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FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

Wednesday, 26 October 2022

Subject	Page
SPEAKER'S STATEMENTS	3003
Logan Justices of the Peace	3003
School Group Tours.....	3003
TABLED PAPER	3003
MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS	3003
Federal Budget.....	3003
Natural Disasters, Preparedness	3005
War Widows.....	3005
Federal Budget.....	3005
Federal Budget.....	3006
Federal Budget, Education.....	3007
Federal Budget, Health	3007
Fire and Emergency Services.....	3008
<i>Tabled paper:</i> KPMG report, dated 21 November 2021, titled 'Independent Review of Queensland Fire and Emergency Services: Prepared for Queensland Fire and Emergency Services: Final Report'	3008
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Report by Mr Campbell Darby DSC AM, dated 13 March 2020, titled 'SES Review: "Sustaining the SES-Partnering for Change"'	3008
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Report by Mr Campbell Darby DSC AM, titled 'Review into the Volunteer Marine Rescue Organisations in Queensland—Blue Water Review'	3008
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Queensland government, titled 'Good Jobs and Better Fire and Emergency Services to Support Queensland's Great Lifestyle'	3008
Federal Budget, Road and Transport Infrastructure.....	3009
Thompson, Ms E; Federal Budget, Women	3010
Federal Budget, Tourism	3010
Federal Budget, Energy	3011

Table of Contents – Wednesday, 26 October 2022

TRANSPORT AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE	3012
Report	3012
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Transport and Resources Committee: Report No. 24, 57th Parliament—Public	
Works inquiry into the Sumners Road Interchange Upgrade project	3012
NOTICE OF MOTION	3012
Rockhampton Ring Road.....	3012
QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE	3012
Federal Labor Government, Health	3012
Federal Labor Government.....	3013
Federal Budget, Health.....	3014
Federal Budget, Health.....	3014
Federal Budget, Housing	3015
Federal Budget, Water Infrastructure.....	3015
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Extract, dated 12 October 2022, from the Twitter account of the member for	
Nanango, Ms Deb Frecklington MP, regarding Paradise Dam	3016
Federal Budget, Infrastructure	3017
Federal Budget, Infrastructure	3017
Federal Budget	3018
Minister for Health and Ambulance Services	3019
Federal Budget, Education	3019
Minister for Health and Ambulance Services	3020
Federal Budget, Health.....	3020
Mental Health Facilities, Access.....	3021
Federal Budget, Funding Commitments	3021
Hughenden Irrigation Project Corporation	3022
Energy Prices	3022
Obstetric Services.....	3023
Federal Budget	3023
CHILD PROTECTION (OFFENDER REPORTING AND OFFENDER PROHIBITION ORDER) AND OTHER	
LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL	3024
Introduction	3024
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Child Protection (Offender Reporting and Offender Prohibition Order) and Other	
Legislation Amendment Bill 2022	3024
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Child Protection (Offender Reporting and Offender Prohibition Order) and Other	
Legislation Amendment Bill 2022, explanatory notes	3024
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Child Protection (Offender Reporting and Offender Prohibition Order) and Other	
Legislation Amendment Bill 2022, statement of compatibility with human rights	3024
First Reading	3025
Referral to Community Support and Services Committee.....	3025
PUBLIC HEALTH AND OTHER LEGISLATION (COVID-19 MANAGEMENT) AMENDMENT BILL	3025
Second Reading	3025
LAND TAX AND OTHER LEGISLATION (EMPTY HOMES LEVY) AMENDMENT BILL	3035
Introduction	3035
SPEAKER'S RULING	3040
Land Tax and Other Legislation (Empty Homes Levy) Amendment Bill, Order Discharged	3040
PUBLIC HEALTH AND OTHER LEGISLATION (COVID-19 MANAGEMENT) AMENDMENT BILL	3041
Second Reading	3041
Consideration in Detail.....	3045
Clauses 1 to 15