panel are of the highest quality. They must have the respect of the industry, and there are a number of ways we can ensure that. One of these ways is that they need to be appropriately remunerated, so I would ask the minister to not go cheap on these people. To have the respect of the sector, the chair must have a thorough knowledge of the industry. Racing people want to be assured that the person or persons deciding their future and their future livelihoods have a very good understanding of the industry. That was one of the criticisms of the previous system. I also urge the minister to ensure that the panel is resourced appropriately. The better resourced they are, the more effective they will be and hopefully fewer cases will go to QCAT, which should be the ultimate goal.

There are some other minor and technical amendments as part of the bill, including to provide for the publication of stewards' reports and other reports online in an effort to promote confidence in the integrity of the racing industry through transparent decision-making. Another amendment will remove the redundant requirement for QRIC to obtain and store fingerprints prior to licensing bookmakers.

This bill is long overdue. The industry has been crying out for a judicial process that is timely, well-informed, fully credentialed and not only fair but seen to be fair. I believe this bill goes a long way to making sure this outcome is achieved. We all hope that is the case because it is incredibly important that this industry remains fruitful and continues to flourish as it has been for the thousands of people it employs either directly or indirectly.

 **Ms RICHARDS** (Redlands—ALP) (11.45 am): I rise to support the Racing Integrity Amendment Bill 2022. As we have heard, there are over 40,000 participants across all three codes in the Queensland racing industry who make a significant contribution to not only Queensland's economy but country Queensland's economy and the social fabric of our communities. I think everybody likes going to a race day, particularly to the greyhound racetrack out my way. The member for Capalaba is a very big supporter.

On 24 February 2022 the Racing Integrity Amendment Bill was introduced to the parliament and referred to the Education, Employment and Training Committee for consideration. I take this opportunity to thank the committee, my deputy chair and fellow committee members, particularly the member for

Rockhampton and the member for Hinchinbrook. We all discovered that they have an absolutely keen interest in racing. The poor old member for Rockhampton lost his SookySooky La La throughout the course of this bill.

The key policy objective of the bill is to amend the Racing Integrity Act to reform the review processes for decisions made by stewards under the rules of racing by: replacing the current internal and external review processes for decisions made by racing stewards under the rules of racing with review by an independent panel—we heard how important this process is going to be in terms of alleviating some of the pressures on QCAT at the moment in hearing these matters; ensuring reviews are finalised within a reasonable timeframe; and reducing serious welfare, human safety or integrity risks by preventing relevant decisions from being stayed pending hearing of an appeal by QCAT. The bill also provides for the online publication of stewards' reports and makes a number of minor technical amendments.

As we heard, consultation occurred through the Get Involved portal back in 2019. The then local government, racing and multicultural affairs minister announced some proposed changes to the review process in an industry forum on 16 September 2020. There has been targeted consultation throughout the process. I take the opportunity to thank the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries for their assistance in this bill. They undertook wide, targeted stakeholder sessions with the Thoroughbred Alliance, the Queensland Jockeys' Association, the Australian Jockeys' Association and Harness Racing Australia to provide input into this bill.

In our inquiry process, we invited stakeholders to make written submissions. We received six submissions—from the Australian Jockeys' Association, Mr Daniel Bowden, Racing Queensland, the Queensland Jockeys' Association, the Coalition for the Protection of Greyhounds and the Queensland Law Society. Advice was received from the department on issues that were raised within that, and we received a briefing in March from the department followed by a public hearing where we heard from the Australian Jockeys' Association, the Queensland Law Society, the Coalition for the Protection of Greyhounds and the Queensland Jockeys' Association. I give a shout-out to Mr Glen Prentice. I know he is a big fan of Queensland's racing calendar. I also mention Larry Cassidy. My dad was a mad keen punter. I still remember his TAB phone account number—that is how mad keen he was. He always liked to back a Cassidy horse, so it was lovely to hear from Larry Cassidy. The Cassidy family are well-regarded in the industry, with his brother Jimmy also riding some pretty serious rides.

Issues that were raised throughout the process included: clarification of the definition of a 'racing decision' of the panel; appeals of decision of the panel to QCAT and the stay of those penalties; clarification of the nature of allowable appeals; the publication of the stewards' race day reports; and eligibility for appointment to the panel. These formed the basis for the recommendations that the committee made. Every submitter to this inquiry was fully supportive of the bill and its objectives to make sure we maintain integrity within the system and improve processes in that way.

The committee's recommendation 1 was to pass the bill. Recommendation 2 was seeking clarification on the definition of 'a racing decision', so I thank the minister for her clarification in the second reading speech on the stewards' roles and the powers they are able to exercise.

Recommendation 3 was in regards to clarifying the meaning of 'extent'. Again, the minister clarified that in her second reading speech that referred to the size of the penalty with no re-examination.

Recommendation 4 was again clarifying the publication of stewards' reports. We heard from a number of people around the use of stewards' reports and what they can be used for. There are multiple uses of those reports, but there is an impact in terms of the Human Rights Act, so I think a really good balance has been struck in terms of what we publish when it comes to those stewards' reports and being able to access information and sharing arrangements that have been put in place.

Recommendation 5 was in regards to the eligibility of appointment to the panel. I think the minister said it very well that there is an absolutely detailed suitability criteria that will be applicable to those panel members and to the chair's appointment. Obviously it will be impartial and independent, so that appointment process will be absolutely thorough to ensure we maintain integrity in our racing industry. I thank the minister for being able to clarify those issues that we identified in our report.

This is really good, sensible legislation. It continues the Palaszczuk government's investment in Queensland racing and making sure we have one of the best racing calendars in the country. I think Glenn Prentice is on record saying that jockeys love racing here in Queensland. On behalf of the committee, I thank them again for their contribution. This is a really good, sensible piece of legislation that will improve racing integrity in Queensland. I commend this bill to the House.



Mr LANGBROEK (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (11.51 am): I rise to speak to the Racing Integrity Amendment Bill 2022. Racing is a very big business. It brings a \$1.9 billion economic contribution to Queensland with 14,000 jobs, but up to 42,000 spin-off jobs, with 675,000 annual attendees. However, it is more than just about money; it is about people—the people who are affected by the Racing Integrity Commission. I am going to refer to those people today. I note the former minister, the member for Sandgate, is here, as well as the minister, the member for McConnel, who oversaw after 2015 the royal commission bringing in the Racing Integrity Commission which was to separate integrity issues from the financial issues that Racing Queensland was going to administer.

It is all very well for the minister to speak about how well the industry is going in terms of money being put into it, but the issues we are dealing with today are about integrity. Integrity was to be separated from scheduling and the financial aspects. That was the whole point of setting up the Racing Integrity Commission, a unique system compared to New South Wales and Victoria. However, now we are seeing that six years after we set up a separate system, we are going to what Victoria and New South Wales have because the unique system that we had clearly did not work.

I wish to table two columns by Trenton Akers from the *Gold Coast Bulletin*. The first is from 18 July 2022 which states—

The farcical appeals system—

which, of course, this is removing—

has been a major bugbear for many in Queensland Racing with participants to work the system by easily getting a “stay” at QCAT.

I table that.

Tabled paper: Article from the *Gold Coast Bulletin*, dated 18 July 2022, titled ‘Four-week riding ban set to be appealed’ [\[1738\]](#).

Another article by Trenton Akers from Sunday, 18 September 2022, states—

Grace helped establish the bureaucratic nightmare that is QRIC in her first stint as Racing Minister, now she has the opportunity to get everybody in the same room to help right the ship.

Tabled paper: Article from the *Sunday Mail*, dated 18 September 2022, titled ‘Head-hunting gun steward should top Racing Minister’s to-do list’ [\[1739\]](#).

Many people were affected by the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission in the time that I was shadow minister. Whilst there was a separation of scheduling from the money aspects, a great example of those most affected was the case of Ben Curry, a trainer from Toowoomba. Racing Queensland finally had to reject the nominations by that trainer simply because he kept winning cases before QCAT, which showed that the system that was set up was very poor. Basically, the Racing Integrity Commission does not deserve that name. Former Stewards Chairman, Alan Reardon, prefers ‘Queensland Racing Commission’ because there was no integrity.

As shadow racing minister, people complained to me about QRIC. The stories were the same. The culprit was Labor’s woeful QRIC. They promised so much and delivered so little. Participants were criminally charged, there was inadequate evidence, and reputations were shattered. We had the farcical situation the shadow minister has referred to of QRIC hearing its appeals—Caesar judging Caesar—with people who had no knowledge of the racing industry delivering stays so that jockeys could eventually over time delay a three- or four-meeting suspension for up to six months or a year. It was typical Labor which hires party donors to head inquiries.

QRIC charges started as beautiful swans and ended as ugly ducklings. The problem was administration and competence of those administering. Labor’s QRIC failed at every hurdle. The main tenant of policing is following evidence. Evidence does not have mistruths. QRIC’s harness racing charges failed spectacularly because of no evidence. The courts told us that. There were 10 people charged with over 40 charges, and not one conviction. There was more than a million dollars of legal charges for participants. Careers were stalled for years, marriages were ruined and lives were ruined. At what cost to taxpayers?

There were no apologies from QRIC after initiating indictable charges which failed, but they were quick to name and shame. I will give you some examples. Mathew Nielsen’s marriage ended; he went from driving horses to courier trucks. Shane Graham went to bed an Australian world championship representative and woke up a truck driver. Young Leonard Cain was barred from America because of spurious charges. For them, there have been no apologies, no convictions recorded, nor for Peter Poulsen, Marshall Dobson, Dayl March, Mick Grant, Bart Cockburn, Stuart Hunter or Vicki Rasmussen. Homes were searched by armed police. Bank records were investigated and betting accounts seized. Body worn cameras were used. There were months of phone taps and coercive hearings. Computers

were confiscated. There were covert surveillance bugs used. Photos and videos were taken. Associates were questioned, relationships were tested, marriages failed, careers abruptly stalled, income streams gone, defamation cases fought, businesses decimated, and they were threatened with 10 years' jail.

Mr WHITING: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I question whether the member is adhering to standing order 236(1) which is about relevance to the debate. I understand what he is talking about, but whether individual cases relate directly to the matter that is on the green paper is questionable.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): I will take some advice and I will take that in silence, thanks. There is no point of order. The member is being relevant.

Mr LANGBROEK: Labor's CCC compelled participants under threat of perjury, all to no avail, but at what cost to them and to taxpayers for a wild goose chase? Armed police arrested Shane Graham, Vicki Rasmussen and Leonard Cain and then paraded them before Channel Nine news cameras—a stage-managed perpetrator walk for TV news—a witch-hunt! All were not guilty! These people with no previous criminal charges or contact with police found and engaged solicitors for huge money. They were hurt on social media, press, radio, television, behind their backs and face to face.

The police had not finalised evidence against Peter Poulsen two years after the charges. Magistrate Hay ruled there was no case to answer, said it was hopeless and doomed to failure. Others had charges dismissed, no cases to answer or not guilty judgements delivered. Their futures flashed before them. Their once bright reputations have been flushed down the QRIC toilet. Their reputations are in tatters. They have thrown enough mud—flimsy, worthless charges from a heartless, spineless, uncaring QRIC. I ask: would you like to walk a mile in their shoes? They were charged by Labor's ill-designed, top-heavy, dysfunctional commission and the hopelessly outclassed Racing Squad.

Neale Scott, a harnessing licensee with 45 years without a charge, was disqualified on false testimony of a subsequently sacked steward. QRIC's commissioner would not correct the public record, did not reinstate Mr Scott or even offer a rehearing after knowing that untruths had been sworn into evidence and unethically accepted. Mathew Neilson was charged with race fixing. He was found not guilty and a perjury charge justifiably thrown out. But at what cost to him and taxpayers? No conviction, no apology, no manners—typical Labor.

Labor's hand-picked inaugural commissioner was mentioned in a statement in December 2016. It stated—

The Queensland Racing Integrity Commissioner has welcomed the decision to charge a harness racing code participant with perjury.

Merry Christmas Matty Neilson! District Court Judge Richard Jones instructed the jury last July of the behaviour of the CCC presiding officer, Paul Rutledge, in November 2017 as follows—

His sarcastic language toward Mr Neilson was not wanted. The Presiding Officer's sarcastic, supercilious attitude shown toward Mr Neilson at a CCC hearing in November 2017 was unfortunate ... there was no need for it ...

Labor's appointed commissioner who, by his own admission, had no knowledge of racing when engaged tweeted about 'barrier' draws for Capalaba greyhounds, which start from boxes not barriers. Over 400 grand a year for that Labor drive!

Ms Grace interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Minister! Member, you are talking about the CCC. This bill is about the Racing Integrity Commission and reforms to it. I am failing to see where the connection is between the matters you are raising and the bill.

Mr LANGBROEK: It is about a case of someone who was charged who subsequently went to the CCC.

Ms Grace: But it's the CCC.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order. I will let you continue.

Mr LANGBROEK: The QRIC commissioner grandstanded about harness cartels but there was no sign of a TV camera, commissioner or Labor minister when the charges amounted to nothing. Labor's choice, Barnett, was not the cause, just the symptom: he was a novice, no background or knowledge of the areas of expertise required to head racing. The commissioner removed Norm Torpey as head of the racing integrity regulation unit after an independent investigation found he had not properly investigated a matter reported by a participant. Labor's commissioner then appointed Torpey as senior harness racing steward.

In its first year, five officers from QRIC were sacked, stood down or redeployed. In its first year, more QRIC staff were stood down than licensees with stewards bumping into each other at exit doors. Alan Jones labelled Queensland racing a 'basket case'. Under QRIC, the following has occurred: a baby was almost killed at Redcliffe by an errant mobile barrier; many meetings were abandoned because of improperly curated tracks; a licensee had a two-year delay to a nine-day suspension to be served; a chairman of stewards was sacked and was then forced to be reinstated by an independent process; and wrong greyhounds were racing.

Labor's QRIC overcapitalised. There has been a conga line of failures and expensive external and in-house legals. Racing squad officers who would not know one end of a horse from the other were tasked with dealing with a specific industry. It is horses for courses and jobs for the boys. We saw Labor stumble from disaster to crisis—a QRIC circus. Licensees who were paying fees in the hope of a better tomorrow or a level playing field got no cigars.

The Johnstons, well-known trainers at Kenilworth, had charges withdrawn after 12 months due to a lack of evidence. Stan and Marilyn's daughter Krystle's charges were also dismissed after 12 months. They were raided by numerous police officers in the middle of the night. There are so many issues I do not have time to deal with them all. What about the issues to do with Meramist? QRIC was meant to deal with animal welfare and of course at Meramist we then had the commissioner saying, 'I am going to take care of horses for the term of their natural life,' but Meramist exposed that.

I will finish on this point. Racing with Labor's bumbling, dysfunctional QRIC is the same as putting lipstick on a pig: underneath it all it is still a pig, a \$32.7 million Labor pig.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hart): Member for Surfers Paradise, before you resume your seat, there was an unparliamentary word in your speech. I would ask you to withdraw.

Mr LANGBROEK: I withdraw.



Mr O'ROURKE (Rockhampton—ALP) (12.03 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Racing Integrity Amendment Bill 2022. The racing industry in Queensland is worth approximately \$1.2 billion annually and it is essential that we protect the integrity of this industry. We need to ensure that we have an industry that people can have confidence in and that the racing industry is held to the highest level of integrity. Whether someone is a horse owner, a trainer or a punter, they have to have trust that the racing business is free from corruption.

Racing plays a key role in Central Queensland. On an annual basis it contributes more than \$55 million to the local economy while providing more than 450 full-time jobs, so it is essential that we protect the integrity of this industry. Currently under the act a wronged person can request a review. The person can request an internal review of the steward's decision and then an external review by the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal, QCAT. Going to QCAT can take months and it is likely that a ruling will be made by a person with no or very limited knowledge of the racing industry. This is just a way to deliver a very delayed decision and a way of playing the system. Someone can spin this out for months before a suspension comes into place.


Within racing circles many have criticised this review process as being not fit for purpose for the rules of racing and a way to try to beat the system or, at a minimum, delay the process. Some of the concerns raised include the timeliness of decisions, the lack of racing expertise at QCAT and, as they say, abuse of the process where those before QCAT are able to continue to participate in the industry while the cases are drawn out due to the review processes. It can be some months before the case is finalised.

The Racing Integrity Amendment Bill 2022 will put in place an independent racing appeals panel to replace the internal and external review of the stewards' decisions under the rules of racing. The process will be streamlined to reduce the risk of abuse by ensuring that a review request must be lodged within three business days. Many of the decisions will be reviewed within a further seven business days, and in more serious cases the panel will finalise its review within 20 business days.

To ensure the integrity of racing, the panel chairperson will be required to have at least five years legal standing and, for most hearings, two members will be selected from a panel of people with racing or other relevant expertise. Most matters will be finalised by the panel. Appeals to QCAT would only be permitted on a question of law relating to the extent of a disqualification action of three months or more. Stays pending a QCAT appeals tribunal decision will not be available where the panel has determined the breach involved a serious risk to animal welfare, human safety or the integrity of racing. Through

this new process, which is also consistent with other states, particularly New South Wales and Victoria, there will be a review system that will see most reviews finalised in a much reduced time and that is better suited to protecting the integrity and the reputation of the industry. The bill also makes a number of other minor changes.

Having been the part owner of a couple of racehorses, Isis Turbo and SookySooky La La, I know personally of the importance of having a racing industry with a very high level of integrity and one that people can feel confident in investing in. As I said previously, racing plays a big role in Central Queensland; it supports about 450 jobs. Callaghan Park in Rockhampton holds about 41 race meetings throughout the year and we have a couple of really big carnivals. That then has benefits for the rest of our community, whether that is people getting dressed up, buying new clothes or things like that. Then after the race day there are always activities in and around town. Making sure we have a racing industry that is of a very high standard is essential. It is great to see. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr LISTER** (Southern Downs—LNP) (12.08 pm): I, too, rise to make a contribution on the Racing Integrity Amendment Bill 2022. I would like to echo the words of the chair in acknowledging my colleagues on the Education, Employment and Training Committee, especially the member for Bundaberg, who caused much merriment when we were reminded of the name of the horse SookySooky La La. I never fail to chuckle at that one. I gather the member no longer owns that particular horse.

Mr O'Rourke: No longer.

Mr LISTER: He perhaps was not the most successful of horses. I will put the merriment aside and say that in the narrowest sense this is a good bill because it does some good things. However, it does not really cover a number of shortcomings in the system, some of which were referred to with great gusto by my honourable friend the member for Surfers Paradise. I agree with his concerns about the numerous abuses which have occurred through QRIC to innocent parties who have had their reputations sullied and have had their personal situations adversely affected by errors and incompetence on the part of QRIC. I think that needs to be said.

Returning to the substance of the bill, what we are seeing is a good change that will make sure that wrongdoing is not able to continue at length because of stays provided by the current process. If racing stewards detect offences and they apply charges to the parties involved, they ought to be heard expeditiously and fairly. Any processes which involve the review that the accused parties are entitled to use should be handled independently and quickly, and that is not the case at the moment. We have heard previous speakers say the process involves people who do not have the necessary industry experience to truly understand what they are dealing with. That, combined with QCAT's notoriously long waiting list—a result, in my view, of the underfunding of QCAT and a litany of poor decisions by entities associated with the government—needs to change.

By taking appeals out of the hands of QCAT—disciplinary matters, not administrative ones which would properly sit within the remit of the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal—we will see justice much faster. One of the difficulties that we have seen is that those accused of wrongdoing in the racing industry—and these are serious matters because they tend to erode the confidence of the public in the integrity of racing in Queensland—have been able to be stayed. In some cases, it takes years to be heard, which gives the accused parties, even if they know themselves to be guilty, time to continue in and perhaps extend their misconduct. It also enables them to elect to accept the findings and to cease their appeal until a convenient time, perhaps over Christmas or when they have attended an important racing event. Allowing offenders to pick and choose their punishment to suit their personal circumstances is not, in my view, consistent with the needs of the racing community.

A short reading of the explanatory notes for this particular bill summarises the need. What it does not do is talk about how this bill is four years after the discussion paper *Racing integrity reforms: review of the Racing Integrity Act 2016* went out. As the explanatory notes say—

There was a perceived lack of independence of QRIC's internal reviews and dissatisfaction with the level of racing expertise at QCAT, which conducts external reviews under the RI Act. The average time taken for QCAT to consider reviews referred to it (more than two hundred days) compares unfavourably with the time taken to finalise reviews in other jurisdictions (generally no more than a few weeks, except in limited circumstances ...

The discussion paper also prompted stakeholders to say that—

... stay orders were being used to enable participants to continue racing despite serious and/or repeated breaches of the rules of racing until it was convenient to accept the penalty ...

I heard the member for Surfers Paradise refer to the ignoble case of Benjamin Currie. He perhaps personifies the potential for abuse under the system as it now stands. Mr Currie has been charged with a number of very serious offences over a long period and he was able to use stays and appeals to continue racing and actually accrue further charges of misconduct from the stewards in QIRC. This has irritated QIRC. An undated press release from their website states that—

The Queensland Racing Integrity Commission (QRIC) opposed the stay at a QCAT hearing today, Thursday April 18 2019, however the stay was granted to Mr Currie, permitting him to continue to train in Queensland.


...

The Commission operates within the appeals system of internal review and QCAT as set out in the Racing Integrity Act.

While multiple charges have been laid against Mr Currie and have been vigorously pursued by the Commission, Mr Currie has exercised a range of legal rights that have delayed the finalisation of those matters.

I looked at the actual QCAT findings. It was almost two years between when the first of these charges were laid against Mr Currie and when the final decision from QCAT was handed down—a month shy of 2½ years. This aroused the ire of some of my constituents, and it was a matter which was on the lips of people at pubs, at race tracks and in the backstreets of my electorate. I think that the whole episode reflects poorly on Mr Currie but even more poorly on the system that allowed him to continue his misconduct and continue his racing unfettered by the penalties that ought to have applied to him much sooner.

This bill is necessary. It has been a very long time coming. It addresses the shortcomings of the current system, particularly in relation to the ability of stays to be used to the advantage of the accused, but it does not do anything to fix the abuses and the injustices which have been perpetrated upon innocent people by QIRC in other cases.

 **Mr SULLIVAN** (Stafford—ALP) (12.15 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Racing Integrity Amendment Bill 2022. This bill represents the next stage of reform of the racing industry from the Palaszczuk government that has been determined in its reform and leading the way to enshrine integrity across the racing industry. This bill—these reforms—builds on the Palaszczuk government's strong history in improving integrity in the racing industry across the various codes. It builds on the government's creation of the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission, QRIC, established through the Racing Integrity Act 2016. The commission provides vigorous independent oversight of the industry and at the core of this is the important work of stewards.

Stewards are, of course, employed by QRIC to oversee race meetings and independently apply and adjudicate the rules of racing. The decisions of stewards can be internally reviewed in the first instance, and further appeals then fall under the jurisdiction of QCAT. After reviews in 2019 and 2020, the minister announced a desire to establish an independent panel to provide a more effective mechanism for these reviews. This is not a criticism of QCAT decision-makers but the committee heard evidence from industry participants that, because of the thoroughness of QCAT's jurisdiction, including possibilities for stays being applied, some in the industry try to abuse the procedural processes provided by QCAT. The committee heard that some people attempt to effectively game the process, including gaming the procedural fairness afforded to them, in ways such as continuing to ride or to train in major race meetings and then game any possible penalty period for when they otherwise would not be working anyway.

The Racing Integrity Amendment Bill will establish an independent racing appeals panel to replace the internal and external review of stewards' decisions under the rules of racing. Applications for review must be lodged within three business days and the majority of the decisions will be reviewed within a further seven business days. In more serious cases, the panel will finalise its review within 20 business days. This is a great improvement.

Most matters will be finalised by the panel. Appeals to QCAT's appeals jurisdiction would only be permitted on a question of law relating to the extent of disqualification action of three months or more. Stays, pending a QCAT appeals decision, will not be available where the panel has determined a breach involved a serious risk to animal welfare, human safety or the integrity of racing. This is a great outcome which is supported by people from the industry, knowing that they will not be riding next to or training alongside people who are accused of such serious behaviour. The outcome will be a review system which will see most reviews finalised in a much-reduced time and it is better suited to protecting the integrity and reputation of the industry. The new model in Queensland will be more consistent with other states, including Victoria and New South Wales.

At the core of this bill is the ongoing recognition that a successful and sustainable racing industry must be based on integrity. Integrity is central to public faith in the industry and the significant economic employment, social and cultural elements that are associated with it. To be blunt, I am not much of a punter. I do not regularly gamble myself but, as I am a lifelong north sider, from time to time I have spent a day at Eagle Farm and Doomben. Living on the north side, there are consistent reminders of the chain of employment and economic injection that the racing industry generates.

It is quite common—indeed, it feels quite normal for us—to have horses being walked through our northern suburbs, training facilities interwoven with suburban residential living and horse floats around any given corner. Again reflecting on what a day at the races reminds us of, I make this point because the need for integrity and fairness in the racing industry is not merely about the desire for fairness and honesty for the betting results of punters. It is not just important for the owners and connections who want a fair return for their investment or at least a fair crack at that opportunity. More importantly, it is crucial for the whole spectrum of the workforce that relies on a healthy and fair industry—the trainers, the strappers, the stablehands, the veterinarians as well as the significant hospitality workforce, small business suppliers, bookies, the TAB staff and everyone else along the employment chain. That is why I am so proud to associate myself with this government's continuing delivery of integrity measures in the racing industry.

One of the key elements of this bill goes to preventing abuse of the stay process. The racing industry has been concerned that stays are being abused to enable people to continue to operate despite being accused of significant and serious breaches of the rules of racing. Stays of a penalty are permitted to ensure implementation of a decision does not compromise the potential for it to be overturned on appeal. However, as well intentioned as this has been, over 40 per cent of applicants to QCAT are withdrawn before being heard. This clearly suggests that there was not a strong commitment or expectation that the decision would actually be overturned; rather, that it was used as a strategy. This also lends weight to industry concerns that stays are being used by offenders to, in effect, serve any suspension period or disqualification at a time of their own choosing—that is, it is being used strategically as a tactic. To prevent this situation from arising in the future, the Racing Integrity Amendment Bill 2022 provides that stays will not be permitted where the Racing Appeals Panel determines that the penalty relates to a serious risk to animal welfare, human safety or integrity of racing. Prohibiting stays in these circumstances prevents the abuse of the stays process and protects animals and humans and the industry more broadly and, as I have said, at its core the integrity of the industry.

The Racing Integrity Amendment Bill includes a number of improvements beyond those relating to the review of stewards' decisions. The bill authorises the publication of stewards' race day reports, inquiry reports and a list of horses that have recorded elevated levels of prohibited substances. This formalises existing arrangements, thereby maintaining the transparency but also ensuring there are privacy protections where appropriate.

The bill removes the redundant requirement for the commission to obtain and store fingerprints prior to licensing bookmakers. The collection of fingerprints was a historic requirement for a bookmaker's licence which was relocated from the Racing Act 2002. Fingerprints no longer serve a purpose in deciding whether a person is a suitable person to hold a racing bookmaker's licence. These sorts of simple reforms are a reminder to me of the historic nature of this industry. Indeed, there are reminders all around my local community. One example is the Kedron State High School, which sits on what used to be the Kedron Park Racecourse owned in part by the infamous John Wren. In fact, the land of the Kedron Lions AFL club, just on the other side of the Kedron Brook, was donated by Wren from his proceeds in this unregistered racing. It is just a small reminder to me of how far we have come in this industry.

I want to briefly make some thankyou's. Thank you to the minister and the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries under which the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission sits. Thanks for its ongoing work of overseeing the industry, for progressing these reforms and for the briefings and assistance throughout the committee process. It was very helpful. Thank you to our chair, the member for Redlands. She does a great job. Thanks also to the other members of the committee, including the deputy chair and the members for Theodore and Hinchinbrook. I particularly want to thank the member for Rockhampton. While I am not personally involved in the racing industry, I did appreciate the regular updates on Sooky Sooky La La.

Ms Pugh interjected.

Mr SULLIVAN: I take that interjection from the member for Mount Ommaney. I am not sure that Hansard can get that accent correct; we will see how we go. I am not sure, member for Rockhampton, if she is getting a run at the spring carnival this year.

Mr O'Rourke: No.

Mr SULLIVAN: Do not think so, no. Thank you to the secretariat. It does a great job for us and we appreciate everything it does. Thank you to the submitters and witnesses throughout the committee process and hearings. It was very interesting to hear insights from the industry leaders themselves and it is great to have their support broadly. I look forward to this bill progressing and the implementation of these reforms across our racing industry. I believe this is an important next step in the strengthening of integrity in racing that has been the hallmark of this government. I commend the bill to the House.



Mr BOOTHMAN (Theodore—LNP) (12.25 pm): I rise to speak on the Racing Integrity Amendment Bill. This bill was referred to the committee on 24 February 2022. This is a very important bill because this affects a very important part of an industry in Queensland, especially in those rural areas where this industry is very important for bringing tourism out to those country towns. Therefore, it is critically important that we have a system put in place to ensure that there is fairness and integrity in the system itself. Whilst the committee only had six submitters who made comment on the bill, I want to highlight what the Australian Jockeys Association said. It stated that the original bill that was brought in had good intentions but was unworkable. The system that we brought in in Queensland was unique compared to other jurisdictions and it is quite ironic that we are now using pretty much a carbon copy of other jurisdictions to ensure that there are processes in place to bring fairness and accountability into this very important industry.

I want to talk about the objectives of the bill. One of the main parts of the bill is replacing the current internal and external review process for decision-making by racing stewards under the rules of racing with an independent panel. As the member for Surfers Paradise stated—and this is very important—the people on the independent panel should have some extensive racing knowledge to ensure that decisions are made in a timely manner and decisions are made very fairly for that industry. Most importantly though, it needs to ensure that decisions are finalised within a reasonable time frame. One of the biggest issues that we heard about through the committee process was the length of time that some decisions took. These decisions involve family businesses. These businesses were left in limbo. They were literally going to the wall.

The member for Surfers Paradise highlighted some of the instances where these individuals had to get out of the industry and seek other employment because what transpired destroyed them. At the same time there were individuals who were well versed at working the system and using stay notices, and the member for Southern Downs and the member for Surfers Paradise spoke about Ben Currie. I want to read into the *Hansard* record a press release from QRIC about what transpired. The first paragraph states—

The Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal ... granted Toowoomba Trainer Ben Currie a stay of proceedings against a February 18 2019 Stewards decision to refuse to accept nominations of horses trained by Currie Racing.


He received a stay notice. It was proven by video that he was giving substances to horses yet he was still allowed to participate, as the member for Southern Downs highlighted, for about 2½ years.

Mr Krause: So much for integrity!

Mr BOOTHMAN: I take that interjection. For 2½ years this individual was able to participate in race meets because QCAT gave him stay notices. As the member for Surfers Paradise highlighted, it is important that we have experienced, independent people on these tribunals to ensure that this type of behaviour does not happen again. For 2½ years this individual continued to operate, yet other people who were not as unethical as he was or who were innocent of their crimes had their careers destroyed. We need to ensure this never happens again. The LNP will not be opposing this bill. It is four years overdue. This is critically important for the continuation of race meets and the integrity of the racing industry in Queensland. As I stated, it is critically important that we have strong regional race meets. I commend the minister for this legislation. We need to ensure that we have strong race meets because these are on the tourism calendar throughout Queensland.

As the member for Everton highlighted, the number of individuals participating in race meets is about 43,000 people and they employ about 13,500 individuals. It is a big industry and we need to ensure that it goes forward stronger than ever. The committee made six recommendations. The member for Redlands highlighted those recommendations and I will not go over them. I feel we have taken a long time to get to the position we are in at the moment—four years. We should have acted a lot sooner. The member for Surfers Paradise highlighted the harrowing stories of real people whose lives were destroyed by a system that did not work. It should never have been implemented. Looking at best practice in other jurisdictions, why did we not implement a system like theirs, similar to what we

have in this legislation? This is long overdue. This situation should never have happened. This legislation will correct the wrongs of the past, but for those families who have been destroyed there is not much justice.

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (12.33 pm): I begin by acknowledging students and teachers from the Islamic College of Brisbane in the electorate of Stretton who are in the gallery. I rise to contribute briefly to the Racing Integrity Amendment Bill. I regret to inform the House that I do not own a racehorse, unlike my second cousin, the member for Rockhampton.

Mr Krause interjected.

Ms PUGH: No, I do not have anything. Nonetheless, the racing industry is important to all Queenslanders, not just the member for Rockhampton. The racing industry, including thoroughbred horses, greyhound and harness horse racing, is a core component of many Queensland communities and many Queenslanders themselves. In the racing industry we have close to 43,500 participants employing the equivalent of more than 13,500 full-time employees. I should declare that I do have a number of in-law relations tangentially employed in the racing industry in various ways.


In 2021 in Queensland there were 1,591 race meetings involving 14,237 races. It is estimated that some 8.2 per cent of Australian adults wager on the races in an average month. That is roughly 330,000 people in Queensland. In the 2020-21 financial year, the Queensland racing industry was responsible for generating close to \$1.9 billion in value-added contribution to the Queensland economy, an increase of nearly 60 per cent since 2016, and 48 per cent of that contribution directly benefits regional economies like Rockhampton. In 2020-21, a wagering turnover of \$6.7 billion was expended on the three racing codes in Queensland.

We also know, as we have heard from members already today, that racing is an important leisure and social activity in Queensland, particularly in regional Queensland. Every year some 62 Queensland towns host a race day as a highlight of that community's social calendar. Some members have attested that they are not much for racing, but whether you are a punter or not or whether you like going to the races or not, I do not think anybody in this House would not have heard of the Birdsville Races, which is a significant economic contributor to the economy of that town. It brings in people who are interested not only in racing but also in a more broad tourism experience. The benefit of racing to those regional communities cannot be overstated.

I turn now to the provisions of the bill that ensure the responsible use of digital platforms used in racing. After the few weeks that we have had, we all have an increased awareness of the importance of digital safety. Online safety and privacy is important to all Australians, especially in the evolving online environment and the recent health concerns over attendance at licensed premises during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Racing Integrity Amendment Bill clarifies that an approved telecommunications system must be used regardless of whether a bookmaker is making a bet with a person who is not present at a licensed venue or the bookmaker is not present at a licensed venue. This is intended to protect the integrity of the bets, the money and the privacy of the person placing that bet. Clarity on approved telecommunication systems for betting in a remote setting supports the transparency and the reputation of the industry. This complements the Queensland government's implementation of the national code to protect persons placing bets through the national consumer protection framework. As the framework applies to any wagering undertaken via the telecommunications system, it will impact those bookmakers with off-course approvals.

The framework also—and this is important—provides staff training measures for all staff who can provide or can influence wagering services. These staff must be trained to provide a responsible online wagering service to create a culture of responsible gambling within the organisation. That is important. Recently in the House we debated the casino bill where I spoke about the importance of responsible betting and ensuring that we are helping people who might have issues manage that. This is an important part of the bill and I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Scenic Rim—LNP) (12.38 pm): As has been noted, the LNP is not opposing this bill. It brings some important reforms to the racing integrity space that will fix issues that have been around for quite a number of years. Racing is an important part of the Scenic Rim local economy, particularly in the Beaudesert district. We have a very strong heritage of racing in the region through the Beaudesert racecourse and I believe we have a very exciting future. I will continue the strong support that I have for that industry in the region: all the trainers, jockeys, owners and other participants

in that local economy. It is a great part of our local economy. This Saturday we have Derby Day at Aquis Beaudesert. It will be a big event, a good event, and I hope that it is a real success for the Beaudesert Race Club.

Through that involvement in supporting the local racing industry, I have heard firsthand from locals who are involved in the industry about issues of concern with the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission and, more broadly, the entire racing integrity framework. Whilst I will talk mainly about thoroughbred racing, as the member for Everton and the member for Surfers Paradise have indicated, this extends across all codes, that is, thoroughbreds, greyhounds and harness racing. The concerns that I have heard raised in the past couple of years are not new. Those concerns have been around ever since the framework came into being in 2016. This government has been unbelievably slow to do anything about concerns that have been around, as I said, since this integrity framework came into place in 2017.


While the LNP will not oppose the bill, I would not want that to be at all confused with the idea that we think the minister is doing a good job, because nothing could be further from the truth. One member opposite said to me before, 'You're saying that the minister is doing a good job.' That is not true. We support the bill because it will fix problems that should have been fixed a long time ago, which is simply what the minister should have done years ago. When it is said that the minister is doing a good job, nothing could be further from the truth.

Ms Grace interjected.

Mr KRAUSE: John-Paul Langbroek, the member for Surfers Paradise, and Tim Mander, the member for Everton, have outlined a litany of failures with the framework. I hear the minister trying to interject. Those failures in the integrity framework have been around just as long as Minister Grace has been the minister. In 2016 she brought a bill into this place and then provisions had to be voted against because there were so many mistakes in one of the bills. In 2016 and 2017, issues were raised with me across the length and breadth of Queensland, from Innisfail to Cairns, Charleville, Cunnamulla, Beaudesert, the Gold Coast, Ipswich, Eagle Farm, Doomben, Toowoomba, Kilcoy, Mackay, Hughenden, Roma and other places.

Back then, every participant in the industry knew that there were issues with the integrity framework. It was two years after the integrity framework was introduced before they released an issues paper and it was a further four years after that before anything by way of legislation was done. That is six years before any action was taken, despite the problems with the system with appeals to QCAT, the legalistic nature of the system meaning that lawyers have to be involved to deal with issues, and people in QCAT who have no idea about racing but who are dealing with racing issues. That was apparent in 2016, as soon as the framework came into being, but nothing was done about it.

We will not be opposing the bill, but that does not mean that we are saying in any way, shape or form that the minister is doing a good job. This should have been dealt with a long time ago to save the dozens of people who have suffered under the framework the pain imposed on them by the system. The member for Surfers Paradise could have spent a lot longer telling stories of hurt, broken careers and in some cases, no doubt, broken families and broken marriages because of an integrity framework that did not work. Not only did it work against those who did nothing wrong; it worked the wrong way by allowing those who were doing the wrong thing to continue racing. Others have spoken about how stays were obtained so that people could continue to participate in the industry when really they should not have been able to. If the framework had been fixed earlier, those injustices would not have occurred. This bill is too late for the victims. Whilst we will not oppose the bill, we need to call out the failures of the ministers opposite. For many years they have had evidence before them that is as plain as day yet they have failed to act on it to the detriment of all those people in the industry who have suffered.

 **Mr McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (12.43 pm): I rise to contribute to the Racing Integrity Amendment Bill. With almost 40,000 industry participants and about 81 per cent of those in regional communities, the Queensland racing industry contributes more than \$1.6 billion to our state's economy and supports over 12,600 local jobs. It is a huge industry and it is a critical industry for our state. It is absolutely paramount that we do what we can to ensure public confidence in the integrity of an industry that provides so much economic growth and development and local jobs right throughout our state. In fact, every dollar that is invested in the Queensland racing industry generates \$1.56 in benefits for the broader community.

Every year, more than 60 Queensland towns host a race day and enormous economic and community benefits stem from the hosting of that day. Of course, stewards are absolutely central to the operation of race days. They work on the track to monitor the rules of racing that apply to race days. In 2020-21, Queensland Racing Integrity Commission stewards made 1,947 decisions and

148 applications were made for internal review. On average, over the five years to 2020-21, more than 70 per cent of applications for both internal and external review by QCAT concerned thoroughbred racing compared to around 20 per cent for harness racing and approximately 10 per cent for greyhound racing. Under the current model, an aggrieved party can seek an internal review of a steward's decision, followed by an external review by QCAT.

Every now and again, on a Saturday afternoon, I have been known to have a punt. Like many punters, I am familiar with the feeling that comes when a race result is under protest and you are waiting to hear the outcome. It is an incredibly important part of a broader process that underscores and is the foundation of the integrity that surrounds the system, not just for the punters but also for the broader public, industry participants including the owners, and the businesses that are part of the racing industry here in Queensland.

Consultation on the reforms that are contained in this bill can be traced back to a June 2019 discussion paper through to industry consultation on possible reforms that occurred in December 2021. Stakeholders identified and brought forward concerns with the operation of the review process including around a perceived lack of independence from the commission, the time it takes for matters to be heard and a lack of racing industry knowledge within QCAT when undertaking external reviews. Perhaps most concerning, though, is the issue that some industry participants deliberately seek to use stays so that they can continue to ride, particularly through lucrative periods, whilst waiting for their matters to be heard. We have heard previous speakers talk about evidence given to the committee around that gaming of the system.

This bill contains reforms to the review process for decisions made by stewards under the rules of racing by seeking to replace the current internal and external review processes for decisions made by stewards under the rules of racing with review by an independent panel; ensuring that reviews are finalised within a reasonable time frame; and reducing serious welfare, human safety or integrity risks from being stayed pending the hearing of an appeal by QCAT. It also provides important reforms around the publication of stewards' reports and other types of reports online. I think this is an important positive step when it comes to accountability and transparency, which of course are both critical to integrity.

In my local community, racing has a proud history and an important role today. In fact, we have invested \$25 million in the Ipswich Turf Club at Bundamba. That has delivered the new Ipswich Events & Entertainment Centre as well as a host of other upgrades including new and improved facilities and supporting infrastructure. This project included the replacement of the former jockeys' facilities with a new two-storey building providing state-of-the-art areas for jockeys and stewards on the ground floor. It also delivers new hospitality facilities on the top floor which I am very proud to attend quite frequently, supporting the Ipswich Turf Club's vision to diversify its business and revenue to host more private and corporate functions and events. It is not just about direct jobs in the racing industry; there is a huge benefit from indirect jobs. This is a perfect example, because it is delivering hospitality jobs and providing a place for our community to gather for all kinds of reasons. In fact, recently we marked the 50th anniversary of the Box Flat mine disaster at this facility.

The project also includes new tie-up stalls and car-parking facilities as well as new drainage and irrigation—very important to ensuring our local turf club is set up very well for the future. In fact, probably the most well known and supported annual event hosted at the Ipswich Turf Club is the time-honoured Ipswich Cup, one of the biggest days on the Queensland racing calendar.

Mr MANDER: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance. This has absolutely nothing to do with the bill. He has been going on for a couple of minutes about what is happening at Ipswich.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hart): Member for Bundamba, I have allowed some latitude, but I draw you back to the bill.

Mr McCALLUM: Thank you for your guidance, Mr Deputy Speaker. I certainly vehemently disagree with the contribution from the member for Everton, who suggests that the Ipswich Turf Club and the Ipswich Cup are in fact irrelevant.

Mr MANDER: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Resume your seat. Member for Bundamba, I have given a direction on that. You will abide by the chair's direction or I will sit you down.


Mr MANDER: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take personal offence at that comment and I ask that it be withdrawn.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Bundamba, the member has taken personal offence. Will you withdraw?

Mr McCALLUM: I withdraw. A few weeks before the cup I was very proud to attend the Better Future Labour Day Races at the turf club. More than 2,000 people turned out for free family fun that day. It was a shining example of what racing clubs across our great state are delivering for their communities. We had a full card of racing complemented by plenty of action off the track like children's rides, entertainment and food trucks. I bring this up because, in addition to delivering thousands of jobs, racing also—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Bundamba, I have given you a direction. Please come back to the bill. This is your last warning.

Mr McCALLUM: Racing also contributes to the social fabric and wellbeing within our communities. The reforms in this bill continue the Palaszczuk government's ongoing commitment to improving integrity in the racing industry. They bolster confidence for industry participants—whether you are a horse owner or trainer or work at a club—and for members of the broader public and humble punters. I commend this bill and its reforms to the House.

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (12.55 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the Racing Integrity Amendment Bill 2022. The Racing Integrity Amendment Bill was introduced into the chamber by the Hon. Grace Grace, Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing, and referred to the committee on 24 February 2022. As stated by the shadow minister, the LNP will not be opposing this bill.

According to the explanatory notes, the main policy objective of the bill is to reform the review process for decisions made by stewards under the rules of racing by replacing the current internal and external review process for decisions made by racing stewards under the rules of racing with a review by an independent panel; ensuring reviews are finalised within a reasonable time frame; and reducing serious welfare, human safety or integrity risks from being stayed pending hearings of an appeal by the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal. An additional policy objective of the bill is to provide for the publication of stewards' reports and other reports online. The explanatory notes state that the amendments are required to clarify and ensure compliance with the Information Privacy Act 2009 by authorising the publication of prescribed reports.

The Queensland Racing Integrity Commission employs stewards to oversee race meetings and applies the rules of racing for each code. Under the Racing Integrity Act, a person can seek an internal review of a steward's decision and then external review by QCAT. Industry participants and the community expressed concerns about the system of review of stewards' decisions undermining confidence in the integrity of the industry, particularly in relation to a perceived lack of independence of QRIC's internal review process; dissatisfaction with the level of racing expertise at QCAT in its role in external reviews under the Racing Integrity Act; the average time taken for QCAT to consider reviews of more than 200 days, which is just absolutely disgraceful; and assertions that stays were being used to enable offenders to continue racing, despite serious and/or repeated breaches of the rules of racing, until it was convenient to accept the penalty.

The bill establishes an independent panel, the Racing Appeals Panel, to review decisions of stewards under the rules of racing and introduces procedures for the review of racing decisions by the panel, for applications to the panel for stays of racing decisions and for appeal of panel decisions. The bill provides that applications for review by the panel must be made within three business days after a person is given notice of a racing decision. The panel must finalise its review of an application within seven days, unless the review is of a decision to take disqualifying action, in which case it must be finalised within 20 business days.

Appeals of panel decisions to the QCAT appeals tribunal are proposed to be available only for reviews of disqualifying actions and only on a question of law relating to the extent of the disqualifying action. We have had some terrible examples of cases dragging out for extraordinary periods of time. The Toowoomba Turf Club had probably one of the most well known ones in this state. It dragged on for an absolutely unacceptable period. It does nothing for confidence in the industry when that happens.

The bill includes amendments to clarify and ensure compliance with the Information Privacy Act 2009 by authorising the publication online of stewards' reports and other reports of detection of prohibited substances.

All submitters to the inquiry supported the bill's objective to establish an independent panel to review decisions made by racing stewards under the rules of racing. The bill provides a procedure for the panel to review racing decisions made by stewards. Some submitters expressed concern as to what would be termed 'a racing decision'. A racing decision is defined as 'a decision of the steward under the rules of racing', as opposed to under section 252AA. Racing Queensland also noted that the definition of 'a racing decision' in the bill means that not all stewards' decisions are subject to review by

the panel, such as decisions under the RI Act to refuse a licence to a person or to make an animal welfare direction. The committee made a recommendation that the minister in her second reading speech clarify the definition of 'a racing decision'.


The proposed amendments will place a limit on appeals to QCAT. This would mean that a person may appeal to the QCAT appeals tribunal against the panel's decision only on a question of law relating to the extent of the disqualifying action.

Debate, on motion of Mr Weir, adjourned.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.00 pm.

MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Minister for Health and Ambulance Services; Health System

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (Broadwater—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (2.00 pm): Have we really reached the stage in Queensland where a minister cannot be held accountable for promises she has made directly herself? If you cannot honour a promise, do not make it in the first place. If you make a commitment, follow through and deliver it. The minister's performance today lacked ministerial accountability and responsibility. The government is not accepting questions we are asking on behalf of mothers, on behalf of grieving women who have asked the question themselves publicly, who are calling for accountability, who are calling for an end to the Queensland Health crisis. What should we do: ignore their pleas? The government can ignore public servant whistleblowers; we will not. The government can ignore frontline health staff; we will not. The government can ignore patients; we will not.

We have many more questions to ask the government. We expect ministerial accountability, we expect integrity and we expect the minister to be held accountable for the department she administers. I have bad news for the Minister for Health: the town hall meetings that have outlined the crisis which is raging through Queensland Health will continue. They will continue until the minister listens, until she accepts solutions and until she heals the Queensland Health crisis. I know it may be a little politically inconvenient for the minister, but these people deserve a voice.

An opposition member: They are real!

Mr CRISAFULLI: They are real and they are not made-up stories. They are Queenslanders who have been let down because of seven years of poor planning. They deserve a health system that is world class no matter where they live.

The maternity issues that are raging through the state are not just at the Royal Brisbane. Today the member for Currumbin asked a very direct question of the minister and the minister said she had answered that question. I have reviewed what I believe the minister's answer to be. I do not believe there is a straight answer to the question, so we will ask it again: has this practice occurred at another hospital or multiple hospitals? Clarity on that is very important. When it comes to maternity services and the failure of this government, look no further than Gladstone, where for nearly 100 days a powerhouse of this state's economy did not have any maternity services at all. They still do not know when full maternity services will return, and the pressure that is putting on Rockhampton and surrounding areas is immense. We have had babies born on the side of a road in Chinchilla and we have had the closure of wards.

Today I intend to give the government a little bit of knowledge as to their record of years gone by. Since 1998 the Labor Party has closed over 30 maternity wards in this state—over 30. Mothers deserve to have a baby where they live, not on the side of a road on the way to a major centre. Mackay has lost the accreditation to train for maternity services. Whilst I am on the subject of Mackay, in relation to the investigation the minister spoke about today she said that she is 'listening to those mums', but they are the same voices we heard 12 months ago, the same voices whose stories we brought to this place. We were told that we were scaremongering and that we were making up stories. For 12 months that city was given a service they should not have been subjected to because the minister is out of her depth and refusing to listen.

The minister today blamed the previous government for the failings of the health system. We called for this investigation, and where there are failings in the health system every mum deserves to get justice no matter when or where they occurred. This government has been in office for nearly eight years, and for its only defence to be to cling to the record of a government that will be 10 years in the wilderness at the time of the next election shows that in its third term this government has given up. It has given up on trying to heal the Queensland Health crisis.

In Caboolture the government did not make it public knowledge that similar reviews were underway and that the same reviewer who was looking at Mackay was looking at failings in Caboolture. There were 12 investigations, and we still do not know today what they were about today. There have been dozens of PIDs, and the minister refuses to reveal what is going on with the culture at that place or if the reviewer was even told about it in the first place. When a government is no longer willing to listen, let alone answer concerns, that is when you know a government is in its dying days.

The minister avoided the issue of the DNA lab. She ignored the questions, but eventually she said we were politicking. Does that sound familiar? Every time issues are raised it is the same: deflect, distract, attack and then eventually try and blame someone else. Queensland Health is in crisis, and increasingly there is a disconnect between what the minister says publicly and what our RTI briefings tell us. The minister said that category 1A patients were being met on time: they were not. The minister said people were not dying in the back of an ambo or on the end of ramps: they were. The minister said hospital bypass was not happening: it still is. The minister said ED waiting times had not blown out: yes, they have. The minister said elective surgery was being delivered on time: it is not.

This minister is under immense pressure. Her own colleagues tell that tale. They tell that tale in the way they hold their heads during question time and they tell that tale by what they say publicly. The Minister for Water is threatening to resign. The Chief Government Whip is under pressure and breaking ranks. Today the Premier, who had three minutes to defend her minister, took 15 seconds. She had three minutes to launch a defence of an embattled minister and she could not make 15 seconds. We have a health minister who is out of her depth and a Premier who has sailed into the accountability sunset. After nearly eight years of poor management the government must acknowledge that Queensland Health is in crisis. When this government came to office ambulance ramping was at 15 per cent. Today it is at 45 per cent, the worst in the nation. We are waiting for the latest figures, and we know the minister has them. Please show us the figures.

Tonight the federal government will hand down its budget. In the lead-up to the last election there was one comment that struck a chord with me, and that was the defiance with which this government demanded a fifty-fifty funding deal on health. I remember their comments that the former government failed Queensland because it had not committed to fifty-fifty, so tonight is the test. Let me assure you, Madam Deputy Speaker, that I always put Queensland ahead of the political colour in Canberra. I will stand up tomorrow and if there is fifty-fifty funding—the transport minister does not quite understand this concept—I will be the first to come in here and thank the government if it is delivered. If it is not, I look forward to the condemnation going across the political divide.

Finally, I will make this point. It might be uncomfortable for this minister if we keep asking questions, it might be uncomfortable for the government if we keep probing, it might be uncomfortable if we take the fight on behalf of mums, patients and paramedics to this floor but, until this government changes its attitude, we will continue to raise concerns, otherwise Queenslanders will just have to change this government.

Leader of the Opposition, Performance



Hon. CR DICK (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (2.10 pm): The Leader of the Opposition speaks about stillbirth, yet he has never retracted, withdrawn or apologised for his role in cutting ongoing funding to the support groups for women grieving pregnancy loss. For so long as the Leader of the Opposition fails to apologise for those terrible cuts and atone for the damage that he did, that shame will follow the Leader of the Opposition wherever he goes.

It was not just grieving mothers who were under threat when the Leader of the Opposition was in power. Women with gynaecological cancer, people with muscular dystrophy, even the amputees support group—all of them—had their ongoing funding cut by Campbell Newman and his protegee, the Leader of the Opposition. It was only a Labor government, the Palaszczuk Labor government, which restored funding certainty to those 20 community groups defunded by the Leader of the Opposition.

If the Leader of the Opposition refuses to engage on his record in government, then he should at least be engaged on the economic issues our state faces today. In the last 24 hours, there have been two major reports that relate to the Queensland economy and our state's budget, yet the Leader of the Opposition has absolutely nothing to say. For years, we have put up with this Leader of the Opposition lecturing to us about the CommSec State of the States report. The LNP would say over and over, 'Isn't it terrible. Isn't it awful. How bad is Queensland.' Well, isn't it interesting now the wheel has turned that, when Queensland is at the top of the mainland jurisdictions, there is not one word about CommSec from the Leader of the Opposition. It is like it never happened. This says volumes about the character of the Leader of the Opposition.

Then today we had the report on state finances—the final and complete source of truth on the budget of our state—but there was not one word from the Leader of the Opposition. Why? As I said in the House earlier today, it is the biggest surplus on record. That is important. That is a significant matter of public importance and it ought to be a matter of public importance to the Leader of the Opposition, yet he says nothing. The Leader of the Opposition and those members opposite cannot bring themselves to acknowledge that the Labor Party has done a better job on the budget and managing it in this state than they ever did.


The member for Clayfield, the member for Broadwater, the member for Kawana and the member for Mudgeeraba all laid waste to public services in this state. No-one was spared—not even mothers grieving stillbirth—and all of it was for nothing. They never achieved the fiscal surplus they so craved. They destroyed their credibility as they laid waste to the livelihoods of Queenslanders, and they turned their back on women who had sustained a terrible loss.

Only our government, the Palaszczuk Labor government, delivered the fiscal surplus that they tried and failed to deliver. Now our government has delivered the largest operating surplus on record. It is a testament to the people of this state. It is a testament to their fortitude during COVID. It is a testament to their hard work. They are the people whom this government stands with. It is also a result of our plans—like our economic recovery plan, which the Leader of the Opposition and the LNP scorned and attacked. Well, guess what. It worked. Even CommSec admits that our economy leads the nation on jobs. The savings and debt plan has delivered the savings and those savings are now paying off for Queensland.

Who could ever forget the member for Kawana embarrassing himself and wasting more parliamentary time. They complain about parliamentary time all the time. He came in here and embarrassed himself, wasting more parliamentary time in yet another one of his worthless parliamentary stunts trying to amend the title of the Debt Reduction and Savings Bill. Oh, the LNP guffawed and they all carried on. I tell you what, Madam Deputy Speaker: they are not laughing today.

Once again, today's sitting of this parliament has proven it and proven it conclusively. Only one party in this House has a plan for our economy, a plan for jobs, a plan for better services and a plan for better health care—only one party, the Australian Labor Party, that forms the Palaszczuk Labor government.

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (2.15 pm): I wish the Labor government had a plan to fix the health crisis. I wish the Labor government had a plan to fix the youth crime crisis. I wish the Labor government had a plan to fix the housing crisis. They do not. Let us not be lectured to about embarrassment when this is the Treasurer who only a short time ago said CommSec was inherently flawed. What a turnaround. Did they change their methodology? What happened from—no, stay. I dare you to stay, please.

Mr DICK: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point—

Mr BLEIJIE: Oh, a glass jaw.

Mr DICK: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. It is grossly unparliamentary to comment on the movements of members in this House, including those members leaving the chamber. I have two points. The first is a point of order on procedure and gross parliamentary misconduct. Secondly, I take personal offence at the words used by the member for Kawana directed at me and I ask him to withdraw.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Lui): Member for Kawana, the member for Woodridge has taken personal offence. Do you withdraw?

Mr BLEIJIE: I withdraw. Let us not be lectured to about the CommSec report from the one man who said it was inherently flawed. If we want the definition of an embarrassing Treasurer, that is it right there. That is the new definition of embarrassing. Let me talk about another embarrassment.

Mr Nicholls interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: He can't run from Greenslopes. I take the interjection. Talking about embarrassing, let us talk about the Minister for Transport, Mark Bailey, who in some parallel universe tried to make out that the federal members for Dickson and Petrie got out the crayons and themselves worked out how to resume these houses in Griffin. For goodness sake—

Mr BAILEY: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I find those remarks personally offensive and I ask they be withdrawn. They are inaccurate.

Mr BLEIJIE: Madam Deputy Speaker, on the point of order—

Mr Harper interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: I am addressing his point of order under the standing orders. The minister this morning directly quoted the members for Dickson and Petrie as having designed the plans I just referenced. I referenced what he quoted this morning.

Mr BAILEY: To the point of order: at no stage did I mention the word ‘crayons’ or any of the words mentioned by the member. I find that his words were not only inaccurate but personally offensive to me and I ask that they be withdrawn.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Kawana, the member for Miller has found your comments personally offensive. Do you withdraw?

Mr BLEIJIE: I withdraw. He is the minister responsible for Transport and Main Roads, which does the development, designing and drawing of the plans that will resume these homes. He is the minister responsible. The federal government provided 80 per cent funding in 2018. There has been no action from this minister for three years. This minister stood up in front of the media the other day—

Mr BAILEY: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Again, the member is being inaccurate. I find his comments personally offensive and I ask that they be withdrawn.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will seek advice. Member for Kawana, the member for Miller has found your comments personally offensive. Do you withdraw?

Mr BLEIJIE: I withdraw. We have a situation here that when the Premier was at a housing summit talking about the housing crisis in Queensland, the Transport and Main Roads were busy issuing notices resuming people’s homes.

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

Mr BLEIJIE: This is ridiculous!

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will hear the point of order in silence.

Mr BAILEY: Again, the member for Kawana’s comments are inaccurate. I find them personally offensive and I ask that they be withdrawn.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Miller, the member for Kawana made comments directed to the department.

Mr BAILEY: To the point of order, the member for Kawana said that these houses would be resumed. That is inaccurate. They have been given—

Opposition members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr BAILEY: That is inaccurate. They have been given—

Opposition members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members to my left, order!

Mr BAILEY: Can I just finish my point of order?

Opposition members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members to my left!

Mr BAILEY: The department has been given notice that there is—

Opposition members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will be giving warnings.

Mr BAILEY: The department has given notice that there is potential—

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

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will hear the member for Miller.

Mr BAILEY:—for people’s houses to be resumed. They have not been given notice that all the houses will be resumed. They have been given notice that there—

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

Opposition members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members to my left, order!

Mr BAILEY: I simply ask that my point of order be heard in silence.

Opposition members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will seek advice. Member for Miller, there is no point of order. If there are any issues with the process, you can write to the Speaker.

Mr POWELL: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. It is very clear that the member for Miller is deliberately trying to upset the thread of the member for Kawana's speech by these frivolous points of order. The last two you have ruled out of order. If there is an issue around misleading the House, the member well knows that there is a process, as you have just said, where you write to the Speaker. I ask that you rule that the member for Miller no longer interjects.

Mrs D'ATH: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The Manager of Opposition Business has just asked the Deputy Speaker to interfere with the rights of a member of this chamber to stop them from speaking again.

Opposition members interjected.

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

Mrs D'ATH: Every member has the right to stand and raise points of order and the Manager of Opposition Business, in what he just put to the Speaker, is seeking to interfere with the work of a member of parliament which is against standing orders.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will seek advice in silence. I have made my ruling.

Mr BLEIJIE: If I was the Labor government, I would be embarrassed and ashamed at what they have done as well. I would absolutely be embarrassed and ashamed that they think they could get away with 25 families losing their brand new homes, trying to live the Australian dream. They have just moved in! We heard a story where one family moved in on the Monday and that evening—that evening—after moving into their house, they got a notice that there was a potential resumption of their house. Some of these houses are not even built. As they made the point, when the government lectured Queenslanders about the housing crisis, at the same time people were being notified that they could potentially lose their homes, the homes they have saved for. This Minister for Transport is blaming the former federal government. The federal government simply give the money to the state. The state does the planning. The state draws the maps. The state does it. The minister said it himself—

Mr Bailey interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Miller, you are now warned.

Mr BLEIJIE: The Minister for Transport confirmed in question time this morning that he signed off on the notices being issued to these residents. He knew about it. The Deputy Premier, who is the local member for the area, was asked when he knew about it. He refused to answer which shows, and we know, that they knew about this for a long time and they refused to let people do it. The Minister for Transport blamed the council. He got the council wrong: he was talking about Brisbane City Council; it is the Moreton council—

Mr BAILEY: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The comments from the member are inaccurate. I find them personally offensive and I ask they be withdrawn. Every time you lie, I will pick you up on it.

Mrs GERBER: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

Mr BAILEY: I withdraw.

Opposition members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members to my left, order! Member for Kawana, the member has taken offence to your comments. Do you withdraw?

Mr BLEIJIE: I withdraw. He called me a liar. I ask that to be withdrawn because I am personally offended. Madam Deputy Speaker, that language is unparliamentary. The minister is under a warning and I ask that you take action and he be removed from the chamber.


Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister, I ask you to withdraw.

Mr BAILEY: I withdraw.

Mr BLEIJIE: We have a situation here where the government are trying to rewrite history because they are ashamed of what has happened in the area of Griffin. The Deputy Premier should be ashamed of what has happened in his local patch. The facts are that the deputy mayor of the area has put out a statement and said that Minister Bailey has misled her community and she has asked for an

apology from Minister Bailey. That is from the deputy mayor. The deputy mayor, Councillor Shipway, also stated that these plans went to the state government for approval and nothing was notified to the council that the state had any intention to resume any of these parcels of land. This is at the feet of the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. I would say to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads that he front up to the families who are going to lose their homes because of you.

Energy Industry

 **Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement) (2.28 pm): I rise to inform the House of global energy pressures. Let us be clear: nations around the world are suffering through a global energy crisis that is putting pressure on the cost of living. Make no mistake, members, those opposite are a party whose energy policy is to resign our state and our nation to exposure to global fossil fuel markets, to leave our state in fact exposed to an illegal war being waged by Vladimir Putin that has seen the price of natural gas and coal reach record highs and, as a result, seen the price of electricity go through the roof in some overseas markets. Right now we are seeing intense geopolitical conflict, export restrictions, divergent economic growth, hijacking of power stations, and the risk of nuclear accidents. While all this is playing out across the world and nations move to secure their energy independence, the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Broadwater, continues to lead a party that wants to keep Queensland under the thumb of the fossil fuel industry.

That is no surprise because we all know that the Leader of the Opposition and the LNP would rather keep their heads in the sand on climate and energy policy. We know this. We all remember when the Leader of the Opposition put Queensland's assets up on the chopping block. We also know that is still their policy: handing control of public assets to the private sector. At the height of their sell-off frenzy they had Queensland's publicly owned generators, the transmission companies and the distribution companies up on the auction block at the saleyards. In fact, this state lost 1,300 jobs in renewable energy projects.

Mr Bailey: Strong Choices.

Mr de BRENNI: I take the interjection. We all remember the Strong Choices. What happened as a result of Strong Choices? Power prices increased 43 per cent under those opposite, and power prices are up globally because nations are behind on renewables. The world shudders every single time we hear those missiles and the artillery shells fall near nuclear power plants in the Ukraine and we see the apparent sabotage of the Nord Stream pipelines in the Baltic Sea. As Russian sanctions strangle supplies and send wholesale gas prices soaring, what would the member for Broadwater do? He would have Queensland end up like Great Britain, a nation that in just a year has seen its electricity prices double, and they are predicted to skyrocket even further in January. Elsewhere in Europe we see cash-strapped taxpayers having to cover the hefty publicly funded handouts to cap electricity prices in privatised energy systems. Both here in Queensland and in Canberra the LNP are more concerned with reinstating a long-gone climate culture war than they are with delivering our independence from Russian gas.

We know that Queensland owned wind and solar are the cheapest source of electricity generation in Australia, yet the LNP still will not back it. What was the Leader of the Opposition's solution when they had the opportunity to deliver a cheaper, cleaner renewable energy powered future? They wiped their hands of it, sitting at the right hand of their hero Campbell Newman. That is right. There was not a single new renewable energy project under the member for Broadwater and the LNP. Independent modelling that we have released shows us what the member for Broadwater's energy policy is. The report calls it the 'uncoordinated scenario'. That is right, under the LNP we would have higher bills. That is what the report reveals. Under the LNP we would miss our renewable energy targets and we would have 100,000 fewer jobs. That is the future those opposite want for Queensland.

On this side of the chamber we have a plan and Queenslanders are backing our plan so they can stand on their own two feet. Queenslanders are backing our plan towards Queensland's energy independence. The Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan is all about a future of cleaner, cheaper, more secure energy for Queenslanders. The Palaszczuk government is walking the walk by funding it with a \$4 billion down payment. Some may say that the biggest risk in climate is doing nothing. In fact, the biggest risk to our state's energy independence and our climate is the member for Broadwater and his shadow cabinet. They are still hell-bent on privatisation and Queenslanders know it. Queenslanders know that they are still stuck in the past. They know that they are still under the thumb of overseas fossil fuel giants. Queenslanders know that this is a party—those opposite—prepared to let Vladimir Putin call the shots on world energy prices and the future of Queenslanders.

Obstetric Services



Ms BATES (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (2.33 pm): As a registered nurse for 40 years, I have seen the pain and the anguish of mothers who have tragically lost their unborn babies. I have been there with families when they had to come to terms with the fact that the child for whom they had hopes and dreams will not leave the hospital with them. It is a pain and an anguish like no other. It is a hurt which never leaves. So when it happens we must ensure that everything humanly possible is done to ensure the pain and the grief of those mothers and those families is acknowledged and carefully respected. Anything we can do to lessen their grief we should do. That is why 12 months ago I was so alarmed to hear that women who had miscarried or who had stillbirths were being placed in the same maternity ward as others who had given birth successfully. That practice was happening at the Royal Brisbane & Women's Hospital. Mothers who are grieving should not be subjected to that practice. At that time there was wide agreement that it should stop.

Those who have been through that grief know that it is important to allow the time and the space to grieve for the loss of their baby. It is not possible to do that in a maternity ward full of newborns and their families. Madam Deputy Speaker, you will understand my complete and utter dismay when I saw women who had suffered the tragic loss of their beautiful baby still describing their experience in Queensland public hospitals as 'torture': brave mothers at perhaps their lowest ever point mourning a life that will never be lived placed in the same wards as mothers and their new baby. We were told it was unacceptable, and it was. We were told it needed to change, and it should have. But nothing happened; no change was made. Twelve months on, it is still happening.

The health minister made a promise that that practice would come to an end, and it did not. Imagine for one moment being in the shoes of that mother or of that family who has tragically lost their baby. They should not have to walk through a ward hearing the sounds of newborn babies crying for their mother while they grieve. The health minister promised that would stop happening, and it did not. They should not have to witness other families experience their greatest day as they mourn their loss. The health minister promised that would stop, and it did not.

The minister should not make promises she cannot keep. Do not set false expectations. Do not peddle false hope. We know now that is what happened. The promise was not kept; the expectations and the hope were false. Here today we heard the health minister fail to confirm if this practice is happening at any other Queensland health facility. That is despite her one year ago saying that the practice would end at one hospital. It is unfathomable.

With the minister's credibility now shredded and her promise broken, the minister must come clean with the people of Queensland. What questions did the minister ask over the last 12 months to ensure this practice would stop? What actions did the minister take over the last 12 months to prevent this awful situation from occurring? Did the minister do neither? Why make the promise at all if the minister never intended on seeing it through? It is but another example of the minister saying one thing but doing another.

The trust of Queenslanders, her department and her colleagues is the cornerstone of ministerial accountability in our Westminster system. Today what we saw was a clear breakdown in that trust. Asked if the Premier would sack the health minister, the Premier failed to rule it out. Make no mistake, that was no mistake. The Premier is getting sick of watching the minister being embroiled in some new failure or being caught out saying one thing but doing another. It has become a daily ritual now. The Premier was asked directly if she would back her health minister. She could have stood up for three minutes and backed her in. Alas no, she stood up and then she sat down. Queenslanders know that actions speak louder than words, and the health minister knows exactly what those actions meant today.

Before our eyes the minister is losing control of Queensland Health. Before our eyes the minister's credibility has been shredded and before our eyes the minister's own colleagues are walking away from her, threatening to resign and failing to back her. Her position in cabinet is no longer tenable and Queenslanders know it.

Health System



Hon. YM D'ATH (Redcliffe—ALP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (2.37 pm): As I rise to speak can I just address some of the issues that we have heard from those opposite today? The Leader of the Opposition talked about failures but still refuses to acknowledge what they did to the health system when they were in government. He talked about spending 10 years in the wilderness but does not acknowledge why. He talked about town hall meetings and solutions, and I will get to their

so-called solutions in a moment. The member for Mudgeeraba just talked about actions speaking louder than words. She said do not give false hope, do not make promises you will not keep—like, ‘Public servants have nothing to fear from us.’ That was a promise made; it was not kept. Thousands of public servants lost their jobs, their families were impacted, their ability to keep a roof over their head was impacted and still they did not acknowledge the harm they caused. Actions speak louder than words—I could not agree more.

When the member for Mudgeeraba was in Mackay last week with the member for Whitsunday, tell me why, when they put out a notice saying there was a forum for all women of Mackay to come along to and be heard, did a female health consumer—

Mr Mander: Who was that person?

Mrs D’ATH: Why do you ask, member for Everton? I would like the member for Everton to say why—

Opposition members interjected.

Mrs D’ATH: They do not want me to say this. Why did the member for Whitsunday tell a member of the public, a female health consumer, to leave and that they only want women in attendance who have been affected by malpractice—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Lui): Member for Everton, you are now warned.

Mrs D’ATH:—and it would be inappropriate for her to sit in as a concerned and interested member of the public? Tell me why a female who lives in Mackay who turned up to their public forum was asked to leave. They only wanted people affected by malpractice, yet they claimed it was a forum for the people of Mackay.

They talk about continued falsehoods, but they have peddled that rhetoric for years. They say that they care about women, yet they turn a woman away who wants to come and listen at their forum.

Mr BLEIJIE: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The Minister for Transport is on a warning. He interjected while my honourable colleague Ros Bates was speaking and he is interjecting during the Minister for Health’s contribution. At what point does he get kicked out?

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am in control of order, member for Kawana. I do not need your assistance. The minister has the call.

Mrs D’ATH: The Leader of the Opposition likes to talk about transparency, yet when they get an RTI, they sit on that RTI.

Mr BLEIJIE: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The Minister for Transport is now quarrelling with me across the chamber. Hand on heart, I was quarrelling too, but the minister is on a warning. I bring it to your attention.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister for Kawana, my ruling stands. I call the minister.


Mrs D’ATH: The Leader of the Opposition likes to talk about transparency but, at the same time, he sits on an RTI until it is politically convenient to run the story and get into this chamber. Maybe they want the protection of privilege or maybe they just want to make a point of it, but they deliberately hold back information and then drop it to the media as an exclusive, even though it has been out there for weeks. They get very upset if the media gets the jump on them. We know that they do not like the media getting a jump on them on their RTIs before they are able to make a fanfare about them.

They talk about solutions. Their solution is four points—better resources, but they have not said what they would commit to; no dollars, no beds, no staff and no ideas. They talk about putting staff back in charge, but when clinicians make decisions they come in here and criticise those decisions. They talk about better triaging, which has already been done through the hospital system, and real-time data. We have patient access coordination hubs staffed by QAS and QH officers who are monitoring patient flow in real-time.

Mr Crisafulli: Release the data.

Mrs D’ATH: I hear the Leader of the Opposition say ‘release the data’. Other jurisdictions like South Australia have done that and their ramping figures are through the roof. Those on the other side go out there, hold their town hall meetings and say that their four-point plan will fix everything. They are quick fixes allegedly, but there is no dollar commitment. In fact, we are putting on 9,475 extra frontline health workers—they sacked 4,400 in one term. So I will stand by our commitment of almost \$10 billion in capital infrastructure, building hospitals when they built none, putting on staff when they sacked staff and investing in NGOs in the health sector while they cut funding.

Housing Summit

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (2.44 pm): In this state at the moment we do not have enough affordable housing, we do not have enough social housing, we do not have enough properties for rent and we do not have enough properties being built for those who want to invest in their first home. We just do not have enough houses. That is why in this state at the moment, we have a housing crisis. This problem falls squarely at the feet of the state Labor government because over the last seven years they have failed to plan. There has been no projections; there has been no targets; there has been no strategy. They brag about the number of people who are coming into Queensland, but they have not got enough houses to put a roof over their heads.

Last week, the Premier hosted a housing summit—a summit that she was dragged kicking and screaming to host.

Mr Nicholls interjected.

Mr MANDER: I will take that interjection from the member for Clayfield. The Premier said that there was no need to have that summit because there was no crisis. There are others in the Labor Party who disagree with that. I see that a notice went out by the Labor Unity faction a fortnight before the conference asking: can you come to the Queensland housing crisis meeting because we have a crisis? It was a meeting for Labor Party members. They did not trust the Premier. They did not trust that a summit would fix the problems, so they called their own. Who were the guest speakers? Kate Jones and 'Schwarto'. Old 'Schwarto' was there again giving his expert advice on housing. This shows the disunity of the Labor Party. Their own factions do not agree with the left factions and with Minister de Brenni and Minister Enoch who have led this disaster over the last seven years in housing.

The summit held some promise, considering the number of people who attended. However, less than a third of the time was dedicated to stakeholders coming together and giving the government the wisdom and insight that they have from being in this sector for so long. They were desperate for solutions, and it would appear that the Premier and her ministers were not listening. Let me give members an example. What were the announcements made after the summit?

Before I get to that, let me say that the participants in the summit said that one of the great things we do in this state is that we respond to emergency natural disasters very well. We do do that well. It does not matter who is in government, we do that well. They said, 'The housing crisis we have at the moment is similar to a natural disaster—we need to respond quickly.' They said, 'We respond quickly to natural disasters so let's treat the housing crisis like we would a state emergency and respond quickly.' Were they listening? No, they were not.


What was the announcement that came out after they heard that? They said, 'Our big announcement is that the next time we have a natural disaster, we are going to make sure that we fast-track the establishment of housing'. That was not the point.

An opposition member interjected.

Mr MANDER: Exactly right. The point was to treat the current housing crisis like the crises that we have every year—whether it is bushfires, floods or drought. We manage that well. Let us do the same thing with housing, but this government does not get it.

The other thing that this government does not get is that their policies directly contribute to the private rental crisis that we have at the moment. In this state there is currently a vacancy rate in private rentals of less than one per cent. What does this government do? This government implements and suggests policies that will make it even worse. We have had the brilliant announcement by the Treasurer of the land tax. One of the most humiliating backflips I have seen in this parliament was when he had to backtrack that policy. They have put more impositions on landlords which results in disincentives for people to invest. If your rent goes up, do not blame the landlord, do not blame the property owner—blame this state government for a lack of housing supply.

2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (2.49 pm): It has been a fiery afternoon and I want to try and bring a little bit of peace and Olympic spirit and Paralympic spirit to the events. I want to talk about what the Olympics and the Paralympics are going to mean for our community, and I am not just talking about those of us who will ride the 175 and 174 bus down Logan Road to get to the Olympics; I am talking about the whole community of Brisbane, the whole community of Queensland and the whole community of Australia.

To illustrate what the Olympics will mean for our community, I want to tell the story of Alison and Steve Taafe, who run a social enterprise and business in my electorate but live in the electorate of Chatsworth. Alison is a chef who trained in London. Fairly soon after she got her qualifications, she was living the life in New York working for wealthy families and cooking for the rich and famous having a ball. Where else would a 20-year-old want to be but in New York City rubbing shoulders with the glitterati for a few years? I will tell members where else she wanted to be: she wanted to come to Brisbane to take part in Expo 88, and that is exactly what she did. While she was here, she fell in love with Steve, her husband, and she also fell in love with Brisbane and Australia and has been here ever since.


This individual has gone on to be a leading teacher at TAFE, instilling her love of the hospitality industry in so many young people. With her husband, Steve, she has set up a number of successful hospitality businesses and most recently over the last six or seven years has set up the Institute of Culinary Excellence in Coorparoo. If you talk to Alison she will tell you that on any good day she needs her head read because she was already pretty busy, but she decided that she would also start a social enterprise. Now with the help of the Skilling Queenslanders for Work program, she is working with people who are recovering from domestic violence abuse, recent refugees, people with intellectual disabilities and people who have mental health issues and recovering from those. She is not just teaching them how to work in the hospitality industry but teaching them how to love working in the hospitality industry. Every now and then I bump into a couple of those people, and I bump into them right here at the parliament because they are now working in Parliament House Catering Services. Every time I see those people, it reminds me how important the Skilling Queenslanders for Work Program is.

I have to ask this question of the House: if not for Expo 88, would we have the wonderful people like Alison and Steve Taafe in our state contributing so much? Sadly, not everybody is on board with the Olympics and the Paralympics. There are people out there who want to run this wonderful event down. Just in this House alone we have heard the Katters and the Greens running this event down. I hear people in the community parroting things that the Katters and the Greens have said, such as why are we spending \$2 billion for a two-week event? I say to them that the Olympics is so much more than just a two-week event.

I could talk about all of the benefits that the KPMG report identified—the \$8.1 billion worth of economic benefits for Queensland or the \$17.6 billion worth of benefits that will flow nationally. I could talk about all of the significant social benefits that will be derived from the games—the health benefits, the volunteering, the civic pride, the social cohesion. I even hope by 2032 we have gone down the pathway to treaty. I hope that is what we get to by 2032. I could talk about all of those things. I could talk about the positive environmental impacts where our energy and jobs program by 2032 will be a long way down the pathway to moving our community to clean and renewable energy. I could talk about the jobs that the report mentions, but I would rather stay focused on Alison and Steve Taafe because it is these little stories that will make up the big story.

This government has worked hard not just to invest in this two-week event—and I acknowledge that we have worked with other levels of government—but to invest in this event for the next 40 to 60 years. We have put Brisbane and we have put Queensland on the map. I say to those naysayers: think about where we are in 2022 from where we were in 1988. We are still reaping the benefits from 1988. In 2066 what are the stories that we are going to be hearing? What are the Alison and Steve Taafe stories that are going to be told in 2066? How many benefits are going to accrue to our community? That is why people should stop asking questions about where we should spend our money. The reality is we have demonstrated time and time again that when we invest in our state—when we back ourselves with things like the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games—we build our community. We will be investing in these games not just for two weeks but for the next 40 years.

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Law and Order

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (2.54 pm): ‘Queenslanders have entrusted us with providing principled and stable government, and delivering on the promises we made.’ Those words should be very familiar to the Premier and the police minister because they are words from the minister’s charter letter dated 1 December 2020. Today, less than two years later, at least one of those promises has been broken. I quote again from the minister’s charter letter—

Oversee the Government’s commitment to recruit over five years from 1 July 2020 an additional 2,025 frontline police officers and police personnel ...

We now know that that commitment is in tatters, with the minister this week walking away from that commitment. Back in 2020 at the estimates hearings there was a plan to honour that promise. Then Deputy Commissioner Smith advised that in the 2021-22 financial year we would see a net increase of 180 officers. In fact, it was described by the deputy commissioner as—


... about 330 for the attrition in that financial year coming up, plus 180.

What we actually got was five—yes, five. The government's own budget documents show that in the 2021-22 financial year there was a net increase of five full-time-equivalent police officers in this state. The then police commissioner, when questioned further, explained that the data used in the government's own budget documents is incredibly inaccurate and that the headcount had increased by 143. That is still well short of the promised 180, but over the last few days we have learnt that this government is failing to recruit police officers in the numbers that it needs to meet its targets. When the media started to ask the questions, the minister suddenly waived some fees and said, 'We certainly met our targets in years 1 and 2.' No, Minister, you did not meet your target in year 2: 180 extra officers were promised; the budget documents show a net increase of five while the commissioner claims 143. Either way, this government is falling well short of its target. But it is not just recruitment where this minister is failing. When it comes to attrition, in the last financial year we saw the attrition of police officers 40 per cent above what was estimated. Is it any wonder that our police officers are leaving in droves? One only has to look at areas around Queensland to see that, under this government, they are fighting a losing battle.

While our police officers are being stretched beyond breaking point, the police minister fails to request a briefing on the failings of the DNA lab. We have a crime crisis in this state and this police minister is not up to the task. Queenslanders in Townsville described yesterday's incident involving juvenile offenders as chaos and expressed their fears for the safety of their four-year-old daughter. It is Queenslanders on Bribie Island who say break-ins, car thefts and property damage are now occurring on a daily basis. It is Queenslanders in Cairns whose city has seen over 1,000 vehicles stolen so far this year, and it is Queenslanders in Hervey Bay and Toowoomba who are living in fear.

I will put it on the record. I will brief the minister right here, right now: Minister, it is your broken promises that have seen unlawful use of a motor vehicle charges against juvenile offenders increase by almost seven times in the last seven years in the Darling Downs police district. What does that equate to? Six hundred per cent. Members in this House need to get their heads around that figure—600 per cent in seven years in that district. It is your broken promises that have seen robbery charges against juveniles in the Townsville police district increase by 480 per cent in seven years. It is your broken promises that have seen unlawful entry offences against juveniles in the Cairns district increase by 72 per cent in the year to the end of September. It is your broken promises that have seen robbery offences against juveniles in the Wide Bay-Burnett police district almost double in the last 12 months. Queenslanders deserve to feel safe in their homes. They deserve to know that when a promise is made it will be honoured. They deserve to know that perpetrators will be brought to justice. Under this minister, Queenslanders have none of those things and this minister needs to step up and start delivering for this state when it comes to law and order.

Housing Summit

 **Mr SMITH** (Bundaberg—ALP) (2.59 pm): What a wonderful afternoon of oration we have had. I will try to contribute with my best efforts. It is very hard to follow such Shakespearean words from the other side. Last week I represented the Bundaberg community—not just the electorate but the wider Bundaberg region—at the Premier's Housing Summit. I want to place on record my thanks to the Premier and the Deputy Premier for passing on the invitation for me to come along so that I could speak about how important housing is for my region and how we promised we would never let Tim Mander be in charge of housing again. He made a lot of bad calls as a referee, but as a minister he was a shocker. Luckily he will not be a minister for a while to come.

Mr MANDER: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take extreme offence at that and I ask that it be withdrawn.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Lui): Member for Bundaberg, the member has taken offence. Do you withdraw?

Mr SMITH: I do withdraw. Member for Everton, you were much better than Bill Harrigan.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Bundaberg, direct all comments through the chair.

Mr SMITH: I will do indeed, Madam Speaker. It was wonderful to be at the Housing Summit. It was important for regional Queensland to have a voice at the summit. It was great to see members on our side from the regions, such as the member for Rockhampton and the member for Thuringowa. We also had good representation from across the south-east corner.

The summit was to understand what COVID has done to the private housing market. At the end of the day that is how this challenge has come about. The rug has been pulled out from underneath the private market, which has hit middle income Australians who have never had to face this vulnerability before, and these people come to see me in my office. It is a national issue as well as a state issue. We need to find strategies to facilitate private developers and builders of social and affordable housing. Well done to the Premier for having that Housing Summit. It was very important. It allowed me to put across some perspectives from my own local round table I had with members of the UDIA, Regional Housing Limited, the Bundaberg council and some local builders. It was important to make sure our voice was heard at the summit. At the end of the day 'regional Queensland' was on the board as one of the key talking points in relation to making sure these challenges are tackled moving forward.

In the Bundaberg and Wide Bay region we are building more in terms of social and affordable houses. Through QuickStarts, by 30 June 2025 we will see 170 new social homes commence across the Wide Bay. We have already seen that there are an additional 50 new social homes already commenced under the Queensland Housing Strategy. As of March this year 24 new homes have commenced under the QuickStarts program across the Wide Bay. We are delivering social and affordable housing in the Bundaberg and Wide Bay region.

I was glad to have the assistant minister for energy, Lance McCallum, the member for Bundamba, visit Bundaberg. We talked about what the Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan is about. It is about clean energy in dirty shirts. We still need the hard hats and the high-vis to deliver this plan, which will mean 100,000 new jobs, with the bulk of those jobs in regional Queensland. We will need builders and sparkies. We will need dirt on those high-vis shirts. Good Labor governments deliver good policies with jobs attached to them, making sure that people in regional Queensland have a job. When we talk about renewable energy in the Wide Bay region we know that Bundaberg is No. 1 in the country for rooftop solar. The member for Hervey Bay represents a community that is No. 2 across Queensland for rooftop solar. However, our federal member does not like renewable energy. He and Peter Dutton came into Bundaberg a couple of weeks ago and said the people of Bundaberg do not want renewables. Why are we No. 1 in the country for rooftop solar?

Mr Tantari interjected.

Mr SMITH: I take that interjection from the member for Hervey Bay: 27,000. Hervey Bay is second in the state—behind Bundaberg—for rooftop solar yet Peter Dutton says that Bundaberg does not want renewables. Look up, Peter. Look up for a change. Do not always look down at the dagwood dog. Look up sometimes at what is on the roof.


The Palaszczuk government is committed to Paradise Dam. Four contracts have been awarded for Paradise Dam. The construction tender is there. We will build it. There has been fearmongering from the former Nationals who have turned their backs on the farmers. Labor will build the dam. Labor makes our growers strong.

RACING INTEGRITY AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from p. 2928, on motion of Ms Grace—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (3.04 pm), continuing: The committee recommended that the minister in her second reading speech clarify the intended meaning of 'extent' in clause 24 in response to concerns raised by the Queensland Law Society. The bill authorises publication of stewards' race day reports on the QIRC website and provides that the information must be removed from the QIRC website six months after the day the information was published, or if it relates to a disqualification action, no later than the day the effect of a disqualification ends. The Coalition for the Protection of Greyhounds noted that a broad spectrum of stakeholders were concerned about the provision, explaining that for punters and breeders, stewards' reports contain a dispassionate observation of what has occurred in a race and that when a breeder is making breeding decisions the racing behaviour of the dogs and their racing record is very important.

Another committee recommendation was that the minister in her second reading speech clarify the time frames intended to apply for the publication of the stewards' reports. Several issues were raised by submitters about eligibility for the appointment to the panel as proposed in the bill. Proposed section 252BD, Eligibility for appointment, states—

A person is eligible for appointment to the panel.

If—

- (a) for appointment as the chairperson or a deputy chairperson—the person is a lawyer of at least 5 years standing; or
- (b) otherwise—the person has professional experience in 1 or more of the following areas—
 - (i) chemistry relating to animals;
 - (ii) law;
 - (iii) racing;
 - (iv) veterinary science.

...

However, a person is not eligible for appointment to the panel if the person—

...

- (c) has a financial or proprietary interest in a licensed animal;

The department acknowledged that making a person ineligible for appointment to the panel if they have a financial or proprietary interest in a licensed animal will reduce the pool of persons with relevant expertise who are eligible for appointment. It would be interesting for the minister to clarify that because, as we know, today there are huge groups of people who own horses, particularly those more expensive animals that may be racing in the major races in Sydney, Melbourne or the Winter Carnival here in Queensland. There can be up to 50 people as part owners of a horse. It is only a small part of that animal they own, but that would exclude them from holding a position on that panel. I ask the minister to give some clarity around whether it is a sole ownership or a small portion of the animal that would rule them ineligible.

The Condamine electorate is home to a large thoroughbred industry and a vibrant racing community. This generates a significant amount to our economy—in fact, over \$1 billion statewide, with over \$50 million in the Darling Downs region. The industry includes breeders, trainers, owners, jockeys, stable hands, racing club staff, livestock transport, agistment operators, gardeners, vets, catering staff and a host of volunteers. All of these people contribute to this valuable industry. The smaller communities in Condamine depend upon the one race day they have each year to raise money for the local community, socialise and bring people together. It is the social fabric of our rural and regional communities.

It is disappointing for the racing industry that the government has taken almost four years to address the concerns stated by the industry. We are hopeful that the changes to review processes in the bill will be implemented as soon as possible and do not drag on for years. One would think that addressing key industry concerns would be a priority of the government. Those opposite seem to have difficulty with any integrity legislation that comes before this House.

My family has had a long involvement in the racing industry. My grandfather used to breed and race horses. The family has owned horses trained by the late, great Jimmy Atkins, a legend of the industry. I had an uncle who was a bookmaker. We have been involved in every aspect of the racing industry over a long period of time. The integrity of the industry is paramount. We support this bill. It is long overdue.



Mr RUSSO (Toohey—ALP) (3.09 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Racing Integrity Amendment Bill 2022. The Racing Integrity Amendment Bill was introduced into the Legislative Assembly and referred to the Education, Employment and Training Committee for detailed consideration on 24 February 2022. The committee tabled their report No. 18 on 8 April 2022, with five recommendations arising from their examination of the bill, the first recommendation being that the Racing Integrity Amendment Bill 2022 be passed.

The main policy objective of the bill is to amend the Racing Integrity Act 2016 to reform the review processes for decisions made by stewards under the rules of racing by: replacing the current internal and external review processes for decisions made by racing stewards under the rules of racing with review by an independent panel; ensuring reviews are finalised within a reasonable time frame; and reducing serious welfare, human safety or integrity risks from being stayed pending the hearing of an appeal by the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal.

In 2016, the Racing Integrity Act 2016 established the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission as an independent statutory body with a range of functions regarding the integrity of the racing industry, including the greyhound, thoroughbred horse and harness horseracing codes. The QRIC employs stewards to oversee race meetings and apply the rules of racing for each code. Those stewards, who are QRIC employees, can decide, among other things, to suspend, reprimand or warn persons for breaches of the rules of racing. The important step in introducing a QRIC was taken by the, at the time, newly elected Labor government. Those measures were taken to provide assurance to the wider community that the industry was operating to first-class standards.

Throughout its history, all codes within the racing industry have been a target for fraud. We know of the infamous attempted Fine Cotton and Bold Personality substitution scam, which happened at Eagle Farm, Brisbane in 1984. We know that scam was clearly perpetrated through the greed and idiocy of a few amateurs who foolishly thought they had a plan. It was definitely a horse race that stopped the nation but for all the wrong reasons. In the late 1940s across tracks in country New South Wales, a greyhound named Runaway Joe was raced under a number of aliases. Police claimed that the scam, which operated over a number of years, earned the three fraudsters around £20,000, which would be the equivalent of over a \$1 million today. Across Australia there have been other notable scams that utilised different methodologies to implement the scams and, collectively, they represent a seedy underside to the racing industry.

The QRIC functions oversee the integrity and welfare standards of the racing animals participating in Queensland. The QRIC has a strong working partnership with various stakeholders to ensure everyone who participates in the racing industry—be they animal handlers, trainers, owners or even punters—has the confidence that they are on an even playing field. The QRIC is charged with safeguarding the welfare of animals to ensure the integrity of the racing industry in Queensland. Animal welfare is a vital consideration when humans manipulate an animal's choices.

The act includes a framework to allow racing participants to challenge decisions made by QRIC. Since the introduction of the QRIC and the shining of an independent spotlight on activities both on and off the track, consultation with stakeholders and government has continued, with the government committing to a review of the operation of the Racing Integrity Act. A discussion paper was released for public comment in June 2018. Concerns expressed in the responses received at the time of the discussion paper, and since, from racing industry participants and the community suggested that the current review arrangements for stewards' decisions were undermining confidence in the integrity of the industry in Queensland, including disciplinary decisions that may be stayed for long periods pending review.


Stakeholders also asserted that stay orders were being used to enable participants to continue racing despite serious or repeated breaches of the rules of racing until it was convenient to accept the penalty, such as when they had completed riding in lucrative races or when a break from riding would coincide with a family holiday. Those assertions were supported by data that showed over 40 per cent of the applications for review by QCAT were withdrawn before their final decisions. The bill proposes to establish an independent panel, the Racing Appeals Panel, to review decisions of stewards under the rules of racing and further includes procedures for the review of racing decisions by the panel for applications to the panel for stays of racing decisions and for the appeal of panel decisions.

Stakeholders expressed concerns with the level of racing expertise at QCAT given its role in external reviews under the Racing Integrity Act. The bill proposes that the pathway for appeals of panel decisions to the QCAT appeals tribunal only be available for reviews of disqualification actions and only on a question of law in relation to the extent of the disqualification action. The bill does not change the arrangements for the review of other administrative decisions made by QRIC, such as licensing decisions, which continue to be subject to the current arrangements for internal review and external merits review by QCAT. Other actions under the Racing Integrity Act, such as the seizure of animals or property and the issuing of animal welfare directions, also continue to be subject to internal review and appeal to the Magistrates Court.

All submitters to the inquiry supported the bill's objective to establish an independent panel to review decisions made by racing stewards under the rules of racing, although there were concerns raised in relation to the definition of some terms to ensure clarity in the application and implementation of the bill by all parties. Racing Queensland stated—

There is some overlap between the standard and the rules of racing, so that it is at least technically possible for the Commission to have a choice in those matters to either take action under the rules (and the panel will have jurisdiction) or under the standards (in which case the existing internal review and QCAT process will apply). Racing Queensland supports that approach.

The committee's report details the work of the committee to ensure their examination of the bill responded to the scope of the proposed legislation, including the publication of information, eligibility for appointment to the panel and the deferment of suspensions imposed by stewards. Compliance with the Legislative Standards Act 1992 was also investigated, with the committee satisfied the bill met the requirements of the act or that there were similar provisions in other Queensland legislation. I note that all of the recommendations made by the committee were accepted by the government in its response to the tabled report. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr PERRETT** (Gympie—LNP) (3.17 pm): I rise to speak on the Racing Integrity Amendment Bill 2022. According to the explanatory notes, this bill aims to improve the review practices for decisions made by stewards under the rules of racing. The changes will include the establishment of an independent panel to conduct reviews, replacing internal and external reviews and guaranteeing they are completed within an acceptable time frame. The creation of an independent panel will bring Queensland into line with the current arrangements in New South Wales and Victoria. Another change aims to reduce serious welfare, human safety or integrity risks from being stayed pending the hearing of an appeal by the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal. The bill also aims to try to improve transparency by publishing stewards' reports and other reports online and removing the requirement for the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission to obtain and store fingerprints prior to licensing bookmakers.

Stewards are not only integral to the racing industry; they are also key to ensuring the integrity of the system. They are responsible for conducting meetings and ensuring that the rules are adhered to. They are responsible for ensuring that there is proper control and regulation, and for checking the credentials of ownership, stable returns, approving horses for barrier certificates, overseeing track work, and conducting stable inspections and swabbing.

Since 2015 racing has been plagued with a litany of mismanagement and problems generated by government indifference. Since they have been at the helm we have had unprecedented strikes, animal welfare scandals, job losses in the wagering business, Queensland's premier racetrack out of business for years, \$14 million spent on the Eagle Farm track and still trainers are concerned about its condition, a major owner and breeder withdrawing from Queensland racing, and issues with integrity and safety. Labor took an axe to country racing as part of a slash-and-burn regime across the wider racing industry that reduced prize money, confidence and certainty about the future.

Racing is an important part of the Gympie region's social and sporting calendar. Race meetings have been held in Gympie for 154 years, with the first one held in the gold rush days of 1868. Our top-class facility is well supported and patronised, hosting up to nine race days a year, with iconic meetings such as the Nolan cup, Gympie RSL cup, Brown Macaulay & Warren Accountants cup and the *Gympie Times* Ladies Day. It has been through some difficult times in recent years, with race days cancelled because of COVID and flooding.

For the first time in 15 years, the Gympie RSL race day last year was featured on the national mainstream racing channel with its first ever TAB meeting. Racing Queensland determines the status of race meets. Converting non-TAB meetings to TAB meetings is one of the ways it can manage and drive the commercial performance of local racing. Racing Queensland listed three Gympie Turf Club races last year as TAB meetings. In September the minister advised that, of the 21 meetings listed for conversion last year, only 18 were able to be held. Racing Queensland's annual report in 2021 said that the conversion of several meetings delivered more than \$500,000 in additional prize money into regional and remote Queensland.


The Gympie facility is a breeding ground for racing champions, where jockeys and horses get a start with the support of the club, trainers, staff, owners and supporters. Gympie's close connection with the racing industry will be again on display at next week's Melbourne Cup. Gympie State High School Principal Anthony Lanskey and teacher Bob Leitch are part-owners of the 2019 winner Vow And Declare. Anthony will be heading to Melbourne to watch his horse once again have a start in the race after coming sixth in the Caulfield Cup. This is not the first time for Gympie. St Patrick's College teacher Wendy Green was part-owner of the country galloper and 1999 Melbourne Cup winner Rogan Josh. Our local racing industry generates economic activity in the racing and horse management industry, draws visitors and tourists, provides a vital social outlet, supports jobs, and provides cash flow for community groups, vets, produce stores, those who grow and supply feed, farriers, saddlers, caterers, dress shops, milliners, hairdressers and beauticians.

The restoration of integrity and confidence in the racing industry is essential to ensuring a vibrant and healthy racing industry. There is no doubt that Labor's mismanagement has had significant impact on the industry. The greyhound industry commission of inquiry report was handed down in 2015 with

15 recommendations. Seven years later the minister admitted that the government has implemented just over 65 per cent of the recommendations. From a report which went to the heart of integrity in racing, the minister has admitted that the government has implemented only 10 of the 15 recommendations. Four years ago, in 2018, the government released a discussion paper on concerns raised by the industry. It has taken them four years to address some of those concerns.

The committee made four recommendations seeking clarification from the minister in her second reading speech on aspects including time frames, eligibility criteria for appointments, and intended meanings and definitions. The minister was asked to explain whether a racing decision includes decisions made by a steward, irrespective of whether the rules expressly refer to a steward as the decision-maker; to clarify the meaning of 'extent' in clause 24 relating to appeal rights; and to clarify publishing time frames. The committee also wanted clarity on the eligibility criteria for appointment to the panel for persons registered or licensed by QRIC and board directors of licensed clubs.

The government claims that the racing industry is important yet it takes years to address key industry issues. The lack of action makes those words hollow claims, mere lip-service. As the submission from the Australian Jockeys Association said, it 'has been a long time coming'. A history of mismanagement is unacceptable. The government need to turn up to act to deliver confidence to the racing industry. I do not oppose the bill.

 **Mr BROWN** (Capalaba—ALP) (3.24 pm): I think this is an important bill. From listening to the contributions by those opposite it seems they have complete amnesia when it comes to racing integrity. They opposed the original act in the first place.

Ms Grace: All of MacSporran's recommendations.

Mr BROWN: I take the interjection from the minister. That seems to have escaped their minds, yet it was only five years ago. I went back through contributions to the debate at the time. One member after another said, 'I rise to oppose the bill.' It is great that those opposite have now come on board with racing integrity. Welcome aboard! Those opposite now want integrity in racing, which is fantastic.

This debate gives me a good opportunity to talk about how the industry loves this side of politics. Every time I go to a race meeting—I think I go to more race meetings than those opposite—people there talk up the Labor government and what we are doing. They talk about the investment in the bush, the investment in the Capalaba straight track and transferring Capalaba from a non-TAB event to a TAB event. They all remember that horrible TAB deal that occurred under those opposite—

Ms Grace: The worst one.

Mr BROWN: The worst one. They remember it. They raise it every single time I am out at the track. It is good to come in here and provide some context, because those opposite have completely forgotten that they opposed the original act.

The industry talks up this government and the things we are doing all the time. This bill furthers that. We will have a system that deals with matters in an expedient fashion. This is fantastic not only for the industry—for jockeys and stewards—but also for the punters themselves. They want to have faith in the industry. They want to know that when they are putting their hard-earned money towards a horse, a dog or a trot it is done in a proper fashion. It is fantastic that this bill goes further on the reforms—reforms, I might add, that came about because those opposite were asleep at the wheel with the greyhound industry. We saw the *Four Corners* story on it. We had to act on it. We commissioned the inquiry and implemented the recommendations—opposed by those opposite. They opposed the whole act. Now, five years later, they have come on board when it comes to integrity in the racing industry. I am glad that they have come a long way in that time.

It is this side of politics that cares about the integrity of racing in this state. It is this side of politics that invests in country racing and the infrastructure of racing. I congratulate the minister on the new greyhound track at Ipswich. It will be a fantastic facility—

Ms Pease: World-class.


Mr BROWN: World-class—with a straight track. It will ensure humane racing, taking away the tight corners such as at Albion and Ipswich. It will be a world-class facility that ensures dog welfare is foremost. I congratulate the minister on that.

You can see the investment at every single racetrack you go to. I know that the member for Bundaberg will talk about the investment that is occurring at Bundy Monday.

Ms Grace: Warwick.

Mr Healy: Cairns.

Mr BROWN: We could go through a list of them. That is why the racing industry loves this side of politics. That is why they love this minister. That is why every time I am out at the track people congratulate this government on the investment as well as on bringing integrity measures to the racing industry so that everyone can have confidence—stewards, trainers, jockeys and, most importantly, the punters.

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (3.29 pm): I too rise to contribute to the Racing Integrity Amendment Bill 2022. We all know that racing is an incredible part of our Queensland economy. It contributes a massive amount to the Queensland economy. When I first campaigned in 2011 to get into this wonderful House—and I did in 2012—I campaigned on country racing. I continue to enjoy the fact that the LNP government restored country racing back to the bush. We restored it!

Government members: Ha! Ha!

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: They laugh over there. They have no idea. Even Minister Grace will agree there were no Esk races under the former Labor government. They cut them all out. Now we are back and firing the starter's gun. I will tell you this—

Mr Power interjected.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: You ask the country racing industry. They absolutely were. Con Searle, who has a milestone birthday coming up very soon, is the president of the Kilcoy Jockey Club. It was Con Searle who spoke to me way back then and said that the Labor government was refusing to support the country racing industry. It was 100 per cent true. All you need to say at a country race meet are these two words: Bob Bentley. They all say, 'Goodness me, please don't bring back a Labor government into country racing.' We know that it is the LNP on this side of the House that understands country racing.

I want to talk about the integrity issues this bill addresses. It is important to note that I follow a former speaker who tried to rewrite history in relation to integrity issues. As the shadow minister the member for Everton pointed out, I would like to highlight some of the debacles and integrity issues that have happened and are happening. Let me give some examples: David Gafa, a thoroughbred trainer from Caloundra, not guilty on all charges and it took two years to get to court; trainer Brad Smith, three charges discontinued, lack of evidence; hall of fame greyhound trainer Reg Kay banned for life, judge elected not to proceed; March 2018, Ipswich, QRIC stewards failed to read an ear brand and match it to a scanned microchip when a dog entered in race 2 started in the first and vice versa, not picked up by Labor QRIC stewards—they have all gone quiet now—and in April 2021 at Townsville QRIC officials started a race with a rake against the boxes, then notified all clear. QRIC truth is seriously stranger than fiction.

Then we go to the ABC's *7.30 Report*. Honourable members might remember that. It showed Labor's QRIC as amateurs over the Caboolture slaughterhouse. Everyone in this House would remember those horrific images, and our hearts just go out to everyone in relation to the absolute nightmare that was happening at the Caboolture slaughterhouse. Horse wastage—that is all you can put it down to. QRIC was unable to uncover what amateurs did. Despite coercive powers, partners in the racing squad, a veterinary team, an investigative squad, body worn cameras, a staff of more than 200, search warrants, a promotional website, Crime Stoppers and various agencies such as the RSPCA, QRIC could not uncover anything.

Continuing: in late March 2019 a horse ran in the wrong race at Rockhampton; nine days later at the Weetwood meeting at Toowoomba wrong numbers were semaphored, correct weight declared before the official result was changed; Cairns, June 2019, a judge overruled placings; the same day a winner was disqualified for jockey weighing in light; and in Yeppoon, July 2019, a result was overturned two months after the race. QRIC was so culpable that connections of both horses were paid as winners! At the Capalaba greyhounds in August 2021 the all clear was given on the wrong numbers, second and third were placed in the incorrect order; Marburg trots, July 2020, third and fourth placings were transposed; and Barcaldine, August 2020, correct weight on wrong numbers.

There are constant delays in Labor's QRIC judgements: Ben Currie's case is like Blue Hills; Darrell Graham's matter took three years to come to fruition. The list goes on. In February 2022 Labor's QRIC stewards overturned the judge's decision of a dead heat for a first at the Rockhampton gallops a month earlier. Frankie Blue Eyes was declared the winner a month after correct weight. So when people on this side say that it has taken too long for this bill to get to the House, we are absolutely right. Let me say this to the minister: Brisbane Racing Club—

An honourable member interjected.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: The minister is welcome to jump up and take that interjection. In May 2020 Brisbane Racing Club chairman Neville Bell said in relation to QRIC—

Has proved to be it just can't deliver the sort of integrity, or confidence in integrity, that it was originally meant to.

I would like to move to the minister's introductory speech, where Minister Grace said that someone said she was Queensland's best racing minister.

Government members: Hear, hear!

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: It probably was the member for Pine Rivers who said that. It was? There you go. The minister said that in her introductory speech. In March this year the website *letsghorseracing* said—

Whoever the racing legend was that told Grace Grace that she was the best racing minister we have had should not only be named and shamed—

This next bit I do not agree with, but I am going to say it because it is a quote—

and tied to a tree because he certainly is a voice crying in the wilderness.

Ms Grace interjected.


Mrs FRECKLINGTON: The minister still proclaims to be the best racing minister Queensland has ever had. Why has it taken four years, Minister? Why has it taken four years to fix up the integrity problems? The reason I read out these integrity problems, Minister, was to highlight the fact that it has taken too long to get this bill into the House and passed. That is what the racing industry has called for; that is what the shadow racing minister has called for; that is what we in the LNP have called for; and that is what all of those people who work hard each and every day supporting the racing industry, supporting the jockeys and the trainers and supporting the guys and girls who take the photos at the races have called for. With one minute and 23 seconds to go I just want to say that I cannot wait for Flemington in the Bush on Tuesday, the annual Kumbia races. I know the minister has been there before.

Ms Grace interjected.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I will take that interjection. It is a good race. The annual Kumbia race day will be on. We will be firing. It will all be happening at Kumbia. I want to give a real shout-out to Brian Lenihan, who has put his whole life into the Kumbia Race Club, and his entire committee. I know that I am going to have a fabulous day. I should also give a big shout-out to all of those country bookies who still work so hard at our country race days. They have been meeting in Kumbia for more than 50 years on Melbourne Cup Day. There is no better spot in Queensland to spend Melbourne Cup Day than at the Kumbia Race Club, where I am more than happy to serve you a burger because I work behind the burger bar. It will be fun.

An honourable member interjected.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I will give you a tip next week. It is very important that we all continue to support the vital racing industry in Queensland.

 **Ms BOYD** (Pine Rivers—ALP) (3.39 pm): Following on from that contribution from the member for Nanango, I just remark to those opposite—who in a conga line are coming through and saying that this has taken too long and has been too long in the making—that they have had every opportunity to introduce a private member's bill into this House—

Mrs Gerber interjected.

Ms BOYD: It is your job. I take the interjection from the member for Currumbin.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Order! Member for Pine Rivers—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member for Currumbin, member for Lytton and member for Aspley, I called order twice. You are all warned under the standing orders. Member for Pine Rivers, I remind you please to direct your comments through the chair.

Ms BOYD: I certainly will, Mr Deputy Speaker. Thank you so much for your guidance. I take the interjection from the member for Currumbin. Yes, it is the job of the opposition to come up with policy. Yes, it is the job of the opposition to pick up a pen and create a private member's bill and bring it into this place. If we have an opposition that is effectively working, it is an opposition that is contributing new ideas, not just slamming a government day after day. If those opposite want to be an effective

opposition, they can do so by creating legislation through private members' bills and bringing them into this House. It is rich to be lectured to by those opposite that we are not working fast enough in government and that the government of the day is not doing all of the work and making the change they expect to see, yet they are not making any contribution in that space at all.

This is a bill that I am very proud to support. It demonstrates the Palaszczuk government's commitment through our budget in 2022 to long-term funding to the Queensland racing industry, especially the country racing industry, through a new sustainable funding model. It is recognition of the significant changes that have occurred in the racing industry and the important role that country clubs play in their regional communities.

I spoke recently at the LGAQ Bush Councils Convention where I got to report that there are 125 racing clubs across Queensland and that, for 85 of those clubs, a race meeting is the biggest or second biggest event in the community each year. It just goes to show how many of these clubs are in the bush. We know how important these gatherings are to the social fabric of Queensland, particularly in our regions. We are determined to ensure that the industry thrives for outback communities and communities right across Queensland.

This is something I recently experienced firsthand with the member for Maryborough when we were invited by North-West Queensland mayors to join them for a day at the races in Cloncurry. It was a Friday and the Cloncurry community had a half day so the community actually downed tools for the afternoon and went along to an afternoon at the races. It was a tremendous event and I congratulate all of those involved. Sadly, I did not have a win but I understand the mayor of Richmond's horse came in first in the last race of the day. Congratulations to Mayor Wharton on that.


This bill continues to deliver reform in the racing sector. It will reform the review processes for decisions made by stewards under the rules of racing by: replacing the current internal and external review processes for decisions made by racing stewards under the rules of racing with review by an independent panel; ensuring reviews are finalised within a reasonable timeframe; and reducing serious welfare, human safety or integrity risks from being stayed pending hearing of an appeal by QCAT. It also has a policy objective of providing for the publication of stewards' reports and other reports online.

The racing industry supports more than 12,600 full-time jobs and almost 40,000 participants. This includes more than 7,850 volunteers across all three codes. I commend the minister, and I will also add my voice to those saying she is the best racing minister that Queensland has seen. I commend the minister on bringing—

Mr Mander: What about the member for Sandgate?

Mr Power: She wins by a nose.

Ms BOYD: I take the interjection from the member for Logan. I commend the minister on bringing forward this important reform. It is reform that will continue to support the livelihoods of those in the industry, the humane treatment of animals and the integrity and transparency of the racing sector. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr McDONALD** (Lockyer—LNP) (3.44 pm): It would be remiss of me if I did not repeat a quote from the shadow minister for racing, the member for Everton, from this morning when he said that racing is a lifestyle. I can tell members of the House that if they came out to the Lockyer and the Somerset they would see many people who are the lifeblood of the racing fraternity.

I turn the attention of members to the \$1.9 billion of value that is added to the Queensland economy from the racing industry and that 48 per cent of that is actually directly related to regional economies. What is really important is that, of the 43,500 individuals who are involved in the Queensland racing industry, 81 per cent also come from regional communities. When both of those statistics are put across each other, it shows that it is not all glitz and glamour in the bush—although our race days out there are certainly community events to behold. In fact, sometimes they are the biggest events that some of our communities see. When we see that 81 per cent of people involved in racing across the state come from the regions and that only 48 per cent of the \$1.9 billion is related to regional economies, it certainly does tell a picture in terms of the importance for many of our struggling trainers, owners and jockeys as well as the volunteers involved in racing in our communities.

I welcome this overdue integrity amendment bill. During the four years since the discussion paper, many in the racing industry have bled their hearts out. I have had people in my office talking to us about the difficulties they have had in negotiating the integrity processes in Queensland, particularly through QCAT appeals processes. Some of those changes to the appeals process are very welcome. These people have had their lives destroyed. There is a famous quote that justice delayed is justice

denied. I have heard the heartfelt pleas from my community who have made representations to me. I will not go into their details or mention their names—they know who they are—but they will certainly welcome these changes in this bill.

I must talk about the importance of the stewards in racing and having integrity as a cornerstone. This is what gives our community the confidence to participate in racing—whether it be by having horses in the paddock or by having a bet or a flutter on the events. It is the integrity that gives people the confidence to turn up to the races and have a good time. For those interested, they should get out to the Lockyer Valley Turf Club. It is a wonderful country racing program only an hour west of the city. It is great that there are six stewards involved in every one of our TAB meetings, and I have met a number of them. They look after things like weights, betting and fairness in racing. They review the videotapes afterwards and they make sure that the racing is always done fairly.

We appreciate the attention of Racing Queensland to the Lockyer Valley Turf Club and our president, Terry Kirkwood. He is now an employed person from Racing Queensland making sure that no stone is left unturned. With his offsider, Jim, and their volunteers out there, they are doing a great job for our community.

An opposition member: Good on you, Jim.

Mr McDONALD: That is not this Jim; it is another Jim, although I do like to go out there and help out when I can. I would like to draw the attention of the minister to some very important points about this bill, particularly the appointment of the chairperson and deputy chairperson. I want to take some learnings we had from a recent inquiry into the Office of the Independent Assessor when the new Councillor Conduct Tribunal was set up.

It certainly was not the intention of the government to make a legalistic system out of the councillor conduct system. To quote Danny Bowden, one of the submitters, he said that we need to make sure that we get the right people who have experience in the racing industry, who are able to make good decisions for the racing community and get on with things. With the right people involved in that committee, they certainly will gain confidence in the appointments and confidence in the appeals process.

As I say, we have seen plenty of evidence through that OIA report which was only tabled on the Friday of the last sitting that saw very legalistic processes handling what can only be described as relationship and/or political issues, not actually integrity issues. I would encourage the minister to really make sure, as our shadow minister stressed earlier today, that they make the right choice with those appointments and see people in those positions, which will give confidence to our community.


As I mentioned before, the Lockyer Turf Club is one of the jewels in the crown of racing in South-East Queensland. They have a wonderful strategic plan. I appreciate Queensland Racing. The Lockyer Valley Council, as well as the University of Queensland and their equestrian collaborative, have done some great jobs with the business case, and we look forward to seeing the funding coming for the stages that that wonderful part of South-East Queensland racing will bring. It is actually a bit of a backup track for many of the trainers and jockeys in the city here. Terry and his crew out there do a wonderful job in preparing the racecourse each and every race meeting, and I appreciate the minister's attendance out there and the shadow minister coming out to visit the racecourse to make sure we get the funding in upcoming budgets.

In regards to the impact on local communities from racing, I mentioned the value of the number of employees and the value to the economy, but I go back to what a shining light the racing industry really was, through great coordination, throughout the COVID pandemic and their response to COVID. Even though we might not have seen as many people at the races, we did see race meetings happening and there was a flow of money coming from this very important sector.

It might interest members to know that there are actually thousands of race meetings happening all the time across the state. In fact, in the 128 racing clubs—that is, 117 thoroughbred racing clubs, five harness racing clubs and six greyhound racing clubs—there is a total of 14,000 races. I would have thought that there would have been more at the thoroughbred races, given the overwhelming number of clubs, but there was actually 4,671 races in the thoroughbred industry and 6,670 in the greyhounds, or what some might call the 'dish-lickers'.

I pay tribute to a great Lockyer Valley resident, Les Bein. Les and Sandra have been there for many years and Les was the chairman of the Brisbane Greyhound Racing Club and was always proud to espouse the benefits of greyhound racing and just what a great job it did for our economy. We saw the inquiry into some terrible behaviours and treatment of animals and greyhounds through that industry and we welcome those recommendations when they are made.

All in all, I have to say that it is great to be the member for Lockyer and it is great to support our local race clubs. If you are looking for something to do, make sure you take the one hour and 10 minute drive out to the Lockyer Turf Club to one of our great meetings and you will enjoy a great day of country hospitality.

 **Mr MADDEN** (Ipswich West—ALP) (3.53 pm): On 24 February 2022, the Minister for Racing tabled the Racing Integrity Amendment Bill 2022 as well as the explanatory note, and I am delighted to say some words in support of this very important bill. Racing is a significant contributor to the Queensland economy and a significant employer of Queenslanders. More than \$150 million is distributed annually to the racing industry by way of prize money across the three racing codes—thoroughbreds, harness which is otherwise known as standardbreds, and greyhounds. All three codes have facilities in my great city of Ipswich and are very well supported by Ipswich residents like me. Like other members of my family, I really enjoy a day or an evening out at the races, but I need to know that when I go to the races that appropriate animal welfare standards and the integrity of the racing industry participants are maintained. The responsibility for this is overseen by the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission, established with the passing of the Racing Integrity Act by the Queensland parliament in 2016.

The main policy objective of the Racing Integrity Amendment Bill 2022 is to amend the Racing Integrity Act 2016 to reform the review processes for decisions made by stewards under the rules of racing by replacing the current internal and external review processes for decisions made by racing stewards under the rules of racing with review by an independent panel, and ensuring reviews are finalised within a reasonable time frame, and reducing serious welfare, human safety or integrity risk by preventing relevant decisions from being stayed, pending hearing of an appeal by the Queensland Civil Administration Tribunal, otherwise known as QCAT. The bill also provides for the online publication of stewards' reports and makes a number of technical and minor amendments to the Racing Integrity Act 2017. In her introductory speech the minister advised that—

The Palaszczuk government is continuing its commitment to improve integrity in the racing industry, and I am pleased to announce that Queensland will have a new independent appeals panel as part of these reforms.

She also said—

The importance of the Queensland racing industry cannot be understated. The racing industry supports more than 12,600 full-time jobs and almost 40,000 participants. This includes more than 7,850 volunteers across all three codes.

As well she said—

It is amazing the growth in this industry and the manner in which we were able to support this industry because of our strong health response during the COVID-19 pandemic.

As well she said—

I am proud as the minister, as is the former minister for racing, Minister Hinchliffe, of the manner in which the industry has been able to conduct itself and grow its business. The fact that the industry has gone from strength to strength is second to none in this country.

In my great city of Ipswich, racing has a strong presence with excellent facilities for all three codes. The Ipswich Turf Club located at Bundamba is one of the premier thoroughbred racing facilities in Queensland, and one of the major sporting events in Ipswich is the Ipswich Cup. We are talking about 40,000 people coming in. We are talking about an injection into the economy on that day. It is a wonderful—

Mr McCallum: It was great to see the minister there this year.

Mr MADDEN: Yes. It is a wonderful event. I know the event is well supported by the member for Bundamba. As well, the Marburg Pacing Association—and I am sure you are familiar with the Marburg Pacing Association, being born and raised in Marburg, Deputy Speaker—is located at the Marburg Showground and is a true country club, located only 60 minutes from the Brisbane CBD. It is based at the Marburg Showground and under the stewardship of its president Scott Neaves, secretary Denis Smith and treasurer Craig Whiteoak, the club goes from strength to strength. I am advised that my cousin and namesake, Jim Madden, who operated an earthmoving company, built the Marburg track.

Mr Healy interjected.

Mr MADDEN: I am very proud of my connection with the Marburg track. He also owned and trained harness racing horses, otherwise known as standardbreds, at his property at Tallegalla.

When I attend the Marburg races I regularly see the stewards undertaking their duties enforcing the Racing Integrity Act. Currently, the Ipswich Greyhound Racing Club is based at the Ipswich Showgrounds but plans are well underway for the magnificent new greyhound racing track at Purga in

Ipswich. First announced in 2019, the Greater Brisbane Greyhound Centre got the go-ahead from the minister in September of this year. The facility will include a state-of-the-art veterinary centre which will assist with the enforcing of animal welfare laws for racing animals as overseen by the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission. This \$39.15 million facility is funded by the Racing Infrastructure Fund and will be the Queensland greyhound code's new state headquarters. It is set to open in 2024 and I am looking forward to attending the official opening with the Minister for Racing.

In order for the racing industry in Ipswich and other areas to prosper we need strong animal welfare laws to be enforced and we need confidence in the integrity of the racing industry. This is provided by the Racing Integrity Act, which this bill seeks to amend, and enforced by the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission.

I would like to thank the Queensland Racing Integrity Commissioner, Shane Gillard, who has held this position since 2 December 2021, for his great stewardship of racing integrity in Queensland. Before joining the commission, Shane spent five years establishing the Greyhound Racing Integrity Unit in Victoria as general manager of integrity. I would also like to thank Racing Queensland for choosing Ipswich as the new centre for greyhound racing in Queensland. I acknowledge the great stewardship of its Chairman, Steve Wilson; its Chief Executive Officer, Brendan Parnell; and its Executive General Manager of Operations, Adam Wallish. I hope I have the pronunciation of his name correct.

After its introduction to parliament, the Racing Integrity Amendment Bill 2022 was referred to the Education, Employment and Training Committee for consideration. On 8 April 2022 the committee tabled its report in relation to the bill and it contained five recommendations. Recommendation 1 was that the Racing Integrity Amendment Bill 2022 be passed. Recommendation 2 was that—

... the Minister in her second reading speech clarify whether a 'racing decision', as defined in clause 24 (proposed section 252AA) of the Bill, includes a decision made by a steward under the rules of racing, irrespective of whether the rules expressly refer to a 'steward' as the decision-maker.

Recommendation 3 was that—

... the Minister in her second reading speech clarify the intended meaning of 'extent' in clause 24 (proposed section 252AU(2)) of the Bill.


Recommendation 4 was that—

... the Minister in her second reading speech clarify the timeframes intended to apply to the publication of stewards' reports.

Recommendation 5, the final recommendation, was that—

... the Minister in her second reading speech clarify the eligibility for appointment to the Panel for employees of the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission, persons registered or licensed by the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission, and board directors of licensed clubs under proposed s 252BD Eligibility for appointment in clause 24 of the Bill.

In closing, I would like to thank the minister for introducing this important bill; the Education, Employment and Training Committee; the committee secretariat; the submitters; the relevant government departments; and Hansard. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr SMITH** (Bundaberg—ALP) (4.03 pm): I think I pulled a hamstring there, but I will continue on! The Queensland racing industry is a very proud industry. Of course, all of us as Queenslanders are proud of everyone who participates in the racing industry. Those of us who have our own racing clubs in our electorate are very proud to speak on such matters. It is a billion dollar industry. It supports around 13,000 full-time equivalent jobs, 7,850 volunteers and close to 40,000 participants across the sport.

Like so many people here, we have our own stories and personal connections to racing. I know that the member for Rockhampton spoke about his horses. My connection is that my uncle was actually the leading jockey in Coffs Harbour in the eighties. He got his start when my grandad, who was a colourful Sydney identity, knew some other colourful Sydney identities and got him a racing apprenticeship. I see the member for Nanango quite enjoyed that one. As I said, he was the leading jockey in Coffs Harbour throughout the eighties and we have that connection to racing.

Racing is like any other sport. It is important that there is integrity within the sport. That is what means so much to us as Australians. We like a fair go and we want our sports to be fair as well in terms of the participation and the competition as it moves forward. It is vital that not only the participants of the sport hold integrity but those who are charged with its oversight do as well. That is very much where these reforms are coming from. It is about the integrity in the oversight measures.

In recent years we have seen this around the sport of cycling. We saw that sport go through drug scandals. We saw the way in which some of those cyclists were able to cheat and those who were in a position of oversight of those athletes allowed that cheating to occur. That hurt the sport in general. Not only did it attack the integrity of the sport, but it also attacked the sport of racing in general.

We have listened to the concerns of the racing industry and this bill will implement the recommendations with its centrepiece being the racing appeal panel. I note that the minister, as those on the opposition have said, is the best racing minister Queensland has had, backed up by the member for Pine Rivers.

An honourable member: What about Stirling?

Mr SMITH: They are equal first. There was a photo finish and they both finished equal, that is for sure.


We heard Minister Grace talk about how this new independent panel will act like a judiciary panel in other sporting codes. My background in sport is in Rugby League. When I look at the current process in terms of the appeal of the steward's decisions, the internal process through the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission and then the external appeals through QCAT, that process is very different to the world of sport that I know. In Rugby League you have a judiciary panel. It is dealt with during that week between matches. There are people with expertise in the legal profession but largely in the Rugby League profession. Former officials and former players make up part of that judiciary panel. I think this is getting closer to what those other sports enact in their codes. I think this is a very important piece of reform moving forward, especially when we talk about the times.

It is very good to see that the panel will constitute a chairperson and two other members selected by that chairperson from a larger pool of representatives. It is noted in the explanatory notes that the chairperson may sit alone or with a maximum of two members to review decisions that involve a penalty that is \$200 or less or a disciplinary action that has effect for no longer than eight days.

The length of time is a concern when we talk about these reforms and appeals to the stewards. We have heard the examples—I will not repeat them—of the stay orders and how they have almost been used and abused to cater for those within the industry who have made a decision that that is how they want to play things. I think this reform goes a long way to making sure we are achieving that integrity that stakeholders have expressed their concerns about through the submissions and other processes.

One of the other great things is the length of time, as I have mentioned. I do note that a review application must be lodged within three business days—and the member for Stafford did go through this in his speech—after a person has given notice. The panel must finalise its review of an application—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Lister): Member for Bundaberg, would you please resume your seat? Under the provisions of the business program agreed to by the House and the time limit for this stage of the bill having expired, I call the minister to reply to the second reading debate.

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (4.09 pm), in reply: I thank the members of the House for their contributions to the debate. Whilst I welcome the opposition support for the bill, it is clear based on some of the contributions we have heard from them today that not much has changed since this original bill was debated in 2016. Aren't they all geniuses in hindsight? Everyone is a genius in hindsight.

As I have already said, passing the Racing Integrity Act 2016 was essential for addressing the systematic issues that were plaguing racing. The LNP fought against the Palaszczuk government's crucial integrity and animal welfare reforms every step of the way so I find it galling that we have on the one hand the member for Everton saying that this bill is long overdue while on the other hand we have the member for Surfers Paradise like a ghost from the 2016 debate launching a diatribe against QRIC.

Before I turn to the matters raised in the debate, I think it is worth revisiting, for the benefit of the newer members, some of the hysterical and dishonest allegations that we heard from the LNP during the debate six years ago. At the time, the members for Nanango and Warrego claimed the passing of the Racing Integrity Act would shatter confidence and spell disaster for the industry. Well, aren't they all geniuses in hindsight.

The member for Condamine accused the government of using the 2015 *Four Corners* program that led to the MacSporran report as an excuse to launch an attack on the racing industry. He went as far as saying—

New South Wales and Victoria have taken measures to address the practices of cruelty in the greyhound industry. The Queensland Labor government, on the other hand, saw the opportunity to take a hatchet to the racing industry as a whole across all racing codes. There was a gross overreaction in Queensland not seen in the southern states ...

The irony for the member for Condamine is that, no sooner was the ink dry on *Hansard*, the LNP members accusing us of overreacting had the Liberal-National government in New South Wales banning greyhound racing outright. That did not go well for them down there. New South Wales passed legislation in August 2016 to shut down the greyhound industry, plunging their industry into chaos and forcing the then premier, Mike Baird, to backflip on the ban in October 2016. That was the great overreaction of Queensland, compared to New South Wales. Aren't they all geniuses in hindsight?

Who could forget the member for Toowoomba North's bizarre prediction that we would run out of horses by 2019 because apparently the prize money was so bad. The member had this to say about the Racing Integrity Bill at the time—

The effects will not be felt right now, but in three years time there will be no horses to run around the track, because nobody will have trained any as the prize money is so bad.

I recently attended the Weetwood race day in Toowoomba. I inform the member for Toowoomba North—all geniuses in hindsight—that there was no shortage of horses. In fact, what people from Toowoomba Turf Club did tell me that day is how excited they are for the inaugural King of the Mountain slot race that will be held on 31 December. That new race in Toowoomba will run for \$750,000—they are all geniuses in hindsight—in prize money. It will be restricted to Queensland bred horses that are prepared by Queensland-based trainers.

Those opposite have no credibility when it comes to racing. So what did happen with the racing industry as a result of our reform six years ago, you may ask? The economic contribution of the Queensland racing industry has soared almost 60 per cent under the Palaszczuk government to a record nearly \$2 billion. That successful economic growth has been shared across all three racing codes since 2016.

Mr Hinchliffe interjected.

Ms GRACE: I will take the interjection from the minister, the member for Sandgate. Thoroughbreds are up nearly 50 per cent; harness is up 30 per cent; and greyhounds are up 116 per cent. Wagering turnover on Queensland product across all three codes was nearly \$7 billion in 2021-22. That is up from \$3.9 billion in 2016-17. The total prize money in breeding scheme payments across all three codes was nearly \$210 million in 2021-22, up from \$133 million in 2016-17. None of this would have been possible had the LNP got their way in 2016. Thanks to the Palaszczuk Labor government, the racing industry has changed for the better and is stronger than ever in this state.

I will now turn to matters raised during the debate. The member for Everton, despite voting against the original Racing Integrity Act, claims the government was too slow with this bill. The racing integrity reforms discussion paper was released in June 2019, and the government announced that we would establish a racing appeals panel. Unfortunately, in early 2019 the racing industry was hit with COVID. What we did in this state to maintain racing was incredible. They were able to continue and we worked with the industry. I was not the minister at that time, it was the member for Sandgate. It was a photo finish. We went out to consult the industry and they basically said, 'We have other priorities at the moment. We are fighting for our life. We want to keep racing alive. This is not the time to go out and start consulting about any amendments to QRIC.'

Those members opposite who are bemoaning the time it has taken were going to force the industry into prioritising this matter when they were basically fighting to stay alive. That is incredible. I do not mind if sometimes—

Mr Power interjected.

Ms GRACE: I take the interjections from the member for Logan. If there was ever a time we needed to consolidate and not disrupt, it was when the minister was speaking to the industry back then. We had COVID-19 right throughout 2020. I became the minister after the election at the end of 2020 and in 2021 we slowly but surely took our time when we got back on our feet to consult with them and make sure that it would happen.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Lister): The member for Nanango will not interject from another seat.

Ms GRACE: Member for Nanango, you should be in your seat. I do not mind taking interjections from the member for Nanango because we share a love for racing but only when she is in her seat. What we obviously needed to do was consolidate and that is what we have done. Here we are, and I thank those opposite for supporting the amendments because they are exactly the right thing for this industry.

The member for Everton asked for an update on the implementation of the recommendations from the 2015 Greyhound Racing Industry Commission of Inquiry report. They were in government at the time the *Four Corners* report came to life. There were 15 recommendations. I can advise the member for Everton that 10 recommendations and 61 activities have been fully implemented. This included the establishment of QRIC, which they voted against and which he and those opposite opposed every step of the way. The government did not support two recommendations so we are now down to 13. Two recommendations were suspended due to the significant reduction in greyhound breeding numbers so we are down to 11. The implementation of one recommendation by Queensland Racing relating to education and training of licensed participants is ongoing, as it should be. All of the recommendations have been implemented. For the member for Gympie to get up and say that they have not been done is completely inaccurate and is misleading the House.

The member for Everton and other members said that it was important that the panel members are of the highest quality and must have the respect of industry. For once, we agree. I agree entirely. As I said in my second reading speech, panel members will be appointed by the Governor in Council on the recommendation of me as the minister for racing. At least six persons for appointment will have various types of experience. The chairperson and each deputy chairperson must be a lawyer with at least five years legal standing. I have spoken to QRIC commissioner Shane Gillard about turning his mind to who we can have on this panel. I want the best people on this panel. There must also be at least three other members with expertise in relevant areas, including racing, veterinary science and racing chemistry.

I now turn to the contribution from the member for Surfers Paradise regarding the current integrity arrangements in this state. I say to the member for Nanango: referees and stewards often make a few mistakes. I do not think that the member for Everton would ever say that as a referee in the NRL he never made a mistake or a bad call.

Mr Mander interjected.

Ms GRACE: I will take the interjection from the member for Everton. Slight human errors that the process fixes are completely different to QRIC integrity issues of animal cruelty and health and safety.

No legislation is going to stop human error. Whether it is on the football field, the AFL field, the racetrack or whatever, it is always going to happen. For those opposite—all geniuses in hindsight—who think that we can eliminate those errors, they are dreaming because it is not going to happen. The current arrangements were put in place as a result of the greyhound commission of inquiry. Stakeholder feedback in response to the 2019 discussion paper indicated that in general stakeholders thought the current arrangements were working well. This bill maintains the separation between the integrity and commercial aspects of racing while addressing stakeholder concerns raised in consultation on the discussion paper.

A number of those opposite have raised cases involving people prosecuted in relation to racing. This demonstrates that they do not understand what the bill is about. QRIC does not prosecute criminal offences and these matters are not relevant to this bill. Prosecutions are conducted by the Queensland Police Service, not QRIC. I will say that again: prosecutions are conducted by the Queensland Police Service, not QRIC. Not all prosecutions are successful of course, and this can be for many reasons. That means that our legal system and the processes which we respect are always working. Unlike those who think that no matter what happens you ignore the process, we do not on this side.

In terms of cases that are relevant to this bill, in 2021-22 there were 1,721 original decisions made by stewards under the rules of racing and a further 498 decisions in the first quarter of 2022-23. In 2021-22 only 119 applications for review were made and most decisions were confirmed. For those who say that there is disaster and things are out of hand, the figures certainly are not confirming it, and they are the facts. When consulted, the industry did not seek to abolish the role of QRIC stewards. It wants these penalties they impose implemented faster and for the review system to be streamlined, and the bill delivers on that request.

I also note the member for Theodore's contribution in which he said that we need strong regional race meetings. I could not agree more. That is why since the Palaszczuk government came to office we have invested well over \$105 million in our country race program. This supports country racing through infrastructure grants, prize money, bonuses including the Queensland Thoroughbred Incentive Scheme, club-meeting payments, jockey-riding fees, superannuation and WorkCover expenses. Country racing in this state has never been so strong since the Palaszczuk Labor government came to power. Country racing has no greater friend than the Palaszczuk Labor government, and I will say that every single day.

I look forward to the member for Theodore's support of our betting tax reforms that will lock in greater long-term funding sustainability for country racing. We on this side of the House understand the importance of country racing. Since we have been in government—unlike the predictions of the member for Toowoomba North—country racing has been flourishing and doing exceptionally well because we have locked in prize money, TAB meetings, supported the bookmakers, infrastructure and the list goes on and on. The point-of-consumption tax bill will lock in the finance for country racing.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Lister): Minister, are you being mindful of the impending debate and not anticipating it? I would ask you to come back to your bill please, Minister.

Ms GRACE: I will come back to my bill. Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, for your eminent guidance. We will ensure that country racing will continue to thrive in this state.

This bill is about providing a fit-for-purpose system of review for the decisions made by stewards under the rules of racing. Since coming to office we have passed nation-leading reforms that deliver higher standards of animal welfare and integrity across the industry, including the original Racing Integrity Act which established QRIC. I have a warning for the industry: if you do not do the right thing, and I have said it before, you will be caught and you will be dealt with. QRIC is a model that is unique to Queensland and created a clear separation between the integrity and commercial activities of the racing industry.

Despite what the member for Surfers Paradise says, QRIC does a fantastic job safeguarding the welfare of racing animals and maintaining public confidence in Queensland racing. If we listened to those opposite we would swear that racing was broken in this state, and we are far from that. The bill builds on our landmark 2016 reforms to enhance the integrity of the racing industry. Maybe those opposite should get out and about to some of their racetracks. Go talk to people involved in the industry. Go ask them about it.

Mr Perrett interjected.

Ms GRACE: I am happy to go to the racetrack with the member for Gympie, and I take his interjection: we will do that next year, member for Gympie. I have a bit of time for the member for Gympie, so I am more than happy to go to the racetrack with him like I did with the member for Nanango. We had a great day, and I ate one of her hamburgers as well. I suggest those opposite go around to speak to people in order to find out exactly what is happening because it is tick, tick, tick all the way.

The integrity of the racing industry to ensure timely implementation of disciplinary decisions while upholding the rights of industry participants affected by those decisions must be upheld. There has been lengthy consultation in the lead-up to the bill as well as through the inquiry by the Employment, Education and Training Committee. I thank it for its work and the member for Redlands for chairing. The widespread acceptance of the changes among stakeholders is evidence of the way the Palaszczuk government has listened to stakeholder concerns, prioritised what we needed to do during COVID and now we are ready to implement the integrity changes, and this bill delivers that. This bill will ensure a world-class appeals system complements what is already a world-class racing integrity system. I thank members for their support and 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 29, as read, agreed to.

Schedule, as read, agreed to.

Third Reading

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (4.28 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. G GRACE (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (4.28 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.

PUBLIC HEALTH AND OTHER LEGISLATION (COVID-19 MANAGEMENT) AMENDMENT BILL

Resumed from 1 September (see p. 2500).

Second Reading



Hon. YM D'ATH (Redcliffe—ALP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (4.28 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

I want to acknowledge the work of the Health and Environment Committee in conducting its inquiry into the bill and thank the committee for its report tabled on 14 October 2022. I also want to thank the many stakeholders who provided valuable input into the development of the bill and participated in the committee's inquiry. I also want to put on record my sincere appreciation for all of the health workers who have made such a significant contribution to Queensland's pandemic response. Whether it be the clinical staff on the front line, the operational staff working throughout our hospitals or whether it be those working in the Department of Health, everyone within the Queensland health system has made their own sacrifices to ensure that the broader Queensland community could withstand the immense pressure of the COVID-19 pandemic, which brought many health systems and economies across the globe to their knees.

The committee made one recommendation: that the bill be passed. While non-government members of the committee tabled dissenting reports, the committee supported passage of the bill to retain the limited powers necessary to manage COVID-19 for the next 12 months. I will address some of the issues raised during the committee's inquiry in my speech. COVID-19 has dominated much of our lives since 2020. To our relief, we are now well on our way to living with COVID. This bill provides the safety net to see us through the next 12 months as we continue to adapt. During the committee's inquiry, many stakeholders expressed their support for the bill and the proposed step-down approach to manage COVID-19 as a notifiable condition until 31 October 2023. This suggests people are becoming more comfortable with self-managing the risks of COVID-19 but appreciate that government still has a vital role at this stage of the pandemic to manage the most serious risks of COVID-19.

The bill will replace the emergency framework with limited measures to manage COVID-19 as a notifiable condition in the Public Health Act without the need for a public health emergency to be declared. The new temporary amendments in the bill will sunset on 31 October 2023. Enacting temporary provisions for 12 months ensures government is only legislating for the measures likely to be needed for now. The bill enables the Chief Health Officer to make public health directions about three measures: masks; isolation for people diagnosed with COVID-19 and quarantine for symptomatic close contacts; and vaccination for workers in specific settings.

The bill strengthens the threshold for when the Chief Health Officer may issue directions to reflect the focus on managing COVID-19. The new threshold means that a direction can only be made if it is reasonably necessary to prevent or respond to a serious risk to the public health system or the community as result of COVID-19, or give effect to decisions of National Cabinet or the recommendations of national public health advisory bodies such as the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee. The range of safeguards and limitations in the bill recognises the impact public health measures may have on human rights. It also responds to stakeholder feedback on this bill and previous COVID-19 legislation.

The proposed approach in this bill aligns with the latest advice from the World Health Organization. The World Health Organization has cautioned that while the end of the COVID-19 pandemic is in sight, we are not there yet. Epidemiologists advise that future waves of infections are

expected, potentially at different times throughout the world caused by different subvariants of Omicron or new variants of concern. The bill has been carefully developed with these realities in mind. The bill retains the powers necessary to preserve human life and respond to serious risks posed by COVID-19 while ensuring the rights and liberties of Queenslanders are limited as little as possible. Striking this balance is difficult because we are dealing with an unpredictable virus.

The differing views expressed by the stakeholders during consultation undertaken by Queensland Health and during the committee process is testament to this. While some stakeholders consider the powers proposed to be retained are too broad or no longer needed, others expressed concern during the development of the bill that the powers may not be broad enough given the ongoing risks of COVID-19. To strike the right balance, the bill places appropriate limits on government decision-making by retaining only the critical measures needed to respond to COVID-19 and maintain consistency with other states and territories. At the same time, it affords individuals more opportunity to self-manage the risks of COVID-19, with government only stepping in when necessary.

In recognition of the new phase of the pandemic we are in, the bill provides a significant number of safeguards on the adjusted powers being exercised. That includes a requirement that the Chief Health Officer publish a statement justifying each direction. This justification statement must set out the reasons for making the direction. It must also include the Chief Health Officer's assessment of whether the direction is compatible with human rights recognised under the Human Rights Act 2019. It also must include a need for directions to be tabled in parliament within 21 days along with the justification statement. If a direction is not tabled within 21 days it will cease to have effect. On tabling, the direction and justification statement will be referred to a parliamentary committee in the same way as subordinate legislation. This will ensure appropriate parliamentary scrutiny of directions. Directions may be the subject of a disallowance motion within 14 sitting days of being tabled. Directions will automatically expire after 90 days and must be revoked as soon as they no longer meet the criteria for being issued.

I wish to emphasise that this legislation is precautionary. As the Chief Health Officer stated in his testimony to the committee, 'it is the current plan to be pulling back on most measures and in the coming months to have no or very limited legal mandates in place'. We moved a step closer to this reality on 14 October 2022 when mandatory isolation requirements were removed following a National Cabinet decision. However, as the Chief Health Officer also advised the committee, 'it is important that Queensland has the ability to respond immediately if required, if something unexpected happens or the cumulative effects of successive waves of COVID-19 create a serious risk to the community'.

To remove the ability to rapidly implement measures to respond to COVID-19 at this time would go against expert advice and be inconsistent with other jurisdictions in Australia. Rather than waiting until things reach emergency level, this bill provides a balanced and proportionate approach to an unpredictable threat. It also allows for meaningful scrutiny of public health measures and provides greater certainty to the community regarding what measures may be required for the next 12 months.

The enabling framework in the bill allows the Chief Health Officer to scale up measures when risks are serious and scale them down when risks are low. While we are currently experiencing a relatively low risk period as we enter the warmer months, it is important we have the tools to respond to any future waves of COVID-19. This year's winter period was a prime example of how COVID-19 can place further strain on our resilient but fatigued health system. In particular, the bill ensures we have the means to manage COVID-19 through the 2023 winter period so that our health system can continue to manage these impacts and other risks that might emerge.


During the committee's review, some stakeholders and committee members suggested there is no longer the need for government support or intervention as Queenslanders know how to live with the virus. I acknowledge that some in the community feel very comfortable self-managing the risks of COVID-19. However, during Queensland Health's consultation on the bill, others representing health, aged care and disability services, expressed concerns that some parts of the community are not yet at a point of self-management. We have carefully considered the needs of all Queenslanders when developing this bill.

It is also important to consider the impacts of COVID-19 on our health system. During a wave of infection, increased strain is put on the health system. If enough healthcare workers cannot work due to illness or otherwise and cases are continually rising, steps might need to be taken to mitigate the impact on the health system. Otherwise, this could have flow-on effects for access to health care for all, including our most vulnerable. The bill retains the powers that may be needed to support our community and mitigate impacts on our health system over the next 12 months.

Legislation is only one part of the COVID-19 response. Queensland Health and the Chief Health Officer continue to provide guidance to the public and sectors like aged care and disability services to assist in effectively managing COVID-19. Eventually, as COVID-19 stabilises, individuals, businesses and industries will be able to self-manage COVID-19 without government intervention. Until we get to that point, however, we must maintain our ability to respond with speed and precision.

There was some commentary during the committee's inquiry about responding to COVID-19 in the corrective services environment. Custodial settings are an environment where physical distancing is not always possible. An outbreak of COVID-19 could present serious risk. It is important we retain measures to respond to COVID-19 in the custodial environment during this ongoing period of uncertainty. Queensland Corrective Services continues to take steps in line with the health advice to mitigate the risks of COVID-19 while minimising the impact on prisoners.

While this bill steps down the legislative response to COVID-19, Queenslanders are stepping up to the task of living with the risks of COVID-19. Our frontline workers have not wavered in their duty. They are still showing up every day to keep us well and maintain a resilient health system. To all of our health workers across Queensland Health and the HHSs and all of our health stakeholders externally, I say thank you for your partnership and your commitment to the people of Queensland. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (4.38 pm): I rise today to give my contribution on the Public Health and Other Legislation (COVID-19 Management) Amendment Bill 2022. It is clearly not the first time this parliament has debated a bill which deals with how our state responds and manages COVID-19. I begin my contribution as I have done on other occasions, and that is to say an enormous and heartfelt thankyou to all those staff who have worked on the front line of the COVID-19 response. We must not forget the incredible courage and strength those on the front line showed when this pandemic first began. For quite some time the threat of COVID-19 was a threat which was largely unknown. As they are called to do, our frontline staff stared down that unknown threat and showed up in the face of it every day. They did so at risk to themselves, to their families and to their friends.

When this chamber last debated a bill such as this, I said that I doubted whether there had been a time in human history when such a spotlight had been shone on health care as there was throughout the difficult days of the pandemic. I stand by that statement. I feel as though, for a generation of people, health care will never be looked at in the same way because of the COVID-19 pandemic. As someone who loves health care, who has lived and breathed it, and who has stood on the front line as a registered nurse, it made me immensely proud. My two sisters and I are nurses. There is nearly 100 years of nursing experience between the three of us and I am incredibly proud of that too. Nurses were among the heroes in scrubs who turned up day in, day out in the face of what was then an unknown enemy. To them and everyone else who rose to the challenge at that time, I say thank you—thank you for what you did then and thank you for what you still do today.

Just as I mentioned the unprecedented spotlight that was shone on health care in the past few years in my last speech on the COVID-19 response, I want to borrow something else that I mentioned in my last contribution. It is not just through COVID-19 that our frontline health staff front up in the face of unknown adversity. That is their job. It is their job to do it every day. Whether it is a pandemic with the world watching on or a patient with problems on a Monday morning, they go to work to solve it, to stop it and to protect us from it. They go to work to nurture, to fix and to mend. They go to work to care and to care for us. Often they are there for us on our hardest days. They might see someone's hardest day 10 times over in just one shift. To those healthcare colleagues and workers on the front line, my family, my friends and my colleagues, I say thank you.

It is quite incredible to think just how different our world is compared to 12 months ago or two years ago. The things that we once took for granted were things we could no longer do—see a friend, catch up at a cafe, see a live gig, go to the cinema. We could not do those things not that long ago. We could not travel abroad. We could not visit our relatives in aged care and, for many, we could not attend a funeral or a wedding. COVID-19 took away a great deal. Many people lost many things—moments and memories that they will never get back or that they never got to have at all. We can never forget that in this place. If we lose sight of that then we have failed in our duty because COVID-19 took so much away from so many. In this place we are privileged to be the voice for our constituencies across this great state. When we talk about how this state responded to COVID-19, we can never forget that the COVID-19 pandemic has caused significant upheaval to the lives of many Queenslanders.

At all times members of the LNP have remained acutely mindful of this in dealing with our constituents. We have carefully considered these realities in our examination of this bill. Despite being tempered somewhat as compared to previous iterations of similar legislation, the LNP recognise that in

many ways the provisions contained in this bill still remain extraordinary. As such, our party has and will continue to treat the passage of this bill and any others like it with the appropriate level of respect that is demanded.

The opposition will not support the passing of this bill. We all must acknowledge that the current state of the pandemic has shifted greatly since a bill of this nature was last introduced to the parliament. As an opposition, we are acutely aware of that. We realise that the threat from COVID-19 has not just upped and left—far from it. As a state and as a society, we must be prepared for a potential new variant of the virus and the risks that that could bring. Those risks and that threat is likely to remain with us for some time yet. However, the situation has rapidly evolved from where we once were to where we are now. Yes, we must be absolutely prepared but our response must be proportionate to the risk at hand.

As it stands, there are now very few COVID-19 restrictions that impact Queenslanders' lives. That is a good thing and it is reasonable, given that the risk and the threat of the virus to our way of life has significantly subsided since the beginning of this year. With more restrictions being wound back, both in Queensland and nationally, we believe it is extremely difficult to justify to the community why legislation like this bill should be passed in the Queensland parliament. In recent weeks, the requirements to isolate should an individual test positive were wound back. That was really the last of the more restrictive measures that still existed and now, as agreed by National Cabinet, it is no more. The decision to stay home if you are unwell now rests with the individual.

The lessons we have learned from the pandemic tell me that most individuals will be careful and respectful in how they choose to go about their lives if they are a known positive case, and so they should. Many businesses and organisations are now choosing what, if any, COVID-19 restrictions they will enforce. Most have none, which is now entirely lawful in almost all sectors and industries. That has been widely accepted by the Queensland public. Others have decided to keep some protections in place, and that is fine too. Those are businesses and organisations making decisions of their own volition. The same can be said for individual Queenslanders going about their day-to-day lives. Queenslanders have learned to live with the virus. They have learned to take careful personal responsibility in going about their daily lives.

There are now only three Chief Health Officer's public health directions in effect in Queensland and they are as follows: the COVID-19 vaccination requirements for workers in residential aged care and disability accommodation services direction; protecting public officials and workers from spitting, coughing and sneezing, direction No. 3; and the public health face mask requirements, direction No. 6. They are quite self-explanatory. Those three directions are now largely self-governed. They are common practice and, in the case of the direction to protect public officials and workers, it is common sense. To any individual who thinks it is okay to spit, cough or sneeze on anyone, it is not. It is also not okay to verbally abuse people in those positions. We have a justice system with the necessary protections in place to punish those who might choose to partake in vile acts such as those.

As I outlined earlier, the opposition realises that, while the phase of the pandemic has moved on considerably, the threat is not yet gone. If a situation was to arise where a new variant of the virus begins spreading through the community and poses a significant threat to public health, parliament could be swiftly recalled in order to pass the necessary laws to protect Queenslanders. Recalling parliament at short notice can be done. It happened as recently as last month following the passing of the late Queen Elizabeth II. If we can recall the parliament to legislate for a holiday then surely we can all get together and pass laws to protect Queensland from any new threat that may emerge. It would be a process that would be well understood by all in this chamber and understood by the Queensland community. It is the job of this parliament to sit, to debate. Let the parliament do its job.

Mr Hinchliffe interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Member for Sandgate, I will not warn you again. The next time it will be a warning under the standing orders.

Ms BATES: Queenslanders have walked this path before. Queenslanders heeded the advice once and, if it ever had to happen, they would accept it again. If there were a genuine need for the government to change the laws to strengthen the response to ensure the public health of Queenslanders is protected then the opposition would never stand in the way of the parliament sitting. As an opposition, we would then carefully and judiciously consider any legislation brought forward. However, we cannot go on living indefinitely with these types of legislative frameworks in place.

I want to take some time to address the attempts that the government has made to include measures of transparency and openness in this bill. The gall of those opposite is quite something. Here we are in a phase of the pandemic when COVID-19 restrictions are all but gone and the government


decides that it is time they embark on the very novel idea of being transparent with the parliament about public health directions and advice. Where on earth have they been for the past two years? Seriously, where? With the worst of the pandemic behind us, at least for the foreseeable future, the government now wants people to believe that they are the source of all things transparent, accountable and open when it comes to how they handle COVID-19.

Queenslanders are not falling for that one. It is an insult to all those who were left reeling by the decisions made by this government—decisions that were made without a shred of transparency and accountability. There was the decision to deny six-year-old Lenny and his father a chance to quarantine in Queensland after major surgery for his cerebral palsy took place overseas. There was three-year-old Memphis, who was stranded with his grandparents over the border and unable to come home to his mum and dad. On top of that, we had the truly unbelievable cases of footy players' wives and girlfriends who were allowed into the state while others such as Lenny and Memphis were not. Yes, the Queensland public would have loved a little transparency about who made that decision and how it was made. The image of the plane on a Queensland tarmac will live long in the memories of the Queensland people.

Then we have the mother of all COVID-19 response stuff-ups, Wellcamp or 'waste camp'. It is a monument to the hubris and ineptitude that has become the hallmark of this tired third-term Labor government. Hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars are gone. The Queensland public needs no reminder of just how open and transparent those opposite were with that decision. It was not just lacking; it was entirely absent.

If ever you need a clear example of the motives of this government, here it is laid bare in this legislation: open with Queenslanders but only when it suits them politically; transparent but only when there is nothing left to be transparent about; accountable—well, actually they never have been and never will be. The opposition is not going to accept that the government has decided these provisions are some gesture of goodwill or some belated conversion to being transparent in government. Everything those opposite do is contrived. Every non-government member in this chamber backed calls in some form or another for openness and transparency the last time a bill like this was debated. The government did not support it. In that moment the government nailed its colours to the mast. How can one take it seriously on these issues now? Once elected on the principles of transparency and accountability, this government has now walked so far away from those things that it does not know where to start looking to find them again.

A lot was asked of Queenslanders by the government throughout the pandemic, and Queenslanders rose to the challenge. That is despite these situations I have just outlined. More than 90 per cent of our state adult population has now received two doses of the COVID-19 vaccine. Many Queenslanders have chosen to have a third or even a fourth COVID-19 vaccine. Ask Queenslanders now and you will find it difficult to find one who has not had COVID-19 themselves or does not know someone who has had it, and many will have had it more than once. COVID-19 is no longer an unknown enemy on the horizon; it is something we all now live with every single day. As such, the opposition believes that the time for legislation like this has come and gone. Until such time as a new public health emergency arises—should that happen, the parliament should then be allowed to do its job: be recalled if urgent and pass the necessary laws.

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (4.51 pm): I rise to speak on the Public Health and Other Legislation (COVID-19 Management) Amendment Bill 2022. We are reminded all the time by the member for Mudgeeraba that she was a nurse for 40 years, so I would like to share with the House that I was a paramedic.

Ms Boyd: Were you really? I didn't know this!

Mr HARPER: Yes, members. Indeed I was.

Ms Boyd: What kind of paramedic?

Mr HARPER: In fact, I was a critical care flight paramedic. I share with the House that only last week I received my 30-year service award from the Queensland Ambulance Service. I certainly know what those on the front line have done over the past couple of years. I want to acknowledge the extraordinary work done by all involved, particularly in the health sector, in managing COVID-19 in this state—the thousands of dedicated health staff who not only looked after thousands of patients in very challenging times but also staffed the fever clinics and, importantly, the vaccination clinics. I also want to thank the people of my home town—I am sure I am joined in this by the member for Townsville—

who followed the sound COVID advice set by the then chief health officer and now Queensland Governor, Dr Jeannette Young; our interim CHO, Dr Peter Aitken, a personal mentor of mine who once was a senior consultant at the emergency department in Townsville; and Dr John Gerrard.

We kept the borders shut to ensure Queensland was safe, despite the 64 times the former leader of the LNP opposition, the member for Nanango—much like One Nation and Clive Palmer; there are some credible people!—called for them to be opened and put our community at risk. In fact, I recall the ‘member for glass jaw’—my apologies, the member for Glass House—

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

Mr HARPER:—who was on record in this place in March 2020—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Lister): Member for Thuringowa—

Mr HARPER: I withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Would you please resume your seat. What is your point of order, member for Nanango?

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Obviously the member does not know who he is withdrawing for: Glass House, Nanango—who knows?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Get to the point, please, member for Nanango.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I would ask the member to withdraw. I have taken personal offence and I ask him to withdraw. He is completely making it up.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Thuringowa, did you withdraw?

Mr HARPER: I did.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Please continue.

Mr HARPER: I will continue my contribution, thank you very much. I hope the member for Nanango pays attention. The member for Glass House is on record in this place in March 2020 saying that the worst was over. Good grief! Really? Millions of people around the world died, including thousands in this country, particularly in the southern states of New South Wales and Victoria. How dreadfully out of touch those opposite were and still are.

The bulk of the Queensland population followed sound COVID advice from the AHPPC and National Cabinet to our CHOs, who provided that same advice to our Premier and health minister along the way. We kept our economy strong. We kept the people of Queensland safe. Of course, I must acknowledge the Premier for her stewardship in dealing with this awful global pandemic. Who will forget those awful images from around the world of mass graves? Millions of people across the world lost their lives. In a crisis, leadership is our most important tool. Leadership is paramount. All the hard and difficult decisions made were all for one thing: to keep Queenslanders safe. I thank the Premier.

The objective of the bill is to provide for continued management of COVID-19 in Queensland by replacing the temporary emergency framework, which was enacted to manage the response to the pandemic, with: new temporary powers to make and enforce public health directions to manage COVID-19 as a notifiable condition under the Public Health Act 2005 until 31 October 2023, and new procedures and safeguards for issuing public health directions for COVID-19; and an extended expiry date, of up to 12 months, for the temporary COVID-19 emergency measures in the Corrective Services Act. The bill amends the Public Health Act to repeal some provisions of the Public Health Act which provided for additional powers such as enforcement of directions and other matters in relation to the COVID-19 emergency. There was general support for the bill. Submissions from organisations in the healthcare sector all supported the bill, although some specific and separate issues were raised by some submitters.

Our committee made one recommendation—I thank all members of the committee—that is, that the bill be passed. The House should note that, subsequent to the introduction of the bill, on 30 September 2022 National Cabinet agreed to end the requirement for mandatory isolation for COVID-19 cases from 14 October 2022, and this may affect some elements of this bill. Most of the submissions opposing the bill in its entirety considered that the emergency powers were not required for various reasons including that the emergency situation no longer exists, that previous measures deployed through the use of emergency powers were ineffective, and that the rules about mandatory isolation, quarantine and mask wearing were a breach of human rights. We considered all of that.

In relation to the need for special powers, some submitters objected to the ongoing use of emergency or extended powers. The Chief Health Officer—member for Nanango, pay attention—Dr John Gerrard, told the committee that at this time he did not expect that the powers will be used

often, or possibly at all, but that it was important that Queensland has the ability to respond immediately if required—if something unexpected happens or the cumulative effects of successive waves of COVID-19 create a serious risk in the community. It is a real shame that the opposition is not supporting this bill, because no-one has a crystal ball. We have just dealt with a global pandemic in this state, and we did it well. Dr Gerrard further advised—

There would have to be a very significant change in the virus ... for us to consider implementing measures—
such as lockdowns or gathering restrictions—
like that again.

...

If there was some unexpected major change or shift in the virus such that it became much more contagious and/or much deadlier, which is unlikely, then that would need parliament's involvement, and I think that's appropriate.

Some submitters were concerned about serious risks not being defined in the bill. Empowering the Chief Health Officer to give a public health direction, rather than a minister or an elected representative, was a concern for some submitters. There were also some concerns about the extension of emergency powers under the Corrective Services Act which would have an impact on prisoners' wellbeing and access to legal and health services. As the member for Caloundra has aptly demonstrated in this House, correctional facilities are already very difficult establishments in which to maintain good order. They already have their challenges, with close confinement of prisoners. In saying that, the Queensland Corrective Services response to those issues was—

... COVID-19 is more sustainable, a new Custodial Operations Pandemic Response Planning Tool has been implemented.

...

This approach has utilised targeted strategies, in consultation with Queensland Health, to reduce the need for centre-wide lockdowns and other restrictions that have previously impacted visits and service delivery.

The Palaszczuk government has led the nation in its measured response to COVID-19. Before vaccines became widely available, we ensured there was minimal community transmission. This ensured we kept our economy open and prevented the extended lockdowns that we saw in places like Victoria and New South Wales. It also meant we were able to save many people's lives.

Our vaccine rollout ensured we were able to open our borders in a safe and considered way. The vaccine plan to unite families meant that we could reunite families and manage the first COVID-19 wave in a way that did not overwhelm our hospital system. A strong level of vaccination coverage in Queensland has ensured that we could withstand not just the first wave but the second and third Omicron waves. Not only has it supported our health system, but our strong management of the pandemic has laid the basis for Queensland to be Australia's strongest mainland economy.

This bill marks the next phase of our plan. It recognises that we are in a new phase of the pandemic which requires a different response to the one we have historically adopted. We know that we cannot just do away with the pandemic framework. No matter how fatigued by the pandemic we may be, it would be irresponsible to adopt the LNP's suggestion to remove the pandemic management framework. But of course the LNP knows all about being irresponsible when it comes to managing the pandemic: they called for the borders to be opened 64 times.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr HARPER: Worse, the member for Broadwater does not support our frontline health workers. He was at the front line when it came to attacking Dr Jeannette Young. Who could ever forget the moment he referred to her as a 'punch-drunk bureaucrat'. He should unreservedly apologise in this House and speak on this bill. That is not the making of a parliamentarian. It is certainly not the making of the leader he purports to be. He should apologise to the Chief Health Officer; he should apologise to the Governor of Queensland. The LNP does not want to support this framework because they do not want to acknowledge the continued existence of COVID-19. I believe this is a sound bill and I commend the bill to the House.



Mr MOLHOEK (Southport—LNP) (5.01 pm): As with all legislation that has dealt with Queensland's response to COVID-19, opposition members of the committee have sought to engage respectfully with regard to the committee's considerations. It would be remiss if we did not acknowledge that the COVID-19 pandemic has caused significant disruption and upheaval to the lives of Queenslanders—in fact, not just Queenslanders but all Australians. There can be no escaping the fact that COVID-19 took away many things from many people. We have previously expressed this sentiment

when examining similar legislation, and it should be rightly acknowledged again on this occasion. At this juncture we should also acknowledge and again thank the thousands of Queensland health workers and medical practitioners across the state who have given so much of themselves in terms of sacrifice and time away from their families. They had to wade through a minefield with so many challenges when there were so many unknowns about the pandemic at the outset.

Despite the changes made by the government to this bill as compared to its previous iterations, the provisions in this bill remain extraordinary. The current state of the pandemic has shifted so greatly since a bill of this nature was last introduced to the parliament that, as opposition members of the committee, we cannot support the legislation as it currently stands. We acknowledge and accept that COVID-19 still circulates widely amongst our community and, for that matter, in many parts of the world. We also acknowledge that we must be prepared for a potential new variant of the virus and the risks that could bring; however, we cannot go on living indefinitely with this type of legislative framework in place.

The member for Thuringowa quite rightly said that no-one has a crystal ball, but just because we do not have a crystal ball does not mean we should continue to expand special powers of the government from one year to the next just in case something else happens. As the member for Mudgeeraba stated earlier, this parliament has been recalled under extraordinary circumstances to deal with something far more minor than the impact of a pandemic: it was recalled for a matter of hours simply to deal with a public holiday. I have absolute confidence in this parliament and its ability to be recalled at a movement's notice should there be the need for additional powers. As it stands, there are now very few COVID restrictions that impact on Queensland life, with more of these restrictions having been wound back both in Queensland and nationally. Our party believes it is extremely difficult to justify to the community why legislation like this bill should be passed again in the Queensland parliament.

During the course of the inquiry there were 57 submissions received. There was general support for some aspects of the bill. There were submissions from organisations in the healthcare sector that expressed general support for the bill but also raised some very specific concerns. There were some submitters who raised concerns that the term 'serious risk' had not been adequately defined in the bill. I note that, in looking at the three special provisions, the directions that would remain in place are more limited than those in the past, but they still provide special or extraordinary powers for the Chief Health Officer.


During the course of the hearings we heard evidence from one group and commentary from the discrimination commissioner who raised concerns about where the appropriate powers should sit. One of the concerns we heard raised at length throughout the course of the hearings was a concern that a bureaucrat or an employee of the government would be vested with special powers rather than an elected member. Concerns were raised about the lack of accountability to the voting public and the people of Queensland. I flag that because it is a concern. While we are not supporting this bill, equally I do not believe that those extraordinary powers should be vested in the hands of a bureaucrat ahead of an elected representative of the Queensland parliament.

We also heard concerns raised with respect to special provisions relating to corrections and corrective services. One of the comments made was with respect to the special powers. I understand the need for the head of corrections to have to implement special measures to deal with the prison population, but one of the concerns raised was that it provides them with the power to make emergency declarations for up to 90 days. Effectively, what that means is they can lock the prison down for a period of 90 days. That restricts the flow of visitors, which includes family members. One of the discussions that got a lot of air time throughout the course of the hearings was the need to perhaps consider reducing that 90 days to 30 days, as that would be a little more humane. It would be better for the mental health of both prisoners and their families. While there are many arguments that could be raised either way with respect to that issue, I do think the mental health and wellbeing of all Queenslanders is equally important.

Throughout the course of the hearings we also looked into the issue of public health directions. I note that the member for Mudgeeraba raised this issue, and I agree with her. It is interesting that after the pandemic has passed we now want to introduce special measures that provide greater transparency. Even so, the bill only requires that public health directions be tabled within 21 days. As we all saw during the pandemic, 21 days is a long time. A lot changes in 21 days. What we all lived to experience was that almost on a daily basis there were new health directives, there was new advice, there was conflicting advice, there was confusion. I am not sure that the parliament would be able to keep up with the information that may be tabled with regard to public health directions. Does that mean that every time there is a change in public health direction we would see new documents tabled? Would

they have 21 days to table those statutory instruments and then we would find ourselves in a never-ending cycle of debating those directions retrospectively? I am not sure that is the most effective way to address or deal with those instruments that are being suggested.

We will not be supporting this bill. We do not believe it is necessary at this time. We absolutely believe that the parliament should be free to do its work and that if the parliament needs to be recalled then that would be the appropriate time to deal with any future pandemic or health concerns.

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (5.09 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Public Health and Other Legislation (COVID-19 Management) Amendment Bill 2022. I do not often agree with the member for Mudgeeraba, but I would like to echo her words acknowledging the great work of frontline workers and I acknowledge the great work that she and her family contributed to the health system. All of our frontline workers put themselves out each and every day and worked tirelessly to ensure Queenslanders were safe. I also acknowledge the great work of the people behind those frontline workers, their families, who supported them. The administration in Queensland Health and across the broader sector also made sure that we were able to work with COVID and deliver the best outcomes.

Like my colleague the member for Thuringowa, I would like to acknowledge the great stewardship of our Premier, the Hon. Annastacia Palaszczuk, for her outstanding leadership during a huge time of crisis in not just Queensland but the entire world. I also acknowledge our current and past health ministers and our current and past chief health officers.

From the very start, we had a plan. The Palaszczuk government had a plan and it is a plan that we stuck to. It was a plan to minimise community transmission, a plan to minimise hospitalisation and a plan to minimise deaths. It was a plan that had at its very heart the protection of Queenslanders and our economy. This plan asked a lot of Queenslanders. It asked us to work together until certain milestones were achieved, and Queenslanders stepped up to the mark and they did that. Queenslanders are amazing and I thank them for that.

The temporary emergency legislative framework in the Public Health Act 2005 to support our response to COVID-19 is due to expire on 31 October 2022. This bill introduces limited, temporary legislative powers that will provide a step-down approach to managing the pandemic's response. It will enable Queensland to respond rapidly to COVID-19 risks and nationally manage COVID-19 until October 2023.

The view of those opposite is out of step with every other jurisdiction in Australia, but of course the LNP know all about being irresponsible when it comes to managing the pandemic—from calling for the borders to be opened not once but 64 times before our COVID vaccine rollout, to passing people over the border. How irresponsible of our leaders in our community; it is a disgrace. While we know that the member for Broadwater does not support our frontline workers, he was also at the front line when it came to attacking Dr Jeannette Young. Who can forget the moment he referred to her as a punch-drunk bureaucrat? The LNP do not want to support this framework because they do not want to acknowledge the continued existence of COVID-19.

This bill provides for management of COVID-19 within the notifiable conditions framework of the Public Health Act, with a new temporary framework that will enable the Chief Health Officer: to make public health directions about a limited range of matters; to provide threshold conditions that must be met before a decision can be issued; and to implement additional safeguards and increased scrutiny of directions and provide limited powers for authorised persons to enforce public health directions. We will be relying on expert health advice from appropriately qualified people. The threshold conditions ensure that such a public health direction can only be issued if the Chief Health Officer reasonably believes it is necessary to prevent or respond to a serious risk to the public health system of the community as a result of COVID-19 or to give effect to a decision or agreement of the National Cabinet or advice from expert bodies, such as the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee or the Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation.


The Palaszczuk government has led the nation in its measured response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Before vaccines became widely available, we ensured that there was minimal community transmission. This ensured that we could keep our economy open and prevent the extended lockdowns that we saw in places like Victoria and New South Wales. As I have said, it also meant that we were able to save many people's lives. Our vaccine rollout ensured that we were able to open our borders in a safe, considered and measured way.

The COVID-19 Vaccine Plan to Unite Families meant that we could reunite families in a safe manner and manage the first COVID-19 wave in a way that did not overwhelm our hospital system. I thank all Queenslanders for undertaking the vaccination program, because this strong level of

vaccination coverage in Queensland ensured that we could withstand not just the first wave but the second and third Omicron waves. It supported our health system, and our strong management of the pandemic has laid the basis for Queensland to be Australia's strongest mainland economy.

We are now at the next phase of our plan. We recognise we are in a new phase of the pandemic that requires a different response to the one we have historically adopted. We know that we cannot just do away with a pandemic framework; that would be irresponsible. No matter how fatigued by the pandemic we may be, it would be totally irresponsible to adopt the LNP's suggestion to remove any pandemic management framework. As I have said, we know how out of step that is with the other jurisdictions in Australia. The LNP do not want to support this framework so I wonder if they acknowledge the continued existence of COVID-19.

I acknowledge the work of the committee secretariat, my colleagues on the committee and all of those who made submissions. Again, I thank the outstanding frontline workers who each and every day put themselves at potential risk and threat and turn up to work. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr ANDREW** (Mirani—PHON) (5.17 pm): I rise to make a brief contribution on the Public Health and Other Legislation (COVID-19 Management) Amendment Bill 2022. I also would like to thank all of the people in my electorate and right throughout Queensland who have worked tirelessly to prevent the spread of COVID throughout Queensland and also to other states.

The new legislation proposing a step-down approach to the current emergency powers framework in Queensland was introduced to parliament on 1 September. This bill was forwarded to the health committee for review by 14 October 2022. I am a part of that committee, and I thank the committee, the secretariat and the witnesses who appeared. The new bill sought to replace the current emergency framework with a new set of temporary and targeted powers which would allow the Chief Health Officer to only issue public health directions across a few key areas. Those directions could only be issued if the CHO believed it was reasonably necessary to respond to a serious risk to the public health system or community, to give effect to a National Cabinet decision or to give effect to advice from national advisory bodies, for example, the AHPPC.

I know that many people feel fairly strongly that this ongoing use of emergency powers in Queensland is unnecessary and that the whole lot should be allowed to expire at the end of October 2022 as they are supposed to. I agree. By this date, Queenslanders will have been living under a state of emergency for nearly three years. I also believe such powers should only be exercised by a minister who is a democratically elected representative of the people here in Queensland and who is accountable to the people for all actions taken. The CHO is none of these things—neither elected nor accountable. There is also an issue with a few broadly worded phrases like 'serious risk' that have not been defined in the bill. The meaning is left entirely up to the CHO's own discretion. I am also concerned with the bill's proposal to extend emergency power provisions at corrective services facilities for another year. Apart from that, I find the virtual silence on the introduction of the bill both in the mainstream media and elsewhere very strange.

The departmental briefing paper states—

A confidential consultation paper about the proposed changes to the Chief Health Officer's powers ... was distributed to targeted stakeholders.

That sounds suspiciously like stakeholders consulted on the bill are being prevented by the government from discussing the contents of the bill, either publicly or with their membership. If so, that is disgraceful. This is a significant issue. There should be a wideranging and open public debate on how the state steps away from the ongoing state of emergency powers framework.

We all saw the storm of controversy that erupted when the *Australian* revealed the shroud of secrecy governing the Queensland government's consultations regarding proposed new environmental laws. Stakeholders were forced to sign an unprecedented confidentiality deed before they were allowed to see the proposed amendments. The deed prevented stakeholders from discussing any of the proposals either publicly or with members. I sincerely hope the same tactics were not used in this bill.

We were the first state to declare an emergency on 29 January 2020 and the Premier said at the time—

Queensland acted early and strengthened the laws because public safety is paramount.

Since then we have seen our economy smashed, small businesses decimated, hundreds of thousands of jobs lost, and people's lives turned upside down through mandates and through direct acts by what has happened with COVID-19. All was sacrificed on the altar of public safety, along with free speech, the right to peaceful assembly, the right to work, freedom of conscience, bodily autonomy,

government transparency and public trust in our institutions. Even worse has been the fundamental change in our relations with one another, a change clouded by suspicion and distrust. This new bill seeks to prolong all this.


It is also important to note that the government's transitional regulation-making powers under part 9 of the original Emergency Response Act 2020 will remain in place for a further two years after the expiry date. This means until near the end of 2024, presuming, of course, that the government does not extend the date again for a fifth time. When the Minister for Health said that Queensland must move from 'an elimination strategy to suppression strategy and eventually into learning to live with COVID-19', her words had an ominous ring. I suspect she did not mean it the way you or I might hope. In fact, the new mantra of 'learning to live with COVID' is starting to sound a lot like 'learning to live with the new normal'. Either way, we cannot afford to let this charade go on one day longer. The report titled *Fault lines: an independent review into Australia's response to COVID-19*, led by ex-public servant Peter Shergold, also found some lockdowns and border closures were not necessary and schools should have remained open. The review stated—

Governments and public servants were making decisions in a fog of uncertainty.

According to this independent review, Australia's response to COVID-19 exacerbated existing inequalities within society that included Queenslanders, which urges that overreach be avoided in dealing with future such crises. Those bearing the brunt of the pandemic included low socio-economic families, women, children, those in aged care, people with disabilities, temporary migrants and multicultural communities, the review says.

It says lockdowns and border closures should have been used less, schools kept open in the main and older people better protected in an aged-care system known to have pre-existing problems. Decision-making was not transparent enough.

The harm caused should stop now. We have a sunset clause and that is the end of this month. We should use it. It is time to end the emergency powers in Queensland. We just cannot go on living this way.

 **Mr SMITH** (Bundaberg—ALP) (5.23 pm): Sometimes you become dumbfounded in life, absolutely dumbfounded, and some of the comments we just heard would blow your mind if you were not already expecting them to come about. This suggestion that somehow lockdowns were more dangerous for the community—keeping people safe, away from a virus killing millions across Queensland, in the mind of the member for Mirani is dangerous. Dangerous! 'Don't let them go near COVID'—no, that would be dangerous.

It is absolutely ridiculous that the member stands up here and, a member of the committee, with all of the information that is presented before the member and continues along this line, suggesting that our response to COVID-19 was somehow damaging to our community.

Remember, before the borders opened, before the vaccine was rolled out in Queensland, there was a total of seven deaths in our state because of the strong health response that we took, the strong health response that also delivered a strong economic recovery plan because businesses such as up in my patch in Bundaberg in regional Queensland were not having to face constant lockdowns as we saw in New South Wales and Victoria, 20-plus weeks at a time, that decimated businesses down there because they failed to respond in time. The New South Wales Liberal government absolutely failed their people because they did not take a strong response like this government did.

In 2020, this government stood up and made sure that Queenslanders were kept safe. Yes, we did have to go through lockdowns; yes, we did have to have those tough times in lockdowns, but it kept our people safe and it meant that we were not getting the spread of the virus from the south-east corner throughout regional Queensland which meant largely we in regional Queensland were still able to go about our business and our trade. Our tourism numbers in Bundaberg actually increased on 2019 because Queenslanders were safe to travel around their state and Queenslanders did that. Instead of going overseas to Bali or anywhere else, they decided to get out there and see their state of Queensland, and they did it and they felt safe.

The member for Mirani talks about this danger and this fear, yet he should talk to real Queenslanders who overwhelmingly backed in a majority Labor government, with 52 seats. We won seats that we had not won in a long time, because Queenslanders felt safe under a Palaszczuk Labor government. That is why overwhelmingly Queensland's response to COVID-19 kept our economy strong. We have seen today as well, through the Treasurer's speech, just how well Queensland performed in comparison to New South Wales and Victoria especially!

Also, we need to mention our frontline health workers, how amazing they were and still are under such difficult times. There is a lot of pressure working in an emergency department, working as a paramedic, as well as our GPs and the pressure they have been working under, yet they rolled up their sleeves and went into work every single day, very early on not knowing the potential dangers to their own lives and their families' lives. They still showed up because they wanted to make sure that they kept to their personal creed, their personal oaths, to keep Queenslanders safe. Every single time we see a frontline health worker or a GP, absolutely we should thank them so much for all of the work they have done. I know that the chair of the committee, the member for Thuringowa, will support me in that, especially with his experience as a paramedic. It was our response that kept Queenslanders safe and we responded on the advice of health professionals.

To the member for Southport and the member for Mirani, through the chair, these are health professionals, not just bureaucrats. Do not belittle senior health professionals by trying to label them as bureaucrats, the same bureaucrats that the LNP marched out the door. They cannot wait to get into government so that they can sack health officials once more. That is what they want to do. They are not just bureaucrats, they are senior health professionals. We took their advice because that is the right way to respond to a global pandemic.

If I want legal advice, I will go to a lawyer—I will go to the member for Toohey. If I want paramedic advice, I will go to the member for Thuringowa. If I want health advice, I will not be going to the member for Mirani, that is for sure! I will not be going to the member for Mirani. That would be the most unhealthy health decision I could ever make in my life, I can tell you that, absolutely. I would rather have a senior health official make a public health direction than that elected member, let me tell you. Absolutely!

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Martin): Through the chair, please, member. Order, members.

Mr SMITH: I would take the health advice from a health professional when it comes to a health matter; that is what I would do. What we saw was the LNP opposition and how they responded to COVID-19. We need to make it very clear because this bill is about COVID-19 management. Their management was about opposing a government simply to try and win an election. That is what the LNP did. They tried to oppose every single step, every single measure, so that they could try and wedge away Queenslanders in winning an election. Well, how embarrassing was that! How bad is it when are you a candidate, you are working at a school, and even the ladies in the tuckshop are quoting, 'I can't believe they said 64 times to open the borders.' Can't believe it! They demanded 64 times that the borders be opened, allowing COVID-19 to rip through. Queenslanders overwhelmingly backed in the Palaszczuk Labor government.

What about the billboard? How successful was the billboard? Bring back 'Rabbit'; that is what I say. We even saw it at a federal level. The LNP opposed our mandates, our provisions, purely due to the federal election. The New South Wales government put in the vaccine mandates around restaurants and hospitality venues—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Bundaberg, it now being 5.30 pm, it is time for debate of private members' bills. I ask that you move that debate be now adjourned.


Debate, on motion of Mr Smith, adjourned.

FOOD (LABELLING OF SEAFOOD) AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from 12 October (see p. 2672), on motion of Mr Katter—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mr KATTER** (Traeger—KAP) (5.30 pm), continuing in reply: I rise to make what seemingly will be the final contribution to the debate on the Food (Labelling of Seafood) Amendment Bill. I will continue from my speech during the previous sitting week when I spoke a little about the politics of this topic, which is certainly very confusing. We have heard Murray Watt saying that we need to act on this federally. He agrees in principle that this is a worthwhile endeavour and that country of origin labelling is required—

Mr Andrew: It's the right thing to do.

Mr KATTER:—and the right thing to do. He said in principle that it is the right thing to do. Then the New South Wales state Labor Party twice said—and I will go through some of the things that were said—it is the right thing to do and we should be doing it here. Of course we should. In the Northern

Territory the Labor government said that this is a good thing to do. It has been operating there since 2018—no, it has been longer than that. They have had a formal review done that said what a roaring success it was. It was a glowing report.

An honourable member interjected.

Mr KATTER: It was 2007 when that was introduced. They have had glowing reports. Everyone speaks highly of it. There is certainly nothing negative coming out of the Northern Territory about it. It is confusing when we then try to introduce the same principle into the Queensland parliament and members are not supporting it.

I mentioned that the government made some respectful contributions, saying that this is a worthwhile endeavour and there is a lot of good sentiment. The problem in this place is we need to marry that sentiment with actions and something real for the people out there. The sentiment in here really means nothing unless we are converting that into something real that benefits them. Unfortunately, saying nice things in this place might make members feel a little bit better, but it does not help the people we are trying to help. We are paid to come in here and pass legislation and to help those people.

Honourable members can see why we are so frustrated when we try to introduce something that is simple, that does not cost the government anything and barely costs hospitality anything, despite the arguments about the exorbitant cost of printing paper and the exorbitant cost of chalk and Nikko markers on the board or glossy Chinese menus. It is so expensive to print a second set of those menus with an 'i' on it! That already is done to denote items are vegan and gluten free, but apparently it is so hard to add an 'i' on it! That is a big cost! Suddenly members are very interested in the costs facing small business. I thought we were debating small business. We were here defending small business from seven-day trade, which is the ongoing warfare between big business and small business. We were trying to defend small business against the government passing laws to open up seven-day trade. All of a sudden members are interested in backing small business on this, but not on the 30 per cent power increases they are looking at facing down the track. This is the one that is hurting; that is what the government is going to stand their ground on. That was the big argument that came out.

The cost of reprinting the menus and the paper was talked about—and I will say again the hospitality lobby group came under scrutiny, and there were good, objective contributions in the committee from all and sundry. Under scrutiny—and it did not all come from me—they said that the main cost would be in reprinting menus. Under further prosecution with words along the lines of, 'Does that mean printing 10, 50 or 100 new pages for the night?', he said, 'Yep, that can cost a lot of money, 100 pages reprinted for the night.' They will not be changing their seafood every night, but that is the big cost, and I recognise it is a cost. It is not nothing, but let's weigh this up against the benefits. Let's go through those benefits now.

Before honourable members cast their vote and think about this—because they will have to live with their decision forever after this. They can turn around and say, 'They are going to do it federally anyway.' They have it within their power now to change the outcome for those people who would benefit from this legislation, and that is most people in Queensland because they buy seafood, and we will get to that. I want to go through KAP's motivation for pushing this.

It simply came from people on the ground saying, 'Hey, we would really like some help here. We have a lot of pressures on us. This is an easy way the government can help us. Would you mind promoting this?' Fine. What are the drivers behind this? It is pro-Australian, and I would like to think all of us are trying to do whatever we can to stimulate Australian industry, particularly when we can align that with the environmental outcomes we all desire. The government places all these harsh measures and environmental standards on our fishing and aquaculture industries, but they are happy to allow other fish to be imported and have it labelled however the importer likes. They are happy to enable that. Some of the standards that apply to imports are horrible. The government is inadvertently enabling that by allowing people in the hospitality service to label fish however they like. That does not happen everywhere, but it does happen.

The bill is pro-Australian. It is what the public wants. We in the KAP are pretty focused on the industry side of things, but we also have to be mindful that everyone out there is a consumer—there are very few people we meet who are not consumers of seafood—and they deserve the right to know what they are putting in their mouth. That is a pretty simple proposition and I would say an implied right that people would expect to have. The problem is that most people do not even realise that what they are buying on occasion is not what it is labelled as. The example that is constantly given is Asian sea bass, which comes straight out of the Delta Mekong and can be labelled as barramundi in the shop. That is an insult for so many reasons. It is a traditional Australian Aboriginal word and this imported fish

that is grown under horrid conditions is being imported and sold at the same price, and that person is well within their rights to sell it at the same price. I have to be honest I love my fish, but I cannot always tell what it is. I am sure that quite often I am paying a price for something that is not what it should be. This will catch out some people. It will hurt some people who cannot get access to it. We have to think about what we are trying to achieve here. What are our aims and objectives? There might be some costs, but there are also some huge benefits.

Thirdly, it is practical and achievable. The KAP bring things into the parliament sometimes to make a statement or to generate a debate. The topic might be difficult, it might be a bit of a stretch, but we still want to debate it. However, this one was an easy one. This is one we thought would easily be taken up by the government because it had been done before in other states, it had performed successfully and the sentiment seemed to be positive everywhere. We then have to ask: why are we not supporting it here tonight? Is it because of the cost of the reprinting of menus or the cost of the chalk on the seafood board at the seafood shop? I am going to go out on a limb and say I think there is a bit of politics being played. It is practical and achievable.

Here are a few facts I want to go over before the vote is cast.

A government member interjected.

Mr KATTER: This is nowhere near the end of my speech. I am not sure where that came from.

A government member interjected.

Mr KATTER: Sorry, my apologies. In 2019-20 a total of 334,615 tonnes of seafood was consumed in Australia, equating to 12.4 kilograms per person. Unfortunately, 62 per cent of this consumed seafood was imported. I heard a lot in the debate, 'If you cannot access it, tough luck. That is an impost on the people who cannot access it.'

Of course that is a problem, but how do you stimulate more production? You want to drive demand to lift production—that is how it works. As stated in the report that was done on the Northern Territory review, we have the ability to enhance the value of our locally produced product by comparing it to the inferior overseas product, but those opposite are denying us the opportunity to do that. We have enormous capacity in aquaculture, let alone fishing. There are attacks on wild fishing. Here was one opportunity to throw both industries a bone and say, 'Here is an easy way, we are going to stimulate things and help you out.' That would have gone a long way towards improving the relationship between the seafood industry and the government, but that opportunity has gone.

On average in Australia we import 60 to 70 per cent of our seafood per year. We are now a net seafood importer; we never used to be. People must wonder how that is possible. A lot of the demand is driven by the fact that people think that if they could obtain the decent fish that they wanted they would pay for it, but there is no recognition of locally-grown products.

Returning to the Northern Territory example, in 2007-08 they introduced a similar scheme. There was no evidence in the Northern Territory report that were detrimental effects on small business. I am sure that they would have manifested in some form and that would have made its way into this debate if they existed, considering the scheme has been operating for so long. It is worthwhile remembering that the provisions in this bill were introduced into the retail industry, which was a cost and an impost on them, but we need to expand it one step further into hospitality.

Biosecurity, which has not been talked about much in the debate, is an enormous issue. We have seen evidence of this through white spot in prawns. Importing seafood brings with it risks. They have inferior standards overseas, but you enable this risk when you do not give us a leg up in our domestic industry and deny us that right. The example of the high importation rate of seafood was highlighted when recent reports indicated that ISKNV-like and SGIV viral DNA—showing severe fish viruses—were present in uncooked and head-on eviscerated non-salmonid finfish commodities imported into Australia at a prevalence greater than five per cent. It is happening. There is seafood being imported now that represents a threat to our local fishing stocks. This was a way to try to restrict that. That experience highlights the importance of having our standards and biosecurity compliance. The example I gave highlights the noncompliance we have and the need to restrict those imports as best we can.

One of the other points that was raised in the debate surrounded the technical issues of operating through the Food Act. Why did that not pose a problem in New South Wales or the Northern Territory?

Ms Boyd interjected.

Mr KATTER: I listened to the contribution of the member for Pine Rivers and I was quite confused. You offered all this great sentiment and you have the vast resources of government, but you say you cannot find a way to do this because it does not fit into the Food Act. Is that the reason you

cannot do it? We can do it federally and in the Northern Territory and New South Wales, but we cannot do it here for that reason. Do not give me the excuse—offer it to the producers in your own electorate. I will be giving you a lot opportunity in your local media to explain that.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Martin): Member, direct your comments through the chair please.

Mr KATTER: Those members who want to vote against this will have plenty of opportunities to explain it to their electorates after they vote on the bill. I said I would mention that the member for Bundaberg was a great passenger on the plane. We had a good conversation, thank you very much. There may be some imposts on the poor fish and chip shop owner; that point is not without merit. The poor aquaculture farmer and the poor fishermen are forced under the strict environmental conditions in this country—which you could say are a good thing—to now compete with overseas imports. It might be the minority, but there will be some people who are pricing fish that is imported and people are buying it, paying a price for it, and thinking it is local domestic catch. We can never escape that fact because if they have to import, they are going to try to get the best price they can. That will always be a problem. I do not see how putting that ‘i’ on the menu is a big impost. I fail to see how that is a big impost.

We were talking about technicalities and people were saying that this cannot be done through the bill. We saw the ethanol mandate bill passed by this place. Not one fine has been issued as a result of that. There have been a lot of policies that I have seen go through this House that send a signal. That one was not successful in sending a signal because clearly people saw the government was not serious. There have been a lot of things in this place where the government has sent the signal and without policing it, it has generated a change in behaviour. If those opposite want to say it will be difficult to police and it will create dramas—if they want to create those excuses—that is fine but it would not hurt to send a signal to those industries to say we are trying to do the right thing.

We have a lot of local operators. There are small businesses—Chinese restaurants, fish and chip shops and pubs—that are battling away. We have Ben Heath at Innisfail Seafood and Lindsey Hughes at Farmer Meets Foodie. A lot of people are battling away out there trying to showcase local products, attract that premium and benefit from that so it can lift our market. Again, if we do not pass this bill then we deny them the opportunity to do that.

In terms of economic nationalism, we should be thinking about being able to feed ourselves and ways to stimulate the economy. There was a lot of talk through the COVID pandemic about being more self-sufficient. There was a large appetite generated throughout that period in terms of what we can do domestically for our protein. Here is a terrific source of protein that we have available, whether through wild catch or in aquaculture. There are amazing opportunities, but it needs to be stimulated. That is the space where government has to be. We have not said throw millions of dollars into the industry to subsidise it or stimulate it; we are saying here is a passive way that is cost effective for taxpayers.

I will table the position that was taken by the Premier and the agriculture minister prior to Christmas where the sentiment towards fisheries was that we need to stimulate production and support our fisheries.

Tabled paper: Joint media statement, dated 5 December 2021, by the Premier and Minister for the Olympics, Hon. Anastacia Palaszczuk, and the Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities, Hon. Mark Furner, titled ‘Fill n’ Chill with plenty of Queensland Seafood this Christmas’ [\[1740\]](#).

That is a good sentiment to promote. I find it very confusing to marry that sentiment up with this passive way of trying to stimulate the industry. I think this is a constructive method that is endorsed across most of Australia. Surprisingly, we find this too hard. With all of the resources of government and all of the people in government, there are no amendments to improve this bill or modify it to make it work. They say, ‘We cannot do it.’

To use the words of Labor shadow minister for primary industries Jenny Aitchison—

Given the choice I think most people in New South Wales would choose to buy locally caught fish, but the Nationals refuse to back local fishers. The Northern Territory has done it and the Queensland LNP have advocated for it. Even the New South Wales Nationals and Liberals promised it back in 2016, but the New South Wales Nationals and Liberals have failed to deliver on this or their long-promised industry marketing packages. It’s disgraceful that in fish and chip shops across New South Wales we see collateral from the Queensland government promoting Australian seafood but nothing from the New South Wales government.

I read that because there are mixed messages in amongst that and I feel that we owe the people better. We owe consumers better and we owe the producers better. We may disagree about a lot of things in this House, but we are generally trying to be constructive here with the government and do something good for the state and it is disappointing that people will be let down in that respect.

Finally, I want to thank a lot of the people who contributed to getting us where we are today. Janis Rossiter is a passionate Queenslander who outlined how disappointing it is how much we import fish and that that should be turned around. The Australian Council of Prawn Fisheries supported this endeavour heavily and the country-of-origin labelling and outlined that COVID-19 served to reinforce Australians' desire for the origin of their food in their quest to seek out local food and to be self-sufficient. Thanks also to Seafood Industry Australia, the Australian Prawn Farmers Association, the Queensland Seafood Industry Association and the Australian Barramundi Farmers Association. We run across these guys all the time and we saw Tim Bade in Townsville on National Barra Day last Friday. We were saying, 'Let's eat domestically produced barramundi.' They said, 'How do you think the bill's going to go?' It is always exactly the same response: a shake of the head. They ask, 'Why? Why could they possibly not support this?'

We all know why and it is disappointing that there are some people in this House who would vote another way if we did not have this rigid party structure pulling people in despite the fact that we are denying Queenslanders some good outcomes and some productive legislation that we could work together on. That is not the path the government chose to take here.

I forgot to mention one other person, David Wren at Karumba. We had a great visit with him. He is an enormously progressive fisherman who has tried to work in with the government and we had the benefit of going out there for the day. Again, I will be explaining to people like David and saying, 'We couldn't get it across the line, mate, I'm sorry. You've taken a lot of hits over the years and you feel like you're being battered from pillar to post and you feel like the world's against you and you're working hard up there in the hot sun trying to make a living and we can't help you. We tried to do something to stimulate you, but we didn't get it across the line.' I think we all look bad in this. I really hope the government reconsiders its decision or individuals within the government consider what is the right thing to do here by their electorates, not by their party. I will certainly be doing my best to let everyone in the Queensland public know how people voted on this and they can do their best to explain to them why they voted that way. With that, I commend the bill to the House.

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

AYES, 37:

LNP, 31—Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Crandon, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Gerber, Hart, Head, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister, Mander, McDonald, Mickelberg, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, O'Connor, Perrett, Powell, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Watts, Weir.

Grn, 2—Berkman, MacMahon.

KAP, 3—Dametto, Katter, Knuth.

PHON, 1—Andrew.

NOES, 48:

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

Pairs: Farmer, Purdie; A. King, Stevens; McMillan, Camm.


Resolved in the negative.

PUBLIC HEALTH AND OTHER LEGISLATION (COVID-19 MANAGEMENT) AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from p. 2965, on motion of Mrs D'Ath—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mr SMITH** (Bundaberg—ALP) (5.59 pm), continuing: It is good to be back on my feet. Before the debate was adjourned I was talking about how this bill is about public management and I listed through what our government did in terms of the public management and the LNP's opposition. I was saying how for the federal Morrison LNP government it was quite all right for New South Wales to put mandates in, but as soon as Queensland went to do it Scott Morrison opposed it completely—opposed it completely.

The federal member for Hinkler demanded that the mandates be lifted. It was all right for the Liberal government in New South Wales to finally take a measure that kept its people safe, but when it came to Queensland the federal LNP wanted to scrap it. We did not hear anything from the state LNP as to why this was important to make sure that Queenslanders remained safe. As I said, the LNP in this state opposed the responsible measures to COVID every step of the way simply because it is so used to that title of 'opposition'. It is opposition by name and opposition by nature over there, and that is all that it will do. It will oppose sensible, good reform on the advice of health officials simply for the sake of opposing it.

As mentioned by the member for Thuringowa, in the early days we saw criticism of senior health officials such as Dr Jeannette Young. Senior health officials were labelled as power hungry bureaucrats and punch-drunk. That was not said by some bizarre member on the crossbench, that was said by the now Leader of the Opposition. The man who has said he would be the next Premier was talking about the now Governor being a punch-drunk, power hungry bureaucrat. If you are a senior bureaucrat are you not terrified of the Leader of the Opposition ever becoming the Premier? He ruled out being savage—he will still cut, he will just not be savage. He will be looking for what he calls the power hungry, punch-drunk bureaucrats. He will be chasing after them. The member for Broadwater is a disgrace. He tries to pitch himself as a leader yet he attacks our now Governor as power hungry and punch-drunk. He was backed in by the member for Everton. That is how much credibility the LNP has when it comes to health.

In terms of the public health direction, we hear from the LNP that the public health direction should not be given by someone in health. Those opposite say we should not have someone in charge of health make a health direction—that would be ludicrous in their mind—it should be somebody who does not have any degree in health. The public health direction can be subject to disallowance in the parliament. It can be subject to disallowance by the elected officials that the LNP members are talking about. There is absolutely no credibility in their argument that the Chief Health Officer should not be allowed to make a public health direction. Why would we not have the Chief Health Officer make a public health direction? I will wait for an interjection.

Mr Andrew interjected.

Mr SMITH: That was good. At least the member for Mirani stood up. The LNP went to sleep on this one. Of course, we will never go to the member for Mirani for health advice. If you ever want health advice please do not go to the member for Mirani. This is good, sensible reform. It is meeting the needs of Queenslanders and it is making sure that we do not listen to the elected officials on the other side when it comes to health.



Mr O'CONNOR (Bonney—LNP) (6.03 pm): I will start by thanking my fellow committee members and our amazing support staff for all their work on their investigation into this legislation. It was nice to hear that the member for Thuringowa used to be a paramedic. A lot of members did not know that. I can say, on behalf of this side of the House, that we will be doing everything we can to make sure he goes back to being a paramedic full-time from November 2024. We will certainly need every one we can get to fix the nation's worst ramping that we have in this state.

As the shadow health minister outlined, the opposition has carefully considered its position on this legislation and we have decided that we will not be supporting this bill. Simply put, it is unnecessary. Our state, our nation and the world have moved on from these sorts of measures, even in the watered down and constrained manner proposed here. The COVID-19 Emergency Response Act 2020 should just be allowed to expire on 31 October.

COVID-19 had a devastating impact on so many people in my community, not just on those who lost loved ones to the virus but to the hundreds if not thousands of people from my part of the Gold Coast who were not able to see their family and friends due to border closures. It was an incredibly tough time for so many small businesses, for so many sole traders—for all workers, in fact—and in particular our health workers who went above and beyond under conditions they could never have imagined, and especially those who stepped up when the borders did open and cases surged last December and at the beginning of this year.

We have come so far from back then. We are so far from a year and a bit before that when we did not have a vaccine to protect us from the worst impacts of this virus. If something does come up, if there is a new variant or if there is a need to impose extraordinary measures like these again, we can come back to parliament. We are not afraid of sitting in this House. We actually think we do not do it often enough. We would be the first to support an emergency session being called to swiftly bring up any necessary measures the government thought we needed to manage any resurgence of the

pandemic or, indeed, any new pandemic threat. Of course, this happened just a few weeks ago with the death of the Queen. With a couple of days notice, the Leader of the House wrote to the Speaker to request a special sitting to pass legislation to enact a public holiday. If it was good enough for a day off then we can at the very least have this standard for legislation which has the potential to impact the lives of so many people.

Everyone should, of course, be vaccinated. I have been a vocal advocate for this since the fridge was first installed at the Gold Coast University Hospital back in February last year and I had a tour with a very excited John Gerrard when the rollout started. It should, of course, be enforced in particular jobs, such as with health workers, but we do not need this legislation to enforce mandates like this. It can be a condition of employment. That is exactly what Queensland Health does for many roles right now. I do note the requirement in this bill for the Chief Health Officer, when giving a public health direction, to prepare and publish a justification statement explaining the reasons for the health direction and its compatibility with human rights within five days of the direction being issued. This statement must also then be tabled in parliament within 21 days and it also requires scrutiny by a portfolio committee.

If only someone had raised the need for this in 2020 when the original bill went through this place. Of course, we did. The opposition has consistently been vocal on the need for these sorts of transparency and accountability measures. It should not have taken this long for them to be proposed. We have never seen powers like these exercised and they should have been better scrutinised at the time they were most relevant to Queenslanders. It is incredibly disappointing that the government is only just bringing them in now when I do not think even they think we will need to put these further powers in place again. They did not support measures like these when they were needed so, frankly, this is a meaningless cop-out.

The time has come for us to fully revert to allowing people to use their common sense, to trust individuals to do the right thing. That is exactly why the mandatory isolation period has been removed around the nation. In relation to the measures in place around spitting and coughing, as the shadow minister outlined, the justice system already deals with this and it is the more appropriate way of doing that.

My main reason for opposing this bill is that the situation has changed. Since 14 October people who get infected with COVID-19 have not been required to isolate. That was a National Cabinet decision. The health minister and several members have said the legislation before us is all about health advice, but that decision to remove the mandatory isolation period was made by Prime Minister Albanese. Importantly, it was made without consulting the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee, the AHPPC. It was just made by consulting the Chief Medical Officer. The quote that the Prime Minister gave at the time was—

... we have a responsibility to listen to the health advice but we also have a responsibility to make decisions which are proportionate. That is what we have done.

I table that article for the benefit of members.

Tabled paper: Article from *The Conversation*, dated 30 September 2022, titled 'View from The Hill: national cabinet drops mandatory isolation, dumping "COVID exceptionalism"' [[1741](#)].

The article goes into further detail on how this was not taken to that full committee of chief health officers from across the nation. It was simply done by the Prime Minister on the advice of the Chief Medical Officer and was advice that he requested because there was not agreement amongst the AHPPC. We saw that with the decrease in isolation requirements announced a couple of weeks before that.

Can members imagine if the former federal LNP government had done that? Imagine if they had made an arbitrary decision without consulting the AHPPC. As with the calls for fifty-fifty health funding, we would have seen motions moved in this House. There would have been absolute riots. Regardless, it was the right decision and now Queensland Health strongly recommends that people stay home until their symptoms go away, to not visit healthcare facilities, to avoid entering aged or disability care facilities and to wear masks indoors. The fact that none of that is mandatory is the greatest indication of how far we have come.

To conclude, this bill is unnecessary. It is looking backwards when we are all moving forwards, away from the pandemic. It is not the best way to manage a resurgence of the virus if that were to happen. I do not support the bill.



Mr McCALLUM (Bundamba—ALP) (6.10 pm): I rise in support of the Public Health and Other Legislation (COVID-19 Management) Amendment Bill. It certainly has been a long couple of years with the pandemic here in Queensland, right across the nation and, indeed, right across the globe. In

Queensland we have seen the terrible impacts of COVID-19 and around the world millions of people have passed away. We have seen the absolutely catastrophic impacts on our economy, our supply chains and our workforce. It has been truly a test of our resilience as a state, as a nation and as a people.

However, in Queensland we have been world leaders in our response to the global pandemic. We have done that because we have taken action and based policies on expert health advice under the strong leadership of the Premier. That expert independent health advice puts the safety of Queenslanders first. During the worst of the pandemic, in Queensland we were able to enjoy relative safety and freedom far in excess of what we saw in other states such as New South Wales and Victoria, for example, which experienced extended lockdowns, and certainly compared to what we saw in other jurisdictions around the world, such as the United Kingdom and the United States. The way that the Queensland community responded to the challenges thrown at us during the pandemic has been absolutely world-leading.

That said, I would like to take a moment to acknowledge those who lost loved ones during the pandemic in Queensland. Whilst we had relatively low mortality rates, that does not make it any easier for the families and loved ones of those who passed. I also take this time to thank our frontline health workers and all health staff. They did an absolutely magnificent job throughout the pandemic. I thank all Queenslanders, including those in my local community of Bundamba, who came out to be vaccinated. They followed the health advice and protected themselves, protected their loved ones and protected their local communities by getting vaccinated.

Over this time and because of our high vaccination rates, despite the challenges with vaccine availability and the rollout, we have been able to move from the emergency phase to a management phase of the COVID pandemic, which is what this bill is about. The fact is that COVID-19 remains a concern. It is going to continue to circulate in our communities. It is out there right now. According to health advice, we are likely to experience ongoing waves of infection. It still has the potential to place a very significant burden on our health system. In fact, we saw that earlier this year when we had three waves of infection. During the peak of the most recent wave, we saw record numbers of patients in our hospitals and record numbers of workers, including health staff, had to take time off due to the impacts of COVID. Of course, there is also the potential that other more dangerous or vaccine-resistant strains of COVID-19 could emerge. That is why a framework for a targeted and proportionate response that will allow us to manage future impacts of COVID is so important.


The current temporary emergency framework for COVID is due to expire in a couple of weeks, on 31 October. In its place, this bill proposes to establish a new framework in the Public Health Act to manage COVID-19 until 31 October 2023. Effectively, it proposes a step-down approach. It will enable us to end the public health emergency that we have currently declared and move to a more balanced public health framework to manage COVID-19 over the next 12 months. The bill proposes to retain three main measures until the end of October next year: quarantine for people with COVID and symptomatic close contacts, if required; requirements around masks; and vaccination requirements for workers in particular settings. Those are the measures that have proven most effective in responding to the risks of COVID-19 in our current environment. Those are the things that have worked to date. They are also measures that are likely to be needed to give effect to any decisions of National Cabinet or the advice that may come from national health advisory bodies. The powers are subject to limitations and safeguards to ensure that public health directions are proportionate, are subject to parliamentary and public scrutiny and, indeed, are compatible with the Queensland Human Rights Act.

We have heard some contributions, particularly from those opposite, saying that we should just let the current framework expire, declare the end of the pandemic from a public health framework point of view and let people manage the risks going forward. It is clear that the virus is simply too unpredictable to remove all of the health framework and rely solely on self-management strategies at this time.

As I said, there remains the possibility that new variants could emerge that might be more severe or better at evading vaccines. The reality is that that could place the community, especially vulnerable people, at serious risk and place a further strain on the health system. While our Queensland health system is extremely resilient, it is still recovering from the cumulative impacts of COVID-19 and we saw that with the recent resurgence in cases over the winter months this year. The bill currently before the House contains the measures that are most likely to be needed to manage any future waves, outbreaks or new variants as well as help protect our health system and protect the most vulnerable in our communities for the next 12 months.


Most stakeholders who submitted to this bill welcomed the balanced and measured step-down in powers and the inclusion of greater parliamentary oversight and other safeguards that are contained in this bill in terms of any of the public health directions that the Chief Health Officer may make. We have heard very clearly that they can be brought before the parliament and have oversight by a committee.

Ultimately, the bill does strike a balance in retaining the effective powers that are most likely to be needed to respond to risks posed by COVID going forward whilst ensuring that these powers are proportionate and recognising the role of individuals and the community to help manage risks. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (6.20 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the debate of the Public Health and Other Legislation (COVID-19 Management) Amendment Bill 2022. My contribution can be summed up in one simple word: enough. The community of the electorate of Glass House and the communities of Queensland have simply had enough. I acknowledge, as was raised by the previous speaker and a number of other speakers, that many of the things that the LNP opposition have been calling for all along this long journey, particularly around transparency with the public and oversight by the parliament, are finally being brought into legislation. That begs the question: why could that not have been done sooner? If it can be done now, why could it not have been done sooner? We called for this parliament to have more say in the directions that were being given to the public. We called for the government to be more transparent in explaining why they were making the decisions they were making. They refused to do either. They are finally putting some of that into legislation today.

We do note—this is why again I say ‘enough’—that this legislation brings in new temporary powers to make and enforce public health directions to manage COVID-19 as a notifiable condition under the Public Health Act until 31 October 2023—another 12 months—and new procedures and safeguards for issuing public health directions for COVID-19.

What is concerning us and a number of the submitters to the committee’s consideration of this bill are a number of things but particularly two. The first is that ‘serious risk’ is not defined in the bill. That does leave matters open to interpretation. That is outlined in the executive summary of the committee’s report. The second is that we are empowering the Chief Health Officer to give public health directions, rather than a minister, an elected representative or indeed this House. On those two grounds, I know that the people of Glass House will continue to have concerns. On those two grounds alone, I know that the people of Glass House will echo what I am saying: enough. On those two grounds, I cannot support this legislation.

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (6.23 pm): I rise to speak to the COVID bill. In doing so, I echo the sentiments of other members of the House, including the member for Thuringowa, who I today learned for the very first time apparently used to work in the health services—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Lister): You wouldn’t be misleading the House, would you, member for Mount Ommaney?

Ms PUGH: I certainly would not want to reflect on the chair. I understand that apparently the member for Thuringowa used to work in the health services in some capacity at some point in his career. In all seriousness, I thank every single person who has contributed in some way, shape or form to the health response and to the general community’s health over the past few years. In addition to COVID, of course, people had to continue to manage their chronic diseases, give birth—Mr Deputy Speaker Lister, you and I both know the joys of going through that particular experience during the COVID pandemic—or face other health challenges.

Over the past few years we have spoken in this place many times about the ongoing impacts of COVID in all of our communities. It has hit differently in all of our communities in different ways. It has been incredibly difficult and challenging for most Queenslanders for many reasons. I mention the Mental Health Select Committee report. Members started making contributions to the debate of that report last week and we will hear some more this week. We know that the mental health impacts of COVID are real and ongoing.

I suspect that few issues have generated more questions or correspondence from our communities than COVID and the accompanying restrictions. Members right across the political spectrum, I am confident, would have received questions, just as I did, about all kinds of things related to COVID—how it might impact their wedding plans or their overseas trip to see family or, in cases of family tragedy, how they can get to funerals. I thank my community and all Queenslanders for their forbearance in what were some incredibly difficult and challenging situations made all the more difficult and challenging by a global pandemic.

In a more general sense, my community were very clear with me in the main that they understood the reasons the restrictions were in place, but they wanted to understand a bit about the process for how the stronger measures would be phased out when the time came. One of the key issues that was raised was what limitations and safeguards will be in place around the scrutiny and human rights aspects of these limitations. When we introduced them we certainly did flag that they were extraordinary measures for the extraordinary time we have all been through over the past few years.

The bill provides the Chief Health Officer with limited and targeted powers to manage the ongoing risks of COVID-19. These powers are much narrower than those exercised during the emergency phases of the pandemic. This reduces the potential impacts on individuals and minimises any potential limitations on human rights. We know that the test for when the Chief Health Officer may issue a public health direction has been strengthened. A direction may only be issued if it is reasonably necessary to prevent or respond to a serious risk to the health system or the community from COVID-19 or to give effect to the decisions of National Cabinet or advice of a COVID-19 advisory body, and this power rests with the Chief Health Officer and the Chief Health Officer alone. This power cannot be delegated by the Chief Health Officer.

The bill also works to increase scrutiny and transparency of decision-making. The Chief Health Officer will be required now to publish a statement explaining and justifying to the community each direction. The justification statement will set out the reasons for making the direction and it will also include the Chief Health Officer's assessment of whether the direction is compatible with human rights under Queensland's current legislation. Those directions will also be tabled in parliament along with the CHO's statement. If it is not tabled, it will cease to have effect.

Upon tabling, the direction and justification will be referred to the parliamentary committee in the same way as subordinate legislation. Directions may be the subject of a disallowance motion within 14 days, and they do expire after 90 days. They must be revoked as soon as they no longer meet the criteria for being issued. I think what we are seeing here is a really clear scaling down, ensuring that we still have those reserve powers in place but also transparency—we have heard about the real importance of transparency—and that any restrictions are only there for the duration they are strictly required. I think that is really important.


We all know and we have all seen over the past few years that COVID-19 is unpredictable. None of us here in this place has a crystal ball, although I am sure that the CHO would absolutely love one. There is a risk that the pandemic could worsen in the future or that a new threat could be identified, as we have seen the strains mutate at what feels like breakneck speed. If that happened we might need to declare a new public health emergency, but this still will not invoke the COVID-19 emergency powers from previous legislation that we have passed through this House.

If the situation in Queensland were to change so significantly that the targeted powers in this bill were no longer sufficient to manage COVID-19, we can always do as we have done in the past and enact legislation to provide those additional powers that may be required. We all recall that this is exactly what our parliament did in early 2020 at the outset of the pandemic. This would be an extraordinary step and presumably one the parliament would only take if it were necessary to protect the community from a very serious threat to public health. The reason the bill does not propose permanent measures is because at this point the risks and impact and severity of COVID over the long term still remain uncertain, and we believe that it may be premature to enact permanent laws in response to COVID at this time.

In terms of permanent pandemic laws, our experience with COVID has shown that it is really difficult to predict what powers may be needed to respond to a pandemic, and the types of powers we needed to respond to COVID-19 previously are different to the ones we think we will need in the future. I think this very clearly outlines for Queenslanders going forward as we manage this health challenge into the future the clear and transparent steps that we are proposing in this parliament to ensure that COVID-19 is managed in a really clear and very responsible way while also ensuring the CHO is able to clearly outline for Queenslanders any future steps that need to be taken now. I am sure that I speak for everybody in this House when I say that I certainly hope that those powers and those restrictions are never needed.

The point we all keep coming back to is that none of us has a crystal ball. That could not have been truer all the way back in 2020 when our Premier had to make a decision about the way we were going to manage the pandemic going forward. I am really proud to be part of a government that took strong steps really early to manage this pandemic. We all know that it could have been so much worse in Queensland. I am incredibly proud of the strong leadership that our Premier and the leadership team

showed in managing the COVID-19 pandemic. It is because of that fantastic work we are in this strong position today, because we know that a strong health response leads to good economic outcomes. I certainly commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (6.32 pm): On behalf of the opposition I rise to address the Public Health and Other Legislation (COVID-19 Management) Amendment Bill 2022. As we have heard from the shadow minister, the LNP is opposing this bill. The objective of the bill is to provide for continued management of COVID-19 in Queensland by replacing the temporary emergency legislative framework which was enacted to manage the response to the pandemic with: firstly, new temporary powers to make and enforce public health directions to manage COVID-19 as a notifiable condition under the Public Health Act 2005 until 31 October 2023; and secondly, to provide new procedures and safeguards for issuing public health directions for COVID-19 and extended expiry date of up to 12 months to 31 October 2023 for the temporary COVID-19 emergency measures in the Corrective Services Act 2006.

A public health emergency was declared for all of Queensland under section 319 of the Public Health Act on 29 January 2020 as a result of the outbreak of COVID-19. Although COVID-19 was prescribed as a controlled notifiable condition under the Public Health Act on 30 June 2020, the disease has been managed as a public health emergency since that time. A raft of temporary legislation was enacted to support the public health, institutional and economic response to COVID-19 in Queensland. Most temporary amendments expired on 30 April 2022, including extraordinary regulations and statutory instruments made in accordance with the modification framework under the COVID-19 Emergency Response Act 2020. In its present form the temporary legislative framework is due to expire 31 October 2022 or earlier if the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services ends the public health emergency.

As a member of the opposition and as my colleagues have said, I wish to place on record that the COVID-19 pandemic has caused significant disruption and upheaval to the lives of Queenslanders. My electorate of Surfers Paradise and City of the Gold Coast were severely impacted by the restrictions the government implemented at the height of the pandemic. From international and domestic border restrictions to staffing and employment issues, many businesses and constituents in my electorate—Australia's favourite tourist destination—suffered significantly. Small businesses have been through terrible times over the last two times with COVID lockdowns and restrictions. The requirements to check vaccinations, let staff go who were unvaccinated and meet every stipulation the Labor government created, often at a moment's notice, had a significant and stressful impact on business owners and staff. With more restrictions being wound back both in Queensland and nationally, we believe it is extremely difficult to justify to the community why legislation such as this bill should be passed in the Queensland parliament. It is for this reason that the LNP will not be supporting this bill.

The position which Queensland now finds itself in is very different to when this House debated a similar extension earlier this year. More than 90 per cent of our state's adult population has now received two doses of the COVID-19 vaccine and many more Queenslanders have chosen to have a third and fourth vaccination. Fewer of us in our social circles would know many associates who have not had COVID. COVID-19 is no longer an unknown enemy on the horizon; it is something we all now live with every single day. Many Queenslanders are again able to enjoy mixing throughout our communities and attend significant events such as weddings, funerals sporting events, fetes and other things, thankfully without restriction.


We acknowledge and accept that COVID-19 still circulates widely amongst our communities. We also acknowledge that as a state, as a society, we must be prepared for a potential new variant of the virus and the risks which that could bring. That risk and that threat is likely to remain with us for some time yet, but the situation has rapidly evolved from where we once were. We cannot go on living indefinitely with these types of legislative frameworks in place. We must be prepared, but our response must be proportionate to the risk at hand.

As it stands, there are now very few COVID-19 restrictions which impact Queensland life. That is a good thing, and it is reasonable given the risk and the threat of the virus to our way of life because they have significantly subsided since the beginning of this year. There are now only three Chief Health Officer public health directions in effect in Queensland: firstly, COVID-19 Vaccination Requirements for Workers in Residential Aged Care and Disability Accommodation Services Direction; secondly, Protecting Public Officials and Workers (Spitting, Coughing and Sneezing) Direction (No. 3); and thirdly, Public Health Face Mask Requirements Direction (No. 6). These directions are quite self-explanatory and the last remnants of a time which has come and gone. Those three directions are now largely

self-governed or are simply common sense. As I circulate throughout the community I see firsthand many businesses and organisations that are now choosing which, if any, COVID-19 restrictions they choose to enforce. Most have none, which is now entirely lawful in almost all sectors and industries.

Queenslanders have learned to live with the virus. They have learned to take careful responsibility when going about their daily lives. No-one has a crystal ball, as I know the member for Mount Ommaney said, and if the situation were to arise where another new variant begins to spread through the community which poses a significant threat to public health, parliament could be swiftly recalled to pass the necessary laws to protect Queenslanders. We all recall parliament in the last couple of months being recalled on short notice following the passing of the late Queen Elizabeth II. If we can recall the parliament to legislate a holiday, we surely can all get together to pass laws to protect us from a new threat should it ever remerge. If there is ever a need to change laws to strength our response and protect the public health of Queenslanders the opposition will never stand in the way of the parliament sitting to consider such laws.

I strongly agree with the views of Mr Michael Cope, the president of the Queensland Council for Civil Liberties, and their submission that Queensland's emergency powers should be allowed to expire on 31 October 2022 as they are scheduled to do. The opposition believes the time for legislation such as this has come and gone until such a time that a new public health emergency arises. In conclusion, I want to thank the members of the Health and Environment Committee and the committee secretariat for their report and the shadow minister and other members for their contributions.

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (6.39 pm): The people of Queensland have had minimal disruption to their lives compared to other states and countries during the COVID-19 pandemic because of the swift measures that were put in place by Premier Palaszczuk, health ministers Yvette D'Ath and Steven Miles, and our chief health officers, Dr Jeannette Young and Dr John Gerrard. We also had unwavering support from all of our health workers, our GPs, our hospital workers and our paramedics out on the road. They all pulled together to make sure we were kept safe.

I am sure everybody in the House could reflect on how good our communities were. It was wonderful to see how everybody wanted to look after each other and how when they needed to they socially distanced without grumbling. They put on their masks to keep others safe and they rolled up their sleeves and got vaccinated. All the community groups out there made sure they kept their services going to keep our most vulnerable safe. For instance, Meals on Wheels changed the way they delivered their service to make sure they could safely go to the homes of the elderly and deliver those meals. I congratulate all of those groups in our community that got out there and looked after each other.

One thing we all know is that our economy has continued to grow. Businesses see Queensland as a safe place to set up because of our response to COVID. This sentiment is backed by the latest CommSec report listing Queensland as having the strongest economy of all the states in Australia. Our population is also booming. Australians see Queensland as a safe place to live. Why? It is because of the quick and sensible handling of the pandemic. When the hard decisions needed to be made, they were made.

Queensland was the first state to declare a public health emergency on 29 January 2020 under section 319 of the Public Health Act 2005 due to COVID-19. The public health emergency has been extended on several occasions by regulation, most recently until 22 September 2022.

To support Queensland's response to the public health emergency, temporary amendments were made to the Public Health Act to provide the Chief Health Officer and emergency officers with extraordinary powers to contain and respond to the spread of COVID-19. This temporary legislative framework has been integral to Queensland's successful response to COVID-19, including immediate efforts to eliminate and suppress the virus and ongoing strategies to manage the endemic risks of COVID-19. The ability to respond quickly and flexibly over the course of the public health emergency has enabled Queensland to avoid significant disruption to daily life while preventing thousands of cases, keeping the community safe and ultimately saving lives.

Unless further extended by an act of parliament, the temporary emergency framework will expire on 31 October 2022 or earlier if the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services ends the public health emergency. Based on the current trajectory of COVID-19 and Queensland's strategy for managing the next stage of the public health emergency, it is unlikely the full suite of emergency powers will be necessary after October this year to manage the public health response. Accordingly, it is proposed not to further extend the current emergency legislative framework for COVID-19.

There are those out there who believe the virus has gone away and that it is no longer a threat. They are calling for provisions to be scrapped. A friend of mine in Mackay is heading back to his home town down south this week to bury his mate. They had been close friends since growing up together


and remained close friends through life's ups and downs. Jeff's mate succumbed to COVID complications. He was in his late 60s. COVID is real; it is still active. The virus is still too unpredictable and too new. We do not know what variants will emerge and how they will affect the population and how the current vaccines will react. The most important thing we can do as legislators is protect the vulnerable members of our community. We do not want to lose any people unnecessarily. Our health system was put to the test during the winter surges of COVID-19 cases. Although the system is agile, we need to give it an opportunity to bounce back and get back on track. We need to give our health workers a chance to get back to a pre-COVID normal.

The existing emergency framework for COVID will expire on 31 October. That is why we need this bill to insert a new framework into the Public Health Act 2005 to manage the ongoing threat of COVID-19 until 31 October 2023. These emergency provisions are needed for the next 12 months. This is our safety net as we step down from the pandemic. This is the next stage of living with COVID safely and ending our health emergency. As we wind back emergency powers, the Chief Health Officer will have limited and targeted powers to manage any risk. These powers are much narrower than those exercised during the emergency phase of the pandemic. This reduces the potential impacts on individuals and minimises impacts on human rights.

The test for when the Chief Health Officer may issue a public health direction has been strengthened. A direction may only be issued if it is reasonably necessary to prevent or respond to a serious risk to the health system or community from a COVID-19 advisory body or to give effect to decisions of National Cabinet or advice of a COVID-19 advisory body.

To ensure increased scrutiny and transparency of decision-making, the Chief Health Officer must publish a statement justifying each direction. The justification statement will set out the reasons for making the direction. It must also include the Chief Health Officer's assessment of whether the direction is compatible with human rights recognised under the Human Rights Act 2019. Directions must be tabled in parliament within 21 days, along with the justification statement. If not tabled within 21 days, it will cease to have effect. On tabling, the direction and justification statement will be referred to the parliamentary committee in the same way as subordinate legislation. This will ensure appropriate parliamentary scrutiny of decisions.

There are never enough opportunities to thank our hardworking health workers who have kept us safe. They have put themselves in the firing line of the virus to care for the community. They went out there vaccinating the community. They were testing. Our paramedics were collecting people from their homes and delivering them to hospital, not knowing what they would find when they got to those callouts, and they did this in all weather. They were out there looking after our community. Our health workers are the heroes of our community. I support the bill.

 **Mr McDONALD** (Lockyer—LNP) (6.48 pm): It is a pleasure for me to rise and speak on the Public Health and Other Legislation (COVID-19 Management) Amendment Bill. Right at the outset, I would like to place on record my sincere thanks to all of those health workers in our community who have done such a wonderful job. It is what they are trained to do, but when you are facing a pandemic, with the changes that were coming and predictions of 50,000-odd people dying, they really stepped up and kept us safe. I am not talking about just doctors and nurses; everyone from cleaners and truck drivers working for Queensland Health were all part of the wonderful response. There were also a lot of other emergency workers who were part of that response, including the SES and police, who were called on to put in place restrictions right across the state. As we now know, if a review was conducted of all of the responses, a one-size-fits-all approach does not work. We can be a lot smarter now and tailored towards geographical controls and making sure that people are kept safe wherever the virus may be.

One of the things that I learned through my time as a police officer, particularly as an officer in charge in looking at disaster management approaches—I am certainly not a health professional, but I do know disaster management arrangements and approaches—is that when it comes to leadership, there needs to be clear and consistent messaging all the way through. I think if we had our time all over again, our messages now would be simply: if you are unwell, stay at home, get vaccinated and, if you are concerned, talk to your GP. As I said, there certainly would be a change to the geographical controls across the state, and we look forward to seeing different approaches.

I would like to place on record my sincere thanks to our shadow minister, the member for Mudgeeraba, the member for Southport and the member for Bonney on their careful consideration of the bill and giving us some guidance with regard to opportunities that we believe the government has missed with regard to this. I believe the government has taken an easy approach just to roll these controls forward for another 12 months. I know that COVID is still in our community. I have loved ones

who are contracting the virus now, but they are vaccinated and the symptoms are certainly nothing like what we were told they would be, and I would argue that certainly with the different strains that have come forward, the vaccinations have worked a treat with regard to minimising those symptoms. As our shadow minister said, if there is another wave or if there are other variants we can easily recall parliament, as we did last month with the passing of Queen Elizabeth, and put in place situations that will allow us to again carefully consider well-constructed legislation to be imposed upon Queenslanders.


As my colleague the member for Glass House said, a lot of Queenslanders have just had enough. They really do not want to hear about COVID anymore. Small businesses had to endure enormous expenses; they were one of the sectors that really have done it tough. None of the small business, hospitality or retail sectors ever want to see COVID or anything come back like that. However, if it does, and we can respond to the different waves or variants, then we can certainly do that very quickly. I would argue that we would tailor the lessons we have learned from the COVID-19 restrictions in an improved way for geographical controls right across the state. I do also recognise the cost that local government had to bear in terms of border protections. I know that the Acting Speaker's seat certainly had some large costs that they did not recover through the controls. We have heard the word 'unprecedented' used more often in the last two years than ever before, and there certainly was unprecedented management of particularly borders.

I want to place on record now my true appreciation of our Gatton and Laidley hospitals. The Lockyer electorate is looked after by the Darling Downs Hospital and Health Service and the West Moreton Hospital and Health Service. The Gatton and Laidley hospitals do a tremendous job and have been a wonderful hub for community advice and certainly rolling out the vaccinations in our communities. I must say that with regard to the challenges they face, I do not want to use the term 'unprecedented', but they have really stood up.

I had a great number of meetings with, and briefings by, West Moreton Health and Darling Downs Health to keep us informed along the way. I particularly thank the former CEO of West Moreton Health, Kerrie Freeman, who had regular stakeholder briefings and gave us the certainty that they knew what they were doing and were responding to things as they were changing. I must say that Kerrie and her team responded to some very large gaps that we had in Lockyer with regard to vaccination clinics and the roll-out because people were turning up at the Gatton and Laidley hospitals expecting to be able to get vaccinations but they were not able to. I do thank them greatly for being able to respond and placing pop-up clinics across Lockyer. I pay tribute to our mayors, Tanya Milligan and Graeme Lehmann, who assisted in lobbying to see the government put those pop-up clinics in our community.

As I said before, when it comes to disaster management approaches—and a pandemic is a disaster management issue for Queensland, handled under the Disaster Management Act—it is very important for people who are concerned at the changing environment to get strong and clear messages. If we had our time over, we would ensure that some of the things that were said which did create some confusion in the community would not happen again.

I take the opportunity now to say that our community has done the heavy lifting in this. They have listened to all of the controls, the issues and the safety regime, and they have answered the call to stay home if you are unwell, and to get vaccinated. I say to anybody who is not sure about this: talk to your GP and make sure that you get the best advice that you can.

 **Hon. ML FURNER** (Ferry Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities) (6.56 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Public Health and Other Legislation (COVID-19 Management) Amendment Bill 2022. It is fair to say that Queensland had not seen anything like the COVID-19 pandemic for generations. It truly has been an emergency on a global scale.

In 2020, the Palaszczuk government was quick to recognise the potential this virus had to play havoc on our health system and the way Queenslanders go about their daily lives. This government was willing to enact unprecedented measures and facilitate unprecedented cooperation with the Commonwealth to get the best possible outcomes for Queenslanders. On 29 January 2020, a public health emergency was declared under the Public Health Act. In fact, Queensland moved faster than any other state or territory to declare a health emergency. The amendments made at the time and in the months since to the act gave the Chief Health Officer and emergency officers unprecedented powers to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

I want to pay tribute once again to our Governor, Her Excellency Dr Jeannette Young, who, as chief health officer in 2020 and 2021, provided excellent advice to the Palaszczuk government and helped keep Queenslanders safe. I also pay tribute to the Queensland Minister for Health, who did a

sterling job and continues to do a sterling job protecting Queenslanders, assisting in conjunction with our great Queensland health workers. What a sterling job they do for Queenslanders right across this state. The powers given to the Queensland Chief Health Officer were unprecedented but necessary. As a government, we listened to the experts, we backed the science and we kept Queenslanders safe through the worst of the pandemic.

As the explanatory notes in this bill point out, the current temporary emergency powers ultimately saved lives and kept the community safe when modelling suggested Queensland was on the same trajectory as other jurisdictions in terms of deaths and cases. However, the Palaszczuk government knew that temporary powers would disrupt our way of life and the way we do business. That is why we moved quickly to provide initial assistance to the first impacted industries and then acted decisively with the most significant and comprehensive jobs, business and health support package seen anywhere in this nation.

We were the first in the nation to declare agriculture as an essential service, highlighting the important role our farmers played in feeding and clothing people right across the country and making sure the routes for the supply chains were open. Initial support to the agriculture and fisheries sector included market diversification and resilience grants, designed to help directly impacted exporters and their supply chain businesses to source new markets or adapt their processes to keep their workforce employed and to keep business revenue flowing while things settled down.

The Department of Agriculture and Fisheries convened the Agriculture Coordination Group, bringing together over 70 industry bodies and sector leaders. The group met regularly during the pandemic as a way of sharing information and hearing directly from growers about the challenges of farming during the pandemic. DAF stood up agriculture coordination officers—more than 100 staff working and living in rural Queensland—to work closely with their communities to address issues such as staffing shortages. It was heartening to see the way the producers and government worked together to find solutions to challenges posed by the pandemic.

I want to highlight Kialla Pure Foods at Greenmount on the Darling Downs. They were a recipient of a rural economic development grant in 2019 which they used to upgrade their blending system to help meet their demand for organic flour and baking products. The new system came online just as COVID hit. Demand for Kialla's products jumped 300 per cent, and to meet demand they had to hire six more staff to keep up with this workload. Some of those workers were people who lost their jobs during the COVID-19 outbreak in other locations.


The situation in Queensland has changed. The way we deal with COVID has changed and that requires different responses. Most restrictions have been lifted as we learn to live with the virus in a new way. We are not out of the woods yet—not by any means. That is why temporary powers in this bill make sense. COVID-19 will be managed as a notifiable condition under the Public Health Act until 31 October next year. It will allow the Chief Health Officer to make public health directions that bring Queensland into line with other states and territories when a decision is made at National Cabinet.

The Health and Environment Committee examined this bill, and I want to thank all the committee members, especially the chair, the member for Thuringowa, for their contributions. I note there were some submissions to the committee opposed to what is being proposed in this bill. For instance, the Queensland Council for Civil Liberties does not think we have an emergency situation at the moment that justifies the use of any special temporary powers and that the vaccines we have are adequate to deal with COVID-19 outbreaks. However, this bill does not provide wide-reaching powers for the Chief Health Officer. The powers proposed are temporary and much more targeted.

This pandemic has been unprecedented. We cannot know how future variations of this virus will affect Queenslanders. As the Chief Health Officer said in his submission to the committee, he expects to only use these proposed powers when there is a serious risk to the community. The proposed amendments also state that the CHO must also publish on the Queensland Health website a justification statement for the public health direction within five days after giving the direction and must table that direction in this House within 21 days and that it could be subject to a disallowance motion.

There will be plenty of public and parliamentary oversight if these more targeted temporary powers are ever used. I do note the LNP state in their dissenting report they do not believe the bill is necessary. Rather, they are happy for this parliament to be recalled at a moment's notice to pass emergency legislation the next time a public health emergency arises. Need I remind everyone in this House that this is the same LNP that argued 64 times for the borders to be opened during the height of the pandemic, putting Queenslanders' lives at stake. This is an opposition that is telling Queenslanders, 'There is nothing to worry about. We will sort things out if there's another outbreak down the track.'

The Palaszczuk government is not as 'happy-go-lucky'. That is why Queenslanders trusted us at the last election and will trust us again at the next election in 2024. We listen to the experts. We trust the science. We keep Queenslanders safe. Unlike those opposite, we plan for the future, just like we are planning for the future with our Energy and Jobs Plan, and the LNP still argues about whether climate change is real. COVID-19 is still real. That is why we need the sensible approach in this bill to continue to keep Queenslanders safe so they can continue to enjoy the great lifestyle they are accustomed to. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr DAMETTO** (Hinchinbrook—KAP) (7.03 pm): I rise to give my contribution on the Public Health and Other Legislation (COVID-19 Management) Amendment Bill 2022. From the outset I state that the KAP will oppose this bill in its entirety. We have always stood in this House and fought for people's choice regarding the COVID-19 mandates imposed by the state Labor government in Queensland. We will continue to fight for those people who want choice when it comes to vaccinations. We will continue to fight for those small businesses that were ravaged through COVID-19 measures. If people stood in regional Queensland and measured the response against what was done in Queensland and Brisbane during the pandemic, they would know that what was done in North Queensland and regional Queensland was unnecessary in many cases. Like I said, the KAP will continue to fight for those people.

Firstly, I would like to speak about the bill in its current form. On 29 January 2020 a public health emergency was declared. I remember where I was. I think everyone in this House would, too.

Mr Healy: Where were you?

Mr DAMETTO: I was actually stuck upstairs. I take the interjection. I was stuck upstairs because this parliament had no idea how to deal with the pandemic just yet. I had been a close contact of Senator Susan McDonald and we were notified by the *Townsville Bulletin*. There was no contact tracing then. We had been at a breakfast in Townsville.

Moving forward, the public health emergency has been extended on several occasions and most Queenslanders would have thought it was going to expire at the end of this month. Finally, we would have been free of the shackles of the Queensland Labor Party's pandemic health restrictions, but that is not going to be the case.

Mr Power: What would the member for Hinchinbrook do? Tell us.

Mr DAMETTO: I do not take the member's interjection. This bill proposes not to extend the current emergency legislative framework for COVID-19; however, it proposes to insert temporary measures and more targeted powers. Still, powers are being handed over to the Chief Health Officer. These powers were supposed to be wound back. People were going to get back to normal and learn to live with the virus. But no, listen to this. The Chief Health Officer will still have the opportunity to require isolation—with a \$14,375 fine for noncompliance—for people who have COVID-19 and quarantine their close contacts. The Chief Health Officer will retain the power to require infected people and symptomatic close contacts to quarantine for seven to 14 days. Currently we do not have those restrictions, but there will still be the opportunity to come in and play with that. Once again an unelected bureaucrat will be making those decisions.

The powers also allow the CHO to require masks—with noncompliance resulting in a fine of \$215—to be carried or worn in specified high-risk settings. They will also allow the CHO to require workers—this is the best one—in vulnerable and high-risk settings to be vaccinated. Right now we have a shortage of health workers and police officers in Queensland. They are both high-risk workplaces apparently. Guess what? I can tell honourable members right now that the government will continue to control those people with these powers for the next 12 months because that is how long this legislation will run for before its sunset clause kicks in. Guess what? The message from the Labor government right now is quite clear: if people want to work for Queensland Health, or they did and they are waiting to come back, they will not be able to—not for at least another 12 months. If they are a police officer sitting there saying, 'I would love to get back to work again and get into this youth crime problem we have in Townsville,' guess what? They are not coming back; that is what the Labor Party is saying to them right now in extending the powers with this bill.

While the Chief Health Officer will retain the power to make public health directions on isolation, quarantine and masks—it sounds like the very start of the pandemic. Honourable members may remember over the last 2½ years the Premier standing up at 10 o'clock every morning to address the public like she was the commander-in-chief, saying, 'This is what we are doing today: Mask on, mask off, sitting down, standing up, you can't drink here, you can't drink there, you have to stand up to drink.' It sounded like we were playing the Labor Party hokey-pokey. It was ridiculous. However, we will continue to do this for another 12 months at the discretion of the Chief Health Officer.

The bill allows that a direction may be given only if the Chief Health Officer believes the direction is necessary to prevent or respond to a serious risk of COVID-19 to the public health system. This also gives effect to a decision or agreement of the National Cabinet or to the advice or recommendations of the national COVID-19 advisory bodies such as AHPPC or ATAGI. This is very interesting because we have been told we are politicising this issue. However, can everyone remember that after the last federal election when Labor took government the COVID restrictions in Queensland started to be wound back all of a sudden? All of a sudden all the Labor states started to relax and COVID was not a problem anymore. I ask: who is actually politicising this now?

We saw a number of things. There will be new tests; we concede that. There will be new tests that will be stricter than the current threshold for giving a public health direction, which only requires the Chief Health Officer reasonably to believe there is a direction necessary to assist in containing or responding to the spread of COVID-19 in the community. It does not seem much different to before. There will be an unelected person, a chief health officer, who will be able to make the decisions about whether we go back into lockdowns again. Guess what? We will be dragged straight back into this House to make further amendments to this legislation if that is the case. If that is the case, then drop it right now.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DAMETTO: I will take the contributions from this side of the House saying that we have been able to come back to the House to move emergency legislation on a public holiday with the passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, but we cannot come back in a small cohort on an apolitical topic to get the job done.

The bill changes the approach of the enforcement of current emergency officers such as police, so this legislation will be handed back to the portfolio of health. The health pandemic should have been managed by Queensland Health in the first place. We heard contributions from the Labor side of the House on the member for Traeger's bill. He concluded by saying that the wrong group of people were managing the legislation he put before the House. I would say exactly the same thing. This emergency should have been managed by health in the first place—not managed like a police state for the last 2½ years. Those officers should have been out there working hard trying to make sure crime was not getting out of control, as it is today. We are seeing youth crime spiralling out of control. It is great to see that police are no longer lumped with making sure people are staying in a hotel or not or making sure they are coming across the border or not. This health pandemic should have been managed by Queensland Health, and they should have employed people to do so—not pulled good police officers off the job.

Finally, the bill also extends the time period by another 12 months, which I covered earlier. There are people who said after the last state election that it was COVID-19 and keeping us safe that saw the Labor Party re-elected. I have even heard whispers in the halls on that side of the House. Guess what? This feels like, once again, we are going to drag this legislation all the way up to the next state election just because we can use it as a political tool.

Mr Katter interjected.


Mr DAMETTO: Exactly right, I will take the member for Traeger's interjection. I ask, once again, for those on the opposite side of the House to consider voting against this legislation. It is the right thing for Queenslanders to get back to normal, and the way to do that is to drop the overarching legislation that dictates what is happening on a daily basis here in Queensland. We want to make sure that Queenslanders can go back to normal.

The reason why Queenslanders want to get back to normal is because we have learned how to live with the virus. People are deciding whether or not, in their own time, they want to get vaccinated. They are protecting their families in their own way as best possible.

Before I finish my contribution tonight, I refer to *Fault lines: an independent review into Australia's response to COVID-19*. It is a great piece of documentation that the member for Hill will table. It contains a couple of recommendations; the government could take five minutes to read this. There are things that should have been done better—economic support would have been done better and more equitably. Lockdowns and border closures should not have been used. It says that schools should have stayed open—it would have been great to keep educating our kids. I know that the same Queensland teachers who wanted to go home were the same ones asking to come back when we could not teach these kids online properly. Older residents should be better protected, and it says nothing in there about locking them down. It is about their mental health in the last years of their life. These people died without getting to see their families, and it is an absolute shame. It is a blight on this state.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Bush): I appreciate it is retrospective, but member for Hinchinbrook, I will caution you in future to seek the call. You did not on that occasion. I gave the call to you, but in future I will remind you to get into that practice.

Mr DAMETTO: Thank you. I appreciate your guidance.

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (7.14 pm): That speech was an exercise in volume over substance. I assure the honourable member that we do not need this as a political football to take to the next election. We have low unemployment, a booming economy, air conditioning in every school. How many new schools have we built? How many stadiums in North Queensland? There is a service in your electorate, member. We have plenty of achievements to take to the next election and we will not be doing it off the back of a jetski either.

I want to rebut something that the member said that was completely and utterly false and misleading to this House. His notion that people died without being able to see their relatives is complete and utter rubbish. My wife is a registered nurse in an oncology unit, and through the entirety of the pandemic people were able to travel with exemptions to visit relatives.

Honourable members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Bush): Member for Hinchinbrook. Member for Coomera. Pause the clock. Member for Coomera, I ask that you cease your interjections. The member for Greenslopes has the call.

Mr KELLY: With exemptions, people were able to visit dying relatives. The reality is that those opposite would like to paint those difficult decisions that were made to keep Queenslanders safe as being heartless. Anybody who knows the work of Dr Jeannette Young knows that those decisions were made carefully and with the greatest consideration for those people. For members opposite to get up in this place and start to peddle this nonsense is really sad and shameful. It is another act of disgraceful behaviour that we have seen in this place today. I want to acknowledge—

Mr Dametto interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Hinchinbrook, you have had your opportunity.

Mr KELLY: He certainly squandered that opportunity, but I am not going to squander mine.

Mr DAMETTO: Madam Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take personal offence, I would like the member to withdraw.

Mr KELLY: I withdraw. I support the Public Health and Other Legislation (COVID-19 Management) Amendment Bill. I start by acknowledging the extremely hardworking health workforce which have been on the front line of responding to the global COVID-19 pandemic. I remind the House that we should never forget the more than 200,000 health workers who died as a result of caring for people with COVID-19. When we want to diminish COVID-19 as a serious illness, we should think about the families of those 200,000-plus health workers around the world who died as a result of COVID-19. The reality is that the majority of those people would have been women. If we did not live in such a gendered world this would have been on the front page of every newspaper, in everybody's Twitter feed, and being thought about and talked about.

I acknowledge the Premier for her leadership during this pandemic. I also acknowledge all of the health ministers and the former and current chief health officers. The decisions that were taken were never easy. They were always based on the best possible health advice and they were aimed at keeping Queenslanders as safe as possible. Since early 2020 the response to the pandemic has been changing and it has been proportionate to the threat.

It is sad to see the LNP joining with their One Nation mates to oppose this bill. I would not say they are joining with KAP, because I know the LNP and the KAP are not mates. Like most other things that the LNP have done during this pandemic, it has been based on chasing cheap political points rather than doing the heavy lifting that is required to keep all Queenslanders safe.

The damage the LNP did to the health system between 2012 and 2015 was immense. They decimated the exact parts of Queensland Health that would be required to respond to a public health emergency. If you would have remained in power, we would have been in real strife. Treasurer Cameron Dick, who was at the time the health minister, and our current Governor, who was at the time the chief health officer, Jeannette Young, should be commended for the work that they did to repair this damage. Dr Young truly reset our system to respond to a pandemic that she knew was inevitable. This


is still a serious disease. We have witnessed multiple mutations, and the chance of future serious mutations cannot and should not be ruled out. The death rate in 2022 from COVID-19 is likely to exceed the road accident death rate in Australia by four to five times.

If that statistic was out there and understood widely—if the road toll suddenly jumped by four times—that would be on the front pages, that would be on the six o'clock news and that would be in people's Twitter feed. The reality is vaccination is our most effective tool for controlling this disease. I understand people who have questions about vaccinations, and I have discussed those concerns with many good people both in my role as an MP and as a nurse. To highlight how important vaccination is, I want to draw on some statistics from a book called *Unvaxxed* by Dyani Lewis which is available in the Parliamentary Library. At the height of the Omicron wave, the percentage of people eligible for vaccination who remained unvaccinated was very small. However, this group represented 18 per cent of all COVID cases, 45 per cent of all hospitalisations, 66 per cent of all those people in ICU and, sadly, nearly half of all those people who died. So a very small percentage represented a very large percentage of the people who were impacted.

While I understand that there are people out there with genuine concerns and I know that we health professionals have to work hard to understand and respond to their concerns, sadly there are also people out there who attempt to lure these good people with their genuine concerns into their far-right conspiracy driven political movements. Sadly, the LNP opposition, as outlined in the statement of reservation, seems to be taking a similar path, opposing sound policy for cheap political gain. We need the capacity to scale up our responses again should the threat increase. I want to challenge members of the LNP to specifically say which powers in this bill they do not believe the CHO should maintain. What are their concerns? Is it vaccination for staff in aged care? Is it preventing people from spitting on public officers? Is it people in hospitals or disability settings having to wear face masks? Which are the ones they think impact on people's lives and we should get rid of? Spell it out. Tell the people of Queensland. They cannot, but it makes for really good dog-whistling politics when you go out there and say, 'We oppose all of this,' while trying to appeal to that far right.

I also love the notion being peddled about putting the power in the hands of an unelected bureaucrat. Just the way this line is delivered is intended to 'other' the CHO—diminish the person, if not the position. It is truly disgraceful, but we have seen some truly disgraceful behaviour from those opposite today. Dr John Gerrard is a truly outstanding individual who acts with the highest degree of integrity and professionalism. To try and stick a label on him, as those opposite are doing, is truly appalling. The reality is that legislation of all sorts empowers public servants of all types in all sorts of ways, and this is no different. In fact, I would challenge anybody to say that there has ever been a parliament in the history of Westminster democracy that has not delegated powers to unelected people in the community. When has that ever happened before?

Our side of the House is really aware of the impacts on Queenslanders from this legislation that have resulted from the public health measures that were taken to keep Queenslanders safe, and we have worked really hard to help our community recover. Every minister on this side of the House and every member of parliament on this side of the House has worked really hard. The great news delivered today by the Treasurer is just the latest demonstration that our hard work towards recovery is paying dividends for all Queenslanders. I want to finish by saying that this bill continues the hard work the Premier has led since the start of the pandemic—that is, the work of keeping Queenslanders safe and leading the recovery. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr KATTER** (Traeger—KAP) (7.23 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Public Health and Other Legislation (COVID-19 Management) Amendment Bill and rise to offer my objection to the bill. There are a number of points that I would make reference to as to why I would form that view. The first is probably one of the more minor points, and that is the one-size-fits-all approach that often gets delivered. I am looking at trying to critique the way things were handled through COVID-19, notwithstanding that it was an enormously challenging event to be presented with at the federal and state level.

It was very challenging and very testing with a lot of pressure—I accept all of that—but embedded in so much decision-making that is made down here is this one-size-fits-all approach and it is not appropriate. For example, if there are bar spacings that are appropriate for Brisbane, that does not mean that they are appropriate in Bedourie or Boulia where no-one is going in or out. Particularly when representing regional areas, there is enormous inconsistency and lack of efficacy in the way that these laws are applied. People say that this is the best thing for us, but is it the best here or is it the best way to operate there? That is one area where we object to a lot of these public health directives and how they can be offered.

There is a lack of trust in some of that advice. Everyone wants to ostracise you and say, 'If you don't agree with this view you must be an ignoramus and you're just not considering this.' No, some people are more discerning. How many doctors have we had through this process challenging some of the views? Some of them might be wrong and some of them might be right, but the government is saying that these are absolute truths and this must happen this way, and if you do not believe it you have to be vilified. What an unhealthy situation when debating something that is really important and a serious infringement on people's lives. In an earlier contribution from another member they said, 'What are you worried about? What's restricted?' I will reverse that argument: if we are not worried about anything, why are we putting this legislation up then? Why do we need emergency powers if there is nothing to be concerned about?

I do not trust some officials because I know that there is influence from government on people operating in these areas. I will argue that until the cows come home. To me, honestly you would be a fool if you believed otherwise—that is, that there is not influence to say, 'Mate, this is the way the government's going in its direction on this.' With regard to those people who stick their head up and say, 'I don't agree with this,' guess what? They are not getting the promotion next week or next year. They might not be sacked, but they are slowly pushed sideways and moved out. Honestly, I think you are a fool if you believe otherwise because I have seen too much in this House.


Let me provide another piece of evidence to rely on. Going sideways a little bit, we debated the reef regulations for years and everyone was saying that the reef was dying as all the science was telling us and members were standing in the House laughing at us saying, 'The science is saying the reef is dying.' Guess what? AIMS reports that for the last two years there has been record coral cover. How do I reconcile that with all of the science and everything that I have been told? Am I stupid? Is it wrong when the data is telling me another thing? I am trying to be discerning and rise above some of this commentary and say, 'There could be something going wrong here.' Yes, I do distrust some of the advice and I am entitled to do that, and I should not be vilified or ostracised for maintaining an alternate view.

Hospitals are blocked up as a very real, inadvertent effect from all of these activities. Members pat themselves on the back for all of the shutdowns and everything, but there were inadvertent effects and we have to count the cost of that when we are debating this issue because the government wants to maintain the opportunity to come and do this straightaway again. At hospitals people were not checking in. They were saying, 'Crikey, if this is so bad I'm not going to go into town to get my check-ups.' Everyone in the hospital system knows this. It created this ballooning effect of diseases or afflictions not being treated and building up and getting worse, and now we are counting the cost of that. This is another inadvertent effect of this hard approach the government took to this issue.

There is an inherent distrust from a lot of people out there. Governments have to earn people's trust. Like I said, people like us who live in regional areas are trying to make sense of everything the government is saying such as the reef is dying and we say, 'Hang on. That doesn't ground truth.' That builds that sense of distrust and we saw that. It hit a peak on the issue of vaccinations where people said, 'The more you're forcing this, the more I'm going to stand up.' We have said that before. So many people said, 'Do you know what? I had no problem with it before, but now the government's trying to force me to do this stuff I'm backing away,' and that was a well-documented effect that was happening.

Another issue was the borders. There was a lot of rationale behind that and I get that, but I had interface with another doctor who worked in Africa for some six or 12 months during the Ebola virus. He was insistent with me when he said, 'Keep the messaging about clean hands, keeping your distance, maintain your distance and if you're sick stay home. That's the messaging. You've got to focus on that stuff. You're battling a virus. You've got to work effectively.' He said, 'Don't get caught on the border stuff.' He said that that created more problems than they started out trying to fix in Africa and Monrovia when there was an outbreak of the Ebola virus. He said that people started doing silly stuff and it created all of this chaos in the economy, and they are very real impacts that the government cannot deny happens from this decision-making.

There may have been a lot of good intent from the government, but I am sure there was an appreciation that it was working well politically and that it was a winning formula, so let's keep it going. That is part of the impetus for this bill. We strongly reject this bill. It sends bad signals to the people of Queensland. It is very dangerous that the government continues to condition people to need to be ordered about and told what to do.

 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (7.29 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Public Health and Other Legislation (COVID-19 Management) Amendment Bill. I want to stress that over the last two and a half years our emergency framework has held us in good stead. I think it is easy in this House to look back

and pick apart and find fault with some of the things that the government did, but overall if one looks at us in a comparative way, within the state and internationally, we made very sound decisions that held us in good stead and history will judge us well. We had expert guidance under our chief health officers, Dr Jeannette Young and now Dr John Gerrard. We used our emergency powers to quickly stop the spread of COVID-19 in the community before Queenslanders had the opportunity to get vaccinated. That was the key reason we put those restrictions in place. Because we were able to prevent widespread outbreaks of COVID-19 in the community, we were able to avoid the lengthy lockdowns that we saw happen in many other places and keep our economy open.

Throughout 2021 we kept those emergency powers in place while we urged all Queenslanders to get vaccinated against COVID-19 to protect themselves and to protect their loved ones. I want to take this opportunity to acknowledge the exemplary work of the Ipswich General Hospital throughout this pandemic, from the senior executive at our hospital, which was headed up at that time by Dr Kerrie Freeman, to the frontline health workers who are indisputably heroes in our communities. We heeded the messages. Every Queenslander heeded the message and by December 2021 we had a significant majority of Queenslanders vaccinated.

Through each phase of this pandemic we used the emergency COVID-19 powers to help keep us safe. Over time our strategy has shifted from one of elimination to suppression and then to managing COVID-19 in the community. This bill will allow the emergency framework to expire on 31 October 2022 and in its place introduce a set of temporary and targeted measures to manage COVID-19 as a notifiable condition to the Public Health Act 2005. Under Queensland's Public Health Act we have provisions for controlled notifiable conditions that strike the appropriate balance between public health and the rights of individuals' liberty and privacy. Other controlled notifiable conditions under the Public Health Act include measles, influenza and tuberculosis; it is not just COVID. These targeted measures for COVID-19 under the Public Health Act will allow the Chief Health Officer to put in place time-limited and targeted public health interventions to maintain the capacity of our health system and to protect our most vulnerable members of the community. Dr John Gerrard has held us in very good stead. He has done such a good job. I cannot think of safer hands for those decisions to be in.

I acknowledge that there are still some high levels of concern in the community about COVID-19, especially among medically vulnerable people and older people. That is why we have stopped short of completely repealing all public health interventions. COVID-19 is still too unpredictable to expect people to self-manage the risks on their own. We know that new variants of COVID-19 can rapidly emerge and that these new variants can be more severe or better at evading vaccines. We know that immunity from vaccines wanes and we know that COVID-19 presents a significant risk to older people and medically vulnerable people. We know that we will more than likely see further waves of COVID-19 infections for some time to come. We also know that COVID-19 can be more severe and have a greater impact on our hospital system than, say, the flu.

Dr John Gerrard, in his briefing to the parliamentary Health and Environment Committee, said that at the peak of the winter Omicron wave on 25 July 2022 there were over 1,000 people with COVID-19 in Queensland's public and private hospitals, including 28 in ICU, while at the same time there were 35 patients in hospital with the flu. It is for these reasons that we need to keep some targeted public health measures in place, such as requiring masks in healthcare settings and aged-care facilities, to protect those vulnerable members of our community. Under this bill the powers that the Chief Health Officer can issue will now be subject to limitations and safeguards to ensure that public health directions are proportionate, subject to parliamentary and public scrutiny and compatible with human rights.

These powers also reflect our current approach to managing COVID-19. The emergency powers that we have had in place in Queensland over the past two and a half years have served us well, but they were not designed for the long-term. Some of the restrictive public health restrictions are no longer appropriate given we have a highly vaccinated population and have therapeutic treatments in place to help people who are at severe risk.


In the first year and a half of the pandemic Queenslanders came together to comply with the emergency public health measures to stop the spread and keep each other safe. I have said before in this House but I want to say again how proud I was of the people in my electorate of Ipswich when the pandemic first hit. I spoke to thousands of residents, mostly over the phone because we were not going anywhere, and I was blown away by their selflessness and their understanding of what they had to do. They stayed at home, they complied with the rules and they put their families and their neighbours first. Most people accepted the border restrictions that were in place. They were necessary. They kept the virus out. They used their Check in Queensland app at venues. They wore their mask when required

and they got vaccinated. The few lockdowns that we had in Queensland meant far less disruption to our state than in southern states, but when we were asked to lock down we did so knowing that a short, sharp lockdown was better than letting the virus rip into our unvaccinated population.

Living in a state of perpetual emergency is not a normal way to live and it is impractical over the long-term. As more people got vaccinated in the last months of 2021 there was growing fatigue and frustration in the community. In the first two years of the pandemic the public health directions issued under the emergency powers restricted movement and gatherings. It restricted people from visiting loved ones in aged-care facilities and hospitals. It enforced compulsory quarantine on domestic and international travellers and we saw the closure of interstate and international borders. But they were necessary, as I have said.

I acknowledge the fantastic leadership that we had here in Queensland during this period from our Premier and our health minister, the Deputy Premier. They stood up every single day to keep us informed and to really put our minds at rest. We know that many of the restrictions that were in place caused emotional and financial pain for Queenslanders. I am sure all of us in this House spoke to many in that situation. Last Christmas I had not seen my son for a couple of years. He lives in Melbourne. He and his sister were in cahoots about a surprise visit from him on Christmas Day. He did everything right: he got the PCR test 72 hours before; he booked the flights. He had it all planned: he was flying to Queensland on his birthday on Christmas Eve; he was going to stay at his sister's place and then arrive at my place on Christmas Day. Like hundreds if not thousands of others, due to the sheer demand his PCR did not come back in time and he was disappointed again. After 263 days of lockdown, he spent Christmas Day by himself in Melbourne and I did not get to see him.

My story is just one of many. I spoke to many of my colleagues on Christmas Day and on Boxing Day. I was on the phone nearly all day to constituents who had similar frustrating stories to tell. The overarching theme behind all of the stories was a deep appreciation of our government for the steps that we had taken. While they were upset—there was a personal cost to them—they understood that it was something that we had to do and that it was for the greater good. My heart went out to them and I could empathise with many of those stories on the day. I respected that our constituents understood we had to make these tough decisions for every single Queenslanders. Like many others, I am looking forward to this Christmas where I can be with my whole family largely free from restrictions thanks to the excellent work of the Palaszczuk government.

 **Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (7.38 pm): I rise to give my contribution to the Public Health and Other Legislation (COVID-19 Management) Amendment Bill. I acknowledge that, through this bill, the government is attempting to restore the Public Health Act to its pre-pandemic operation and remove certain powers granted to the CHO. However, this bill gives the government the power to continue vaccination mandates until 31 October 2023. I really truly believe that if there were an election in October 2023 we would not be debating this bill because the government would get rid of the mandates so it did not get Queenslanders offside.

The negatives of the mandates and the pressure they place on Queenslanders through loss of jobs and a failing healthcare system, with thousands of healthcare workers still out of work, far outweigh any perceived positives of keeping them, particularly considering the many Queenslanders who have had COVID-19 now have a natural immunity and, according to the government's own modelling, the peak has now passed. So why is the government still continuing with these mandates? It is about a refusal to give up power regardless of the rights of Queenslanders and the long-term consequences of the mandates.

In their submission to the committee, the Queensland Council for Civil Liberties—they used to be the state government's friends but they are not now—states—

Mandatory vaccination—our position has been that respect of bodily integrity requires that any vaccination mandate contained a conscientious objection provision.

It did not. The submission continues—

However, when the virus is now circulating broadly in the community and vaccination clearly has only limited impact on transmissibility, we cannot see the rationale for vaccination mandates.

That is backed up by the Pfizer CEO, who stated that Pfizer did not test whether its vaccine stopped transmission. I do not know why we are still in the House debating a bill that allows mandates to continue for another year.

I am sure every government member would have read and been briefed on the independent review of Australia's response to COVID-19 entitled *Fault lines*. I table the independent report.

Tabled paper: Document, dated 20 October 2022, by Mr Peter Shergold AC, Ms Jillian Broadbent ACT, Ms Isobel Marshall and Mr Peter Varghese AO, titled 'Fault Lines—An independent review into Australia's response to COVID-19' [1742].

That independent report should be examined without prejudice. It is critical to understand the problems with the government's overreach, both in the past and in this debate. The same government is trying to make another mistake by extending the period for vaccination mandates. The report states—

There were too many instances in which government regulations and their enforcement went beyond what was required to control the spread of the virus, even when based on the information available at the time. Such overreach undermined public trust and confidence in the institutions that are vital to effective crisis response.

It further states—

These actions could have been avoided if we had built fairness into our planning decisions and introduced compassion into their implementation.

The report states—

Partly as a consequence, implementation was often too harsh, too inflexible, too slow to adapt and too dismissive of basic rights.

The report also states—

Rates of domestic violence increased. Almost 20 per cent of women in domestic relationships in 2020 experienced emotionally abusive, harassing and controlling behaviours for the first time.

And further—

Mental health across the community has been devastated by the pandemic. Young people have been particularly affected: 52 per cent of Australians aged 18—24 have reported that their mental health declined during the pandemic.

The report also states—

Government regulations and enforcement too often went beyond what was required to control the spread of the virus, and sometimes lacked discretion.

And further—

Regional communities with no COVID-19 cases were locked down and schools closed.

Many of those communities were in the electorate of the member for Traeger.

The reality is that Queenslanders have learned to live with COVID so all of the powers granted to the government should now be removed. People are over being jabbed, isolated and jobless. They are over these extended powers. I completely oppose this bill.



Mrs MULLEN (Jordan—ALP) (7.43 pm): The other day I saw a tweet that really spoke to me. It was by a man called John Green. I do not know John Green but he tweeted—

I have no opinion about that thing I don't know much about.

I sometimes wish that others would heed that advice more often.

I am really pleased to contribute to the debate on the Public Health and Other Legislation (COVID-19 Management) Amendment Bill 2022. I begin with a sobering number: 2,256. That is the number of Queenslanders who have lost their lives to COVID-19. In amongst the discussion, the debate, the disagreements and sometimes the delusion, we must never forget those whose deaths are an indelible reminder of the cruelty of this virus and we should never diminish its seriousness.

Over the past two years and nine months, the Palaszczuk government prioritised the health, safety and interests of the people of Queensland in responding to the most challenging and unknown health crisis many of us will ever see in our lifetime. We did this through our public health measures: quick and successful lockdowns, mask wearing, social distancing requirements and closing our borders at the appropriate times. I want to once again thank our communities who understood the need for those measures and what they meant for their health and safety and that of their families. I want to thank the amazing health workers who worked so hard to take care of our communities and who continue to feel the ongoing impacts of COVID-19 through the pressures on our health system.

Those public health measures have allowed our economy to recover more quickly. Indeed, this week we saw Queensland confirmed as the best performing economy of all the mainland states. This morning the Treasurer announced that our Labor government has delivered the biggest ever surplus for Queensland: a surplus of \$4.3 billion for the 2021-22 financial year.

The decisions made by our chief health officers cannot be underestimated. I wish to acknowledge the incredible work of Dr Jeannette Young AC PSM and Dr John Gerrard, who continues to serve in the role. We certainly saw some of that advice completely undermined by those opposite, including by calling for the Queensland border to reopen—64 times, from memory—some even helping people to cross the border illegally and calling the Chief Health Officer ‘a punch-drunk bureaucrat’. Even the AMA Queensland had to come out and say—

We have a very, very straightforward policy. We believe in the science of the Chief Health Officer. We believe that Queensland should follow the advice of the Chief Health Officer and if she says the border should stay closed, we think they should stay closed.

We know that in the darkest moments, the trolls came out. Some would say they were incited to come out. We saw the despicable death threats that followed.

I also acknowledge the leadership of the Premier and our health ministers during this period, Minister Miles and Minister D’Ath, who followed the health advice and did not deviate from the science despite the foolish dog whistling from those opposite. In fact, in a statement of reservation made to a previous COVID bill, the LNP said, ‘Dr Young can offer the advice but the Premier must make the call.’ Actually, no. The legislation was very clear that under the Public Health Act 2005 it is the Chief Health Officer who has the power to give public health directions, and the exemptions that are available under those directions, during the COVID-19 pandemic and not a politician. They did not even understand how the legislation worked. We should never forget those moments. We should always remind ourselves and our communities of the catastrophe that may have befallen Queensland if those opposite had been in power and allowed their anti-vax fake union to influence their decision-making.

I would like to reiterate the words of the World Health Organization’s director-general. In March 2020 he said that several countries had demonstrated that the virus could be suppressed and controlled. However, he posed a challenge to those dealing with large clusters or community transmission: not whether they could do the same in suppressing and controlling the virus but whether they would. He recognised that some countries lacked the capacity, some countries struggled with a lack of resources and some countries struggled with a lack of resolve.

The Palaszczuk government had the capacity, the resources and certainly the resolve. We showed that when we were the first jurisdiction in Australia to declare a public health emergency on 29 January, months before the former Morrison government chose to act. We showed that resolve in the incredible drive and resources we put in to vaccinate our communities, with Queensland now almost 92 per cent vaccinated, which is an incredible result. That resolve has meant that we were able to suppress the virus as successfully as we could. Once we had suitable vaccinations developed, Queensland moved from a pre-vaccination suppression strategy to a post-vaccination strategy that is focused on the prevention of serious illness, hospitalisation and fatality.

We have now reached the next stage of our COVID-19 management, recognising that the full suite of emergency powers will not be needed after 31 October. In place of the current framework, it is proposed to insert temporary and more targeted powers to manage COVID-19 as a notifiable condition under the Public Health Act until 31 October 2023. This will provide a step-down approach to managing the pandemic response, enabling Queensland to continue to respond to serious risks to the community, protect the capacity of the health system and implement national decisions and advice about the ongoing management of COVID-19.

As the explanatory notes state—and this is important—the path from pandemic to endemic is not expected to be linear, with the risk of COVID-19 scaling up and down over time. While the emergence of new variants of concern would normally take years, what we have seen with COVID-19 is that it has taken only a few months. This rapid emergence of new variants is a distinguishing feature of COVID-19 compared to many other controlled notifiable conditions. It is this characteristic of COVID-19 which makes a future response challenging. Experience has shown that each new variant is better at evading treatments and vaccination, even though vaccination continues to provide strong protection against serious disease.

Other factors that remain unknown include whether more effective vaccines will be developed, and the interplay between COVID-19 and other illnesses leading to more moderate and severe outcomes such as influenza. Further, there are a range of post-infection impacts that, although not well understood, are likely to have considerable impact on the health system and workforce. I feel for those who are now struggling with long COVID and other cardiovascular, neurologic, hematologic and pulmonary outcomes.


It is generally believed that repeated waves of COVID-19 will decrease in severity over time. However, with high levels of ongoing infection with each new wave of infection, the pool of people living with long COVID and other long-term outcomes is growing. All of these factors could shift the COVID-19 landscape and place the community and public health system at risk.

The bill provides for the management of COVID-19 within the notifiable conditions framework of the Public Health Act, with additional targeted powers that will expire on 31 October 2023. While the Chief Health Officer will retain the power to give public health directions about isolation and quarantine, masks and vaccination of workers, the Chief Health Officer will no longer be able to give directions about other matters, including many directions that were integral to containing and suppressing COVID-19 during the initial emergency stages of the public health response. For example, the Chief Health Officer will no longer be able to give directions to: enable Queensland's borders to be closed to other states and territories; require quarantine for international and domestic arrivals; restrict the movement and gathering of people through widespread lockdowns and restrictions; require vaccinations for the general public—for example, when entering hospitality venues; or restrict access to vulnerable facilities such as aged-care facilities and hospitals unless necessary to support the effectiveness of a direction about isolation or quarantine, masks or vaccination.

The more limited scope of the new public health direction power reflects the evolution of Queensland's response to COVID-19, which is now focused on managing the impacts of COVID-19 on the health system and on vulnerable members of the community in a targeted manner that avoids imposing broad restrictions and places greater onus on individuals and organisations to manage ongoing risks.

I am also pleased to see a new threshold test for when the power to give a direction may be exercised. This new test is stricter than the current thresholds for giving a public health direction and, again, this amendment is consistent with the current public health focus on managing COVID-19 within the community, given its widespread nature, rather than seeking to contain or eliminate it.

We have come a long way since that first weekend in March when Scott Morrison told us to go to the football and then to lock down. Whilst I hope and pray that we do not go back to those uncertain and frightening days, I am confident that our government will continue to prioritise the health and safety of Queenslanders as we always have. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Dr MacMAHON** (South Brisbane—Grn) (7.52 pm): I rise to speak on the Public Health and Other Legislation (COVID-19 Management) Amendment Bill 2022. It is not even seven months since we debated the last iteration of this bill. While this bill is far from the democratic, transparent framework that the Greens pushed for in March, I am pleased to say that this bill is not as short-sighted as the previous iterations of COVID-19 legislation.

What we saw for the first two years of COVID, including in March this year, was the government continually kicking the can down the road to establishing a robust, democratic approach to public health. The member for Maiwar and I attempted to amend legislation to enact some accountability in the framework and legislate for a COVID-19 oversight committee. We have not seen that yet. While the Greens believe this bill is an improvement on existing public health law and will not be opposing it, I want to talk about what we need to see to ensure our public health legislation is up to the challenges of the next few decades.

The Greens welcome the fact that this bill requires a public health direction to be tabled in parliament. Once tabled, it will be referred to the appropriate committee for scrutiny. It will then be subject to disallowance like any other piece of subordinate legislation. We welcome this. Within five days of giving a health direction, the Chief Health Officer must publish a statement justifying the direction and why it has been given. This statement, explaining the reasons for giving a public health direction, must also be tabled in parliament within 21 days.

Submitters like the Queensland Human Rights Commission have pointed out that a 21-day gap between a public health direction being given and being tabled in parliament seems too long. They suggest that the direction, and the accompanying human rights certificate, should be tabled within five days of the direction being made. Aged and Disability Advocacy Australia note that 'it is also critical that there is an oversight mechanism to ensure that restrictions imposed at an institutional setting are reasonable and proportionate', noting long periods of lock down and restrictions upon movement and visitors imposed by some residential aged-care facilities were, at times, disproportionate with the level of risk.

Many stakeholders, including the Human Rights Commission, had reservations about the changes to the Corrective Services Act. People in prisons and children in youth detention have been hit incredibly hard by the government's management of the COVID-19 crisis. Even this year I have been contacted by families concerned that they are unable to give relatives in prison a hug when they visit them because restrictions on contact have been maintained even while rules dissolve around the rest of the state. The fact is that this government's record on places of detention and closed environments is very poor. While it competes with the LNP on moral panic around law and order, we have a justice system which does not even try to offer rehabilitation to those people who are incarcerated.

Just this week, we have seen the Queensland government refuse entry to the United Nations Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture to its mental health facilities. This is a government that crowed about its mental health credentials this year while giving the mental health system half of the funding that the sector was asking for. Just several months later, we have the government blocking the Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture from visiting its mental health facilities. This is shameful.

In the case of this bill, the Prisoners' Legal Service expressed major concerns about how it allows the commissioner of Queensland Corrective Services to make emergency declarations for up to 90 days, as opposed to the three-day limit which applied before the advent of COVID-19 legislation. Making such a declaration gives the commissioner broad powers to restrict activity in and access to a prison, order that prisoners' privileges be withheld and authorises police officers to do the functions and enjoy the powers of a corrective services officer under the supervision of a senior police officer. The Prisoners' Legal Service is concerned about this and the fact that emergency declarations can be made without any public health declaration being in place. This bill merely extends this power, with no new limitations or safeguards on these powers.

Since the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic, the extended emergency power has adversely affected prisoners' wellbeing, particularly via medical segregation periods. These are basically de facto solitary confinement. People in prisons have been locked down in their cells for at least 22 hours a day, with limited or no association with other imprisoned people, for anywhere between two and 11 weeks. Given the evidence of the impact of solitary confinement on people's wellbeing, even for short periods, this means we have put people in prison at risk of psychological harm which may be irreversible. Instead of rehabilitating people, it is clear that our prison system is harming people. The provisions in this bill will perpetuate this and need to be reconsidered.

In examining this bill, as with its predecessor in March, comparisons have been drawn with the Victorian government's pandemic legislation. As the Queensland Human Rights Commission has pointed out, the Victorian legislation is a good example of the human rights principles that such legislation should embody, including the Premier makes pandemic declarations, there are different safeguards for different powers depending on their breadth of coverage and if the Premier has made a pandemic declaration, the health minister can make pandemic orders to protect public health. These can be disallowed by parliament and must be accompanied by a statement of reasons why the order was reasonably necessary to protect public health, the Chief Health Officer's advice and any assessment of human rights that are limited by the pandemic orders. Clearly, there is no reason Queensland should not have long-term pandemic legislation as well. Let us see some vision and accountability next time we see a public health bill come through Queensland parliament.

I also want to note the incredible stress and strain that our hospitals and healthcare workers remain under—chronic understaffing, overworked and patients of increasing acuity. A recent survey by AMAQ found that 46 per cent of junior doctors at the PA Hospital were working up to, or more than, 24 hours of overtime per fortnight and 68 per cent were concerned about making clinical errors due to fatigue caused by hours of overwork. We have heard similar feedback from nurses and allied healthcare workers, many of whom are burnt out, exhausted and planning to leave the healthcare sector. This bill acknowledges that the COVID pandemic continues and our hospitals are buckling under years of underfunding, underpay for staff, and no efforts to improve conditions or draw in new staff to our hospitals. While other states have implemented COVID bonuses and are offering up free uni for new nurses, Queensland has no plan to bolster our healthcare workforce.

Debate, on motion of Dr MacMahon, adjourned.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Bush): We are about to move to matters of public interest. Before I call the member for Toowoomba South, I remind the following members that they are on warnings: Miller, Everton, Currumbin, Lytton and Aspley. Members who are on warnings, I will not be taking interjections this evening. Unfortunately, if you do interject you will be asked to leave the chamber.

MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment; Federal Budget



Mr JANETZKI (Toowoomba South—LNP) (8.01 pm): I will shortly make some comments in relation to the budget that has just been handed down by the federal Treasurer, but firstly I wanted to turn to CommSec and in particular the Treasurer's performance in relation to CommSec today because it was a dysfunctional performance verging on hilarity. In fact, I am starting to feel a little bit sorry for the Treasurer. Abandoned by the Premier, not even the Premier could support the Treasurer on his renters' tax. He could not even get the Victorian Premier to support him on his renters' tax. I swear, if the Victorian Premier did not see merit in levying a tax on the people then it must be horrifying. It must be a terrible tax if Dan Andrews and the Victorian government could not even support the Treasurer on his renters' tax.

Today we had the Treasurer's laughable performance. I just want to level with you, Treasurer: we all know that you have broken your promises 26 times. We all know, Treasurer, what you have said about CommSec and what this government has said about CommSec for the last eight years. I am just going to go back a little bit before I turn to the budget. I want to make a couple of references back to what Labor treasurers have said about CommSec over the last eight years. Here are the words of former treasurer Jackie Trad, who said—

There are those who would elevate the CommSec report, which is at odds with every other economic report and based on flawed methodology.

That was Jackie. Then we have the Treasurer of today, the member for Woodridge, who said there were 'inherit flaws' in CommSec's methodology. My favourite is the member for Sandgate, because he was stepping in. It must be a factional thing that when the Treasurer is away the member for Sandgate steps in as Acting Treasurer. Just last year the Acting Treasurer said, 'The methodology is not just useless but inherently misleading.' Thank you, Acting Treasurer. I bet the Treasurer regrets leaving the member for Sandgate in charge of the Treasury when he was on leave. There was one other thing the Acting Treasurer at the time, the member for Sandgate, said. He said it 'exploded the myth of the CommSec methodology'. We know that those opposite have had all kinds of trouble with CommSec, but conveniently now they choose to accept the methodology.

I want to make one more comment in relation to what we saw from the Treasurer today and his delusional performance in relation to the renters' tax—which has been abandoned by the Premier—that the Treasurer so forcefully advocated for for so long. It is good to see that the Treasurer and the Premier are talking again. There was a bit of a breakdown in communication for a couple of days. I noticed that they started talking again when they were handing out the hard-earned taxpayer dime to billionaires last week down at Visy. As we saw, the favour was returned with front-page newspaper advertisements in the *Australian* and *Courier-Mail* today, but it was good that such a knees-up could get the Premier and Treasurer together one more time, to see them working together again handing out tens of millions of dollars to billionaires. It is great to see that Labor—the party of the working class—can get together on such an important issue.

I want to turn now to the budget we have just seen handed down this evening by the federal Treasurer. I am intrigued to see the Palaszczuk government's response to this budget and in particular what they will say tomorrow. For years and years we have heard a monotonous record from those opposite talking about their fair share from Canberra, and they have certainly built expectations quite high.

Mr SMITH: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I am seeking clarification whether or not this is a 10-minute contribution or a five-minute contribution as we have an automatic adjournment at 8.30.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Bush): I thought it was 10 minutes. I will just check that. This is a 10-minute contribution.

Mr JANETZKI: Excellent. Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr JANETZKI: I will come to the member for Bundaberg shortly. We have heard plenty from the member for Bundaberg today. We have to await what the Palaszczuk government decides to do about the budget tomorrow. What will they say? We have just heard the budget tonight. When I reflect, last year the Treasurer himself was complaining that about half of the \$1.6 billion in infrastructure spend

would only be spent beyond the forwards. I would like to understand what the Treasurer, the Premier and the Labor government will have to say after the savage cuts to infrastructure that Queensland has seen tonight. We heard the federal Treasurer—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr JANETZKI: That is one thing that the federal Treasurer and the state Treasurer have in common: they love to break promises. We have seen the federal Treasurer and the Treasurer, the member for Woodridge, talking. We know that in Canberra they have broken a promise. There are going to be higher gas prices and higher power prices, so that is a federal promise broken, but what will the government have to say about infrastructure projects in Queensland? There have either been cuts, silence or reprofiling. Isn't that a great word? I heard the federal Treasurer mention that.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr JANETZKI: I will take the interjection from the member for Nanango. Reprofiling is kind of a fancy economic word for delay, but I think it is more accurate to say it is a cut. It is a cut. They know that. Those opposite know what we have seen tonight is this: Hells Gates, gone; Urannah, gone; Emu Swamp Dam, gone—

Ms GRACE: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. There are a couple of members who are not in their seats and they keep interjecting. If they want to interject, they should either sit in their seats or sit silently. I refer to the member for Buderim.


Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will issue a general reminder to all members that if you are to interject you will need to return to your seats.

Mr JANETZKI: Hells Gates, gone; Urannah, gone; Emu Swamp, gone; Hughenden irrigation, gone; Rockhampton Ring Road, gone. The budget has been silent tonight on other projects, including the Sunshine Coast rail and the Kuraby-Beenleigh rail. We have had cuts, we have had reprofiling—let us call that for what it is; it is not delays, it is cuts—and we have had silence.

We have heard it so many times from those opposite. They have got a choice tomorrow. Will they stand up for Queensland or will they as always play the politics? Will the Treasurer and the Premier talk about how Queensland has been short-changed or was it always just about the politics? The Treasurer was silent on the blank cheque that he gave to Wellcamp or was it all just about the politics?

When the Premier said Prime Minister Albanese would listen to calls for long-term fifty-fifty health funding, was that really in the best interests of Queenslanders? Was that about healing the health crisis in Queensland or was it always just about the politics? The federal budget is silent on that again tonight. When government ministers have lined up week after week after week, blaming Canberra, talking about getting their fair share, was it in the best interests of Queenslanders or was it always about the politics? Those of us on this side of the House know the answer. Tomorrow when the government is faced with the choice of backing Queenslanders or just playing politics, we know exactly what they will do.

Federal Budget

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (8.12 pm): Can I say that CommSec finally got it right but those opposite just do not like it. They do not like it that CommSec finally got it right. The economics that this state is generating under the Treasurer is absolutely extraordinary, and I pat him and this government on the back every time. I also back the Labor government federally because the budget they have just handed down is a great Labor budget. It attacks cost-of-living increases, child care, paid parental leave, medicines, housing and wages. It invests in our people, which is what Labor governments always do, and it is a responsible budget repair. It is solid, it is simple and it is sensible. It is exactly what the country needs after years of chaos under the LNP, which has absolutely nothing to show after a \$1 trillion debt. What has Australia got to show after 10 years of chaos and a \$1 trillion debt under the LNP? Absolutely nothing.

Do we know what the icing on the cake is? The great news for workers everywhere is that the policy of deliberately keeping wages low is no longer a Labor federal government policy. That is one outstanding thing of this budget. As the federal Treasurer said, we are in a time of great challenge and change so this is a responsible not reckless budget. The family friendly budget, as the Prime Minister put it, delivers on Labor's commitments. It strengthens the economy. It provides cost-of-living measures for families without putting pressure on inflation. It delivers on the \$5.4 billion promise to make child care cheaper for 1.2 million families at a time when cost-of-living pressures are at their highest. It delivers on the promise for the biggest expansion to paid parental leave since it was introduced, with


\$530 million which will lead to greater equality and greater security for Australian workers and parents being accommodated when it comes to paid parental leave. We will have cheaper medicines from 1 January next year, benefiting 3.6 million people.

This is what Labor governments deliver. They do not dillydally around like the LNP, fighting amongst each other. The LNP are experts at that. Those opposite do not even meet as a shadow cabinet. The member for Toowoomba South was talking about the Treasurer and the Premier speaking, but they cannot even meet as a shadow cabinet let alone talk to each other. It is extraordinary they would even raise the issue. Other highlights include the attack on housing. The government is looking at housing, with a new national housing accord between governments, investors and industry to build one million affordable homes. The LNP completely abandoned housing in this country.

There is free TAFE and more university places. We will have cheaper and cleaner energy. Finally, we have a \$20 billion energy plan to meet what the Palaszczuk Labor government is doing with our Energy and Jobs Plan. There is \$1.7 billion to end violence against women and children; that is a step in the right direction. There is \$1.2 billion in practical measures to close the gap for First Nations people and communities and to begin preparations for a referendum on a voice to parliament. This is what Labor governments deliver.

I am proud to stand up every single day and back the fresh air that is coming through the windows down in Canberra under an Albanese Labor government with their investment in education and early childhood, compared to the awful LNP government before them. The budget also invests more than \$770 million for better schools, happier and healthier students, and more qualified teachers. The other great initiative is an extra 4,000 university places for teachers and educators, including around 1,470 early education teachers. This is a great Labor budget.

Maiwar Electorate, Public Transport

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (8.17 pm): There are so many parts of my electorate for us to be proud of. Whether it is the beautiful jacaranda lined streets, the walks along the river or the Mt Coot-tha summit, it is pretty hard to beat in so many ways. However, we are also winning on a less satisfying front—that is, Coronation Drive is consistently one of the most congested roads in Brisbane and it will remain that way unless both the Brisbane City Council and this government seriously invest in better public transport for the west side.

I had hoped we might get some progress from the LNP council's recent bus network review, but they seem to have completely ignored the west side. Instead of using the new metro as an opportunity to design a properly integrated and connected network, they are tinkering at the edges while they continue to pour billions of dollars into road widening. The state government have not given us any reason to hope for improvement either. I wrote to the transport minister asking whether they would commit some real funding and work with council to coordinate a proper review to account for Cross River Rail and the metro. I am yet to get a response.

Locals consistently tell me that if they had access to frequent and affordable buses they would be far more likely to get out of their cars and leave them at home. Right now, folks in Bardon have no easy way to catch the bus to important centres in the electorate like Toowong and St Lucia, which is the second biggest generator of trips in the whole city. Fig Tree Pocket residents are still waiting for a bus along the eastern side of the suburb up Jesmond Road or regular buses to Indooroopilly and the city outside of peak hours. In the growing Long Pocket area, the single bus service—the 417—is incredibly infrequent, unreliable and totally inadequate on weekends.

If the government genuinely cared about fixing traffic, reducing emissions and making our cities more accessible, they would invest in more high-frequency buses, inter-suburb connections and dedicated bus lanes along main corridors like the Centenary Motorway. They would not continue to prioritise car-centric, short-term sugar hits like road-widening projects. They will spend billions to duplicate a highway, but will not upgrade the train stations across the state that still fail to meet disability access standards. If this government wanted to tackle our traffic woes and help Queenslanders out in a cost-of-living crisis, they would make public transport free.

Ms Boyd: Oh, make it free! Someone has got to pay for it.

Mr BERKMAN: Oh, the histrionics are back! Right now, fares cover only about 10 per cent of the total running costs for the transport network. Why is the government obsessed with wringing money from Queenslanders for such basic services especially when it is such a small proportion of the cost? Why not make developers pay with a windfall gains tax or increase gas royalties so that everyone can get public transport for free? The federal government's fuel excise cut is gone and petrol costs are

through the roof. Now is the perfect time to encourage people to leave their cars at home with free fares. It would not only deliver hip-pocket relief for Queenslanders but also cut a whole lot of costs from our public transport system, specifically the hundreds of millions of dollars being poured into a privatised ticketing system which will cost well beyond the \$371 million that has been poured into it already. How much are they spending on ticketing enforcement, on court and police costs for fare evasion, all to cover that measly 10 per cent of the cost of delivering public transport?

Governments are meant to use our taxes to provide basic services like public transport. You are meant to fund infrastructure for public benefit, not make deals with private corporations to wring Queenslanders dry for profit. The secret deal with QBIC for the ticketing system is one example; the Airtrain is another. Why is the minister defending this 35-year contract for a private provider to keep a monopoly on public transport services around the airport? What part of 'making Queenslanders pay a private company \$20 for a 20-minute trip' sounds like a good deal to the government? It is embarrassing.

This government's commitment to privatisation and outsourcing is embarrassing. I do not know anyone who catches the Airtrain. I am interested to know if anyone here does. We cannot wait until 2036 to review that monopoly Airtrain contract. The government should bring the airport service into public hands and make it free or at least cheaper for everyone to use. They could do it as part of the Cross River Rail project. They could have some long-term vision. Put an end to the secret deals with private contractors, invest in long-distance connecting services and high-frequency inter-suburb buses. Let go of this ridiculous neo-liberal 'someone has to pay for it' mantra and ditch the hassle and expense of fares. Not only would it make the trip along Coronation Drive a lot more pleasant but also across Queensland it would reduce traffic, pollution, cut living costs and give people real freedom to move around their communities.

Agriculture Industry



Hon. ML FURNER (Ferny Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities) (8.22 pm): Queensland's agriculture sector is the shining jewel in the state's economy and something every Queenslander should be proud of. I travel the state talking to farmers every chance I get. I was on the Sunshine Coast at Eudlo Native Trees with the member for Nicklin just last week, announcing a Palaszczuk government's Rural Economic Development Grant that will create even more good jobs as that business expands. With the member for Kurwongbah I visited zoomgarden at Burpengary, a major grower of herbs and ornamental plants for Queensland retailers, where another Rural Economic Development Grant will support an additional 18 good jobs after construction of a new greenhouse. I had the pleasure of visiting Reck Farms near Gatton where they will use RED grants for new processing equipment that will turn a four-month exercise of operations into one that will support jobs all year round.

Members might wonder how the Palaszczuk government conceived such a good idea to support our farmers. I am happy to tell them. It is by listening to farmers, coming back to cabinet and delivering these good jobs for our farmers, for the sector right across our state. I know it is a revolutionary concept for those opposite, but that is what I do and that is what the Palaszczuk government does: we listen to farmers, we listen to the rural communities and we come back and deliver for them.

This government's record on supporting agriculture stands by itself. We have passed landmark and generational reforms to drought support programs; not to cut back on funding to farmers, not to push burdens elsewhere, but by working together with farmers and representative bodies like AgForce and the Queensland Farmers' Federation. We changed these programs to be more focused on preparedness, on helping farmers to get ready before a drought has severe impacts, and we made the assistance available to farmers who were not in officially drought-declared areas. We extended drought support to horticulture farmers because farmers told us about the critical difference that funding could make to their farm operations.

We supported our essential agricultural industries through the COVID-19 pandemic. How did we do it? By forming the Agricultural Coordination Group with over 100 participants, giving key stakeholders a direct voice to government when they needed it the most.

Something that sticks in my mind from last year's Beef 2021 event in Rockhampton that was so very strongly supported by the Palaszczuk Labor government, with so many of my fellow ministers and backbenchers in attendance, and that was something that the federal Nationals leader David Littleproud said at the Rural Press Club event. He said—

The best thing that governments can do for our farmers is to get out of their way.


I understand that the LNP has a particular view of the world, but so much of that view is out of step with Queensland farmers and Queenslanders everywhere, especially when they import US-style anti-government rhetoric that demonises the very existence of government.

When Queensland farmers face biosecurity threats, Labor governments step up, like our \$22 million foot-and-mouth disease and lumpy skin disease measures announced by the Premier at the Ekka this year. But the LNP steps out of sight. We saw today a Labor federal government delivering \$134 million for biosecurity for our nation. When floods and cyclones devastate our regions, we step up; we do not step back like the LNP. When markets were cut off by global trade issues, we stepped up with market diversification assistance; we did not step off the stage like the LNP. We listen to what farmers need and we commit to supporting them time and time again.

Our record on agriculture investment stands up. The last LNP agriculture budget was \$408 million. The most recent Palaszczuk Labor government's agriculture budget was \$608 million, an increase of nearly 50 per cent on the LNP's pathetic record of what they do in their claims of supporting farmers. That record is built on listening to our farmers. The Leader of the Opposition's record is stark as well. He sat around that cabinet table when the LNP was last in government, cutting 600 jobs out of the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries. That is the legacy of those opposite. He never apologised. He never acknowledged that he was wrong. You do have to wonder what he is hearing from farmers now.

How many times has the LNP put forward a private member's bill on agriculture in this House? I will tell you—zero. How many new ideas have they put forward to support our farmers? None whatsoever. How much has the LNP under this Leader of the Opposition taking farmers and their communities for granted? More than you can possibly imagine.

Traeger Electorate, Water Infrastructure

 **Mr KATTER** (Traeger—KAP) (8.27 pm): I represent one of the largest seats in Queensland. The reason it is a large seat is primarily from population decline. If you look at population stats, the population keeps declining in these areas and that is why you keep getting expansion of those electorates. You wonder why it happens. We need a lifeline from the government. You look at the resources and how do we get a way out of this. Successive governments keep throwing cash. There is the Works for Queensland and it is welcomed, it is nice, but it is not a sustainable model. You cannot keep propping these towns up with cash; you need to enable industry. It is why I get really angry when we try to do something like the HIPCo project in Hughenden. All the government can do, whether it is tacit effort, is to stand there reluctantly while the water department makes these decisions.

I thought in Queensland our departments would work to enable these sort of things to happen. It is the exact opposite. Go ask anyone out there in the industry: are they there to help or are they there to stop it? Apparently they are there to stop things. They will find a way to kill any project you do out there. If you want to get irrigation going on, we have about 24 million hectares of Mitchell grass plains out there. That is all farming country. It all has potential for dry land or irrigated farming. Do you realise the potential that could bring towards Australia's wealth, for the employment opportunities, how you can enable those communities and make them sustainable? You do not have to pour cash into them, just give us some access to that water that flows out to the sea. It does not go into the reef, it goes out into the gulf waters. We just want a little bit of that 3.8 million megalitres a year. If the water is running four metres over the Flinders River, we want that little bit that runs that far over the bridge. That is all we need to fill some dams, keep some water for when we get a protein drought and we can all have a win.

They do not have to do much. They do not even have to spend any money. We can self-fund a lot of these things. We have the HIPCo project there—my father and the federal government secured \$180 million for that—the Big Rocks Weir and Hells Gates. However, they are successfully managing to kill all these projects. With the HIPCo project the population of Hughenden is projected to double under it. It is one of the only big elements we have to progress this region. Demand for the project is very strong with the project scheme oversubscribed. It has a BCR of 1.04. It will create over 1,900 new direct and indirect jobs related to agriculture. It will generate about an additional \$170 million of gross agricultural production per year. It will employ more than 2,500 people over its three-year construction period.

Irrigators are willing to contribute \$127 million of the up-front capital cost and 100 per cent of the ongoing operating and maintenance costs. This builds resilience in the agricultural industry by having diversity and there will be dryland farming accompanying it. It is a project that does not run onto the Great Barrier Reef. If they do care about net zero by 2050, which we do not particularly, it will achieve it. It is the first irrigation scheme—

Mr Hinchliffe: Ha, ha!

Mr KATTER: That is funny? This is really funny because these towns are dying and we are trying to keep them alive. The minister might agree with net 2050 or whatever; that is fine. I am trying to tell him that this scheme is carbon neutral. It is a world first net zero irrigation scheme.

Mr Hinchliffe interjected.

Mr KATTER: The minister does not want to hear it because he will tacitly sit there and approve all this.

Honourable members interjected.

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

Mr KATTER: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. I am wound up because we have some little windows of opportunity to do some of these things and these departments come in here and rip the guts out of everything. We front up, try to be constructive and try to do things by the book, but they are allowing it to happen. The water minister is totally responsible here; it is his department. He can enable these things to happen. We can present it. Do honourable members know what we are talking about at the moment? Out of 3.8 million megalitres a year we are talking about two per cent. It is two per cent of the entire average annual flow. They allow 35 per cent to be taken from the Murray-Darling and 20 per cent in any system. We are talking about two per cent, but we are told, 'Oh no, there is too much risk.' There is two years of advanced business case showing all the evaporation—everything is taken care of, but no, they will always find a way to kill it.

So we do get angry because we are trying to survive out there. We are trying to give them something. We are trying to produce. We are trying to play an active part in funding hospitals and schools, but they will not even let us do that. They will not let us survive. I judge that very harshly and I judge the water minister harshly.

ADJOURNMENT

Mudgeeraba Electorate, Education



Ms BATES (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (8.32 pm): It is that time of the year again. The jacarandas are out and for Mudgeeraba students, their families and their educators that means just one thing: exam time. I would like to place on the record my appreciation for all concerned as they prepare for final assessments for 2022. Whether it is the students, their parents, the teachers, the principals, the school admin support teams, I know all have done their best throughout this year to reach this point. I have met with school leaders, both students and principals, throughout the year. In fact, many of my schools have enjoyed visits to this place to see MPs in action and have been fortunate to meet with Mr Speaker and the opposition leader during their tours.

I have also hosted my principals to discuss with them the challenges and opportunities facing our different school communities—from Springbrook Mountain and Numinbah Valley in the hinterland through to the thriving Robina State High School closer to the coast. We talk about improvements to roads, better classrooms, modern facilities, all of which they need to provide the best education for the children of Mudgeeraba. They can be assured that I will continue to fight for every improvement I can assist with to make sure our schools have the best and safest environments in which to nurture the young minds of their communities. I will especially continue to fight for more schools west of the M1 as families flock to the best electorate in the state. We need more facilities so they can raise their children with access to schools and other facilities in Mudgeeraba.

Facilities and technology are just part of the equation. We also talk about their passion for teaching and learning and that is what I believe makes all the difference for the futures of our young people. They are dedicated and committed to excellence and I see that shining through as I visit my schools to join in the graduation ceremonies at this time of year. Throughout the year, they facilitate extracurricular activities, ranging from musicals to elite level sport while remaining focused on the academic goals set by and for their young charges. They also counsel them about the myriad options available and remind them that a single score, or one result, will not limit their future. Striving for excellence is their mantra and their example, and I know the students of my community are in good hands.

To all students, families and educators I say, 'Good luck with exam season 2022. The Mudgeeraba jacarandas are blooming and that means you are nearly there.'

Breast Cancer Awareness Month



Mr RUSSO (Toohey—ALP) (8.35 pm): October each year is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. With the permission of my sister-in-law I would like to share her story that she and her friend Sherri wrote. Bec has been diagnosed with metastatic breast cancer, or stage 4 cancer. Her cancer broke away from the original tumour in her breast and spread to other parts of her body. There is currently no curative treatment for this breast cancer. Many people with metastatic breast cancer live well for several years, but they do require ongoing treatment.

As part of Breast Cancer Awareness Month one day, 13 October, is designated as Metastatic Breast Cancer Awareness Day. This one day of the year presents an opportunity to increase awareness and visibility for everyone who is fighting very hard every day against time. They are desperately waiting for advances in treatment that can improve their life expectancy before they decline too far and before it is too late.

Bec lives on the Sunshine Coast but she has told me she has met a significant number of women, many at the Bloomhill Cancer Centre, who, like Bec, share the real and very raw reality of what a day of awareness represents for them. Many of these women have young children. Bec has a husband and two beautiful children, aged 12 and 14. She knows the adolescent years are tough on most families, let alone those families trying to cope with the stress of having a mum with incurable cancer. As she says, 'It is hard to keep things normal.'

People with metastatic breast cancer are not covered by the NDIS, yet the disease requires ongoing and close, persistent attention to 'stay in the game'. Medicare covers little of the ongoing medical expenses. Private health insurance has its benefits in terms of accessing preferred health practitioners, but it, too, covers very little financially. The numerous medical appointments and the physical impact of treatment affect the ability to work both during and after treatments. It is hard to stay afloat financially. At best, nest eggs dwindle. At worst, debt increases.

For people with metastatic breast cancer, 13 October is a day of hope—hope for more treatment pathways to prolong their lives, hope for ongoing mental health support to help people and their loved ones cope, hope for a stronger palliative care system that can holistically support families like Bec's through the pain and trauma of cancer and loss, hope for recognition and support for the ongoing cost burden and, ultimately, hope for a new scientific breakthrough that can provide a cure.

Bec is currently part of a clinical trial at the Sunshine Coast University Private Hospital. She is doing what she can to fight this insidious disease.

Bruce Highway Western Alternative Project




Mr POWELL (Glass House—LNP) (8.38 pm): I rise to express my continuing concern and that of my constituents at the handling of the Bruce Highway Western Alternative project. I have said it before but I say it again: I support it. The western alternative is needed to ensure a real, viable option to the car park that is the Bruce Highway. What I do not approve of is the way the people of the Glass House electorate whose properties fall into the proposed routes, particularly in stage 2, have been treated. Countless constituents have emailed me saying they are confused as to whether their properties are going to be affected, angry that their dream home—their forever home—may be resumed.

Communication with the residents of Moorina, in particular, is not clear. It is not respectful; is not meaningful. There was no notification that their specific property was impacted by stage 2, leaving them to work it out for themselves or being informed by their neighbour. This lack of respect and communication means fewer people will support this project, making it more difficult to develop the western alternative. 'It is the indecision that is causing grief not the road being required,' one resident said. 'Communication is key. Many residents are now terrified. They are distressed.' As Lindsay and Janine Fox expressed, 'It is ludicrous that we were not given an opportunity to object.' John Langbridge said, 'I don't want to retire next to a major highway. I have delayed retirement as a result so I can keep my options open. There is a block of land coming up at Dayboro, what am I going to do?'

The uncertainty of not knowing what is going to happen to your property and not being able to plan for your future is not right. We have gone from a shaded wedge on a map—a 'study area'—to two options and will eventually settle on one but this unclear, uncertain and drawn-out process is causing so much anxiety in the community. I reiterate my request for more respect and clarity between the government, TMR, and the people of Moorina and Upper Caboolture.

Given what we have heard this week regarding new houses being resumed in Griffin on the same day that their owners are being handed the keys, it is clear the system is broken. This approach is not working; we need to find a better process. In the case of the Bruce High Western Alternative stage 2, we had the opportunity to do it right—we did not. We cannot repeat that mistake for stages 3 and 4. Let's work to achieve the best result for both our future growth and the residents of the Glass House electorate. Just a short disclaimer, my thanks to year 10 Maleny State High School work experience student Kelly Schofield for preparing this speech for me.

Bundamba Customer Service Centre; State Education Week


 **Mr McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (8.41 pm): I am very proud to announce that our brand new \$2.4 million Transport and Main Roads Customer Service Centre at Bundamba is set to open to our local community on Monday, 14 November. This follows an extensive full fit-out that will deliver an accessible, fully inclusive and comfortable experience for both customers and staff alike.

I recently had the opportunity to inspect the new facility and, I have to say, it truly is the next generation of TMR customer service centres. The site at 28 Brisbane Road has been completely transformed. What was previously a former car dealership is now a state-of-the-art two-storey customer service centre. There are 10 customer service desks, private meeting rooms for people who might require a confidential space and plenty of support for all mobility types as we, as a government, continue to deliver better services for our local community.

This brand new centre has an inviting open plan, an abundance of natural light and it has flexible functional spaces that can adapt to the individual needs of all customers. There is plenty of parking with a dedicated car park off Webb Street, as well as additional parking and disability parking with direct access to the front of the centre via ramp access. Services like driver and industry licensing and registration will be offered at the new Bundamba centre, while other services like driving tests and pre-registration inspection for trailers, caravans and large vehicles will continue to be provided at the Ipswich Customer Service Centre. I would like to thank the transport and main roads minister for listening to my representations on this issue, and for taking the time to visit the centre recently in our local community and meet with some of the hardworking TMR staff who are very excited about moving into their brand new workplace. This is a great outcome for customers and workers, and a wonderful addition to our local Ipswich community.

This week is State Education Week, where we acknowledge the great work that is being done in our state schools. There is an absolute commitment to helping each student fulfil their full potential. I would like to take a moment to wish all of the year 12 students across our local community all the very best for their final high school exams.

Scenic Rim Electorate, Ambulance Ramping; Road Infrastructure

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Scenic Rim—LNP) (8.44 pm): The ambulance ramping crisis continues to endanger the lives of Queenslanders, including in the Scenic Rim electorate. Ambulances from our region are regularly stuck at major hospitals like Logan, Ipswich and the Gold Coast University Hospital and taken out of service for our local people when they need help.

I have recently been told about a resident who lives at Knapp Creek, south of Beaudesert, who was in desperate need of help after falling unconscious at home. An ambulance was called and arrived to assist—after a delay—not from Beaudesert, not from Jimboomba, but from Tamborine Mountain way across the region. Sadly, stories like this are far too common in our region, because ambulances are ramped or offline meaning that our area is not covered as well, especially if ambulances are redeployed in city areas after getting off ramps at these hospitals. This will cost lives and that is why, together with my LNP colleagues, I will continue to call out the health crisis under this government's watch, the ramping disaster, and the need for ambulances in our local area to be made available for locals.

The recent flooding events have shown, yet again, the need for upgrades on the state road network in the Scenic Rim. The government talks about making areas more flood resilient to help communities and to keep them connected. A moderate rain event—not a flood—cut the Beaudesert Boonah Road at Coulson again. Right now, this road is closed far too often, cutting this vital artery in the Scenic Rim.

It has been a problem ever since the Bligh government built Wyaralong Dam, but failed to raise this road. The dam causes water to flood this road far more often than it did before. It is the people who I represent that bear the brunt of Labor's bad planning, yet again. This crossing of Teviot Brook needs

raising. TMR knows it; the government knows it. I have been raising this issue for well over five years now. Yet, not one cent has been spent by TMR on planning or designing an upgrade despite my fight and council lobbying. It is a disgrace that there has been zero action while hundreds of millions of dollars are spent on white elephants like the Wellcamp centre. If you want a resilience project to fund, this is a no-brainer.

It is the same story for the causeway on the eastern side of Harrisville at the T-intersection. Main Roads knows that water has been running across this road since February. The intersection is too low and continuous wet weather creates danger and vehicle damage on what is a main road in and out of Harrisville. Main Roads has been aware of this for years, but the minister and the department will not commit one cent for planning and designing a fix for the issue. Labor can find millions to spend on ads promoting their failing health system but will not commit to fixing the basics in the Scenic Rim to bring greater flood resilience.

Since 1989, locals have been lobbying to have Beaudesert Nerang Road at Biddaddaba fixed. The culvert at the intersection with Biddaddaba Road and the gravel section is disgraceful. It is a Third World standard, and the minister should be ashamed of it. It is one of those roads that always goes under when it rains. It should be upgraded as a matter of priority.

Redlands Electorate; State Education Week



Ms RICHARDS (Redlands—ALP) (8.47 pm): I echo the sentiments expressed by the member for Bundamba in this State Education Week and I thank all of our teachers. World Teachers' Day is this Friday. I do not think there is anyone in this chamber who does not love the work that our teachers do in our communities. I wish all of our year 12 students the very best in their exams this week. I give a particular shout-out to my niece up in Cairns. I know that she has been studying really hard and is hoping to obtain a position at Griffith. To all of our year 12 students: best of luck this week. I know that you have all put in the hard yards and will do extremely well.

I wanted to update the House on our satellite hospital. It is going gangbusters on site. It is hard to believe that the site was transferred. We did the exchange with the Redland City Council back in January. Hutchinson Builders were on in site in the second week of January. Nine months in, I took the drone in and gave constituents a bird's eye view of what the site looked like and the scale of that development. Then, I had the opportunity to visit Construction Skills Queensland—a big shout-out to Tony there. He took students from the Redlands to 'try a trade' with the Hutchinson Builders staff. There were people learning tiling, flashing, plumbing and all sorts of things. They were hanging the plaster already. It is nine months in and it is already well under way. I cannot wait to see that facility open next year because that is going to make a huge difference to my island community and to the growing southern end of the Redlands. If anyone is under any doubt about the value that these satellite hospitals will add to Queenslanders bringing health care closer to home they are kidding themselves.

Of course somebody who is getting renal dialysis at the Redland Hospital who lives on an island is going to benefit from having that service closer to home. Some of the stories out there are absolute misnomers and people should be ashamed of themselves for telling them because they are dudding Queenslanders in putting that commentary out there. I also had the opportunity to meet DJ, who has been doing a Construction Skills Queensland pathway. She had been appointed by Hutchinson Builders as one of its newest apprentices in carpentry. She is a single mum with a six-month-old baby with a new career path—the best story ever. If we want to talk about the great stories that are coming out of our investment in health infrastructure, there it is right there. It can be seen down at the Redlands. I am happy to take anybody out there to show them what value that will give to my community.

I am also a bit disappointed in our federal member who has put some rumourmongering out there this week around the funding for our ICU and our additional ward beds. That is a load of rubbish. Some \$13 million has already been paid to Queensland Health for that project, with the rest coming along. The complementary work that is happening out there in health care will make a huge difference. Congratulations to the Albanese government on its investment in people over 55 in our aged-care sector and providing cheaper medicines. We know that working together we will deliver better health care for all Queenslanders.

Gympie Music Muster




Mr PERRETT (Gympie—LNP) (8.50 pm): At the end of August country music boomed once again through the hills of Amamoor State Forest in the Mary Valley for the 40th Gympie Music Muster. After two years of cancellations, it was a relief for organisers to be able to go ahead with Australia's original,

friendliest and best camping and music experience. The iconic Gympie Music Muster showcases a mix of country, roots, blues, folk and rock music as well as workshops, dancing and bush poets. In 1982 Berard Webb and his brothers Fabian and Marius first hosted the 4KQ Webb Brothers Country Music Muster on a bush stage at their family property near Widgee. It started as a fundraiser and, with the help of Apex each year, it continues to fundraise. This year's funds were raised for the QCWA, which is celebrating its centenary year—a magnificent milestone. In May I was pleased to host the QCWA centenary barbeque lunch here at parliament. A familiar face and one of the organisers of the centenary event, Christine King, was also at the muster.

The muster's success in 1982 meant that after only three years it moved to the Amamoor State Forest to cater for thousands of visitors and locals who want to come together to enjoy what the music muster is all about—mates, music and making a difference. Like many events during the last two years, the muster was another victim of COVID lockdowns. This year it bounced back, with more than 44,000 patrons attending the four-day event. The four-day ticket sales were double those from 2019, making it one of the most successful events. The number of campers broke all records. The muster has put Gympie on the national entertainment stage. Fans from all of the states across Australia and New Zealand descended onto the event which hosted more than 750 Australian musicians. I know numerous performers prioritise the event, with many so eager to come they significantly reduce their fees.

As with events such as these, they cannot go ahead without the support of volunteers. Regional communities rely on volunteers and Gympie punches above its weight when it comes to volunteering. More than 1,500 volunteers from 30 community groups made sure everything ran smoothly. There were familiar faces and new ones. Lifetime Apex member Craig Mathisen was there at the start in 1982 and still supporting the muster, just as much as Berard Webb. The iconic voice of Nick Erby announcing acts is the voice of the muster. Congratulations to muster chairman Greg Cavanagh and Apex for this year's outstanding success and to everyone in the community who loves to make sure that we are still renowned for hosting some of the best events across the country.

Health Care

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (8.53 pm): The LNP has once again been talking down our healthcare workers here in the parliament this week, but what is clear is that it offers no alternative. What policies does it have? What ideas does it have? The answer is none. It has no policies, no ideas. Instead, it has four dot points, so let us dissect what the LNP is offering. Dot point 1—better resources. What could be better than 15,000 new frontline staff since 2015? What could be better than 9,000 new staff in this term of government? What could be better than three new hospitals, 11 new extensions and a new cancer centre as well? What could be better than more than 200 beds at Redcliffe or nearly 200 new beds at Caboolture? Try this: it is certainly better than sacking 4,400 frontline staff as the LNP did. The point is the LNP will never do better than us in supporting our health workers.

What about dot point 2—putting doctors in charge and staff back in charge? No, it will not. Remember this morning we pointed out that doctors are in charge of the birthing and obstetrics wards. They make medical decisions about where to locate patients, but the LNP does not support that. It does not want doctors in charge after all. In fact, I do believe that today it accused these doctors of practising torture on these patients. This dot point just shows its hypocrisy.

Let us look at dot point 3—better triage. I will tell members what this really means: kicking people out of our emergency wards. Let us be honest. It would say to patients, 'You're not too bad. Why don't you go to the private hospital down the road? Exercise your choice as a health consumer in a free market. Go to the private hospital down the road.'

Dot point 4—real-time data. This is one of my favourites. What does it actually mean? How does this actually improve the treatment of Queenslanders? Does the LNP really think putting current waiting times for emergency departments on a website is going to improve treatment? Let us look at this example: a kid in Deception Bay having an asthma attack. His dad goes online and says, 'Let's look and see where there's less waiting time—Caboolture or Redcliffe.' They go to one, but there is a car accident emergency at one and they are thinking, 'Maybe we should go to the other one.' Let me say this: how many staff would it need to put on to maintain a website 24 hours a day to collect that information and update that all of the time? It is plainly ludicrous. This part of its plan is plainly ludicrous. I think it has a secret fifth dot point in its secret plan and one that it does not mention but we see every day here, and that is politicising people's trauma: find cases of human tragedy, squeeze the story out of them and parade it through this parliament.

Scott, Mr Q



Mr MILLAR (Gregory—LNP) (8.56 pm): Tonight we say goodbye to a real Western Queensland legend. Quenton Scott—or as we know him, Scotty—passed away unexpectedly over a week ago which has left the Longreach community in shock. His funeral was in Longreach yesterday and it was packed at the Longreach town hall or the civic centre. He was a partner, a father, a friend, a bushman, a tireless community volunteer and, as many people know, he was the Barefoot Bush Poet.

Scotty moved to Longreach 25 years ago for work and found himself spending his spare time volunteering with his local Lions Club and the Longreach Landcare group plus many organisations. He was everywhere. Scotty was absolutely everywhere. As Doug Allpass said ‘He was tough, spraying prickly acacia trees in summer when temps were over the 40-degree mark.’ He was known to know his plant species. He knew his trees, the birds. He could read tracks on the ground, but Scotty will be remembered for his commitment to his local community.

For the last 12 years he worked for Outback Pioneers and was widely known throughout the country as the barefoot poet. Scotty did not like wearing shoes. He would be immaculately dressed in an ironed shirt, moleskins, hat and belt but no shoes. Obviously we all have a dislike for not wearing something. For Scotty it was shoes. You would see Scotty around town without shoes. It was just Scotty and it was great to catch up with him. Richard Kinnon from Outback Pioneers put it perfectly when he said—

If I could explain Scotty in any way, it would be that he would be the most loyal little fella that I've ever known.

He captured the hearts of thousands, telling stories and sharing his bush poetry by the Thomson River as part of the Outback Pioneers' river cruise.

Scotty was the river cruise, he was the heart of that.

He was more than just a workmate ... he was a real true blue mate.

His legacy is going to live on forever.

Six nights a week for the past decade or so Scotty would leave guests with this verse—

Out where the handshakes are a little stronger, and the smiles last a little longer, well, that's where the west begins.

That was Scotty to a tee. He was a fantastic bloke and I have had the privilege of knowing Scotty since I have been a member of parliament. He would always try to catch up with me and have a yarn. He was always honest. He never gave his political opinions; he just told you what he honestly thought, but he played a significant role in promoting Longreach. The funny thing about Scotty was that he was just Scotty and he was known as the barefoot poet. Like I said, he would be immaculately dressed in an ironed shirt, the moleskins, the belt and the hat on, but he did not want to wear shoes. I guess I do not like wearing suits, but he did not like wearing shoes. To Scotty, to Alison, to his family, to everybody: RIP, Scotty. We will miss you, mate.

Bundaberg Electorate, P&Cs



Mr SMITH (Bundaberg—ALP) (8.59 pm): The best part of this job is meeting the many communities within the Bundaberg community. One of those communities is our P&C communities. Being a former teacher, and still a registered teacher, I have quite a unique perspective on this.

Government members interjected.

Mr SMITH: I know it is a surprise, member for Thuringowa. This unique perspective means I know just how pivotal our P&Cs are to our local schools. I know no-one would interject when giving a good speech about our wonderful P&Cs. It is not only the fundraising that they do or the wonderful events that they put on, but also the management of the tuckshops. I believe I have a shift at Walkervale tuckshop in the next couple of weeks. I am very much looking forward to that. Our P&Cs persist in creating a positive school culture. It is not only the teachers and the staff but also the P&Cs that create that culture. What a wonderful culture we have across all of our schools in Bundaberg. That is why last week I put on a morning tea to acknowledge our local P&Cs. I invited along the principals as well. It was wonderful to have principals Ken Peacock, Geoff Fitzgerald and Sheree McMahon from Walkervale, Branyan and Thabeban. They spoke so glowingly of their P&C executives because they know how vital and important they are to their school communities.

I give special acknowledgement to the P&C executives who were able to be there. Those who were not, we have your chocolates and flowers coming to you. Two ladies from the Bundaberg Special School received a Principal's Award, Catherine Haley and Kelly Doherty, for the outstanding work they

do for Bundaberg Special School. Those who know my family history know how important special schools are to me and my family. I thank Cha Cha Chocolate and the Flower Box for providing the flowers and the chocolates to the principals and to our P&C executives and also thank Pato and his team at the Spotted Dog Railway Hotel for providing the venue. What an amazing job they do.

I extend a big congratulations to the P&C at Bundaberg East State School on their market night. It is the return of the market night after two years missing due to COVID-19. They put on a spectacular event. Well done to president Tamara Sword and treasurer Cathy Critchlow, secretary Sarah Jefferies and, of course, acting principal Leanne McNamara and all of the P&C, parents and staff. It was wonderful to be there. I spun the wheel for about a thousand different prizes. It was absolutely awesome the way all of the parents attended. Students came from the local high schools because they used to go to Bundy East and they wanted to come to the market night and see their old teachers again and really enjoy what was such a special event. Well done to all of our P&Cs across the state.

The House adjourned at 9.02 pm.

ATTENDANCE

Andrew, Bailey, Bates, Bennett, Berkman, Bleijie, Bolton, Boothman, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Crandon, Crawford, Crisafulli, D'Ath, Dametto, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Fentiman, Frecklington, Furner, Gerber, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Hart, Head, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, Janetzki, Katter, Kelly, King S, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Lauga, Leahy, Linard, Lister, Lui, MacMahon, Madden, Mander, Martin, McCallum, McDonald, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Mickelberg, Miles, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Mullen, Nicholls, O'Connor, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pease, Perrett, Pitt, Powell, Power, Pugh, Richards, Robinson, Rowan, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Simpson, Skelton, Smith, Stevens, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Watts, Weir, Whiting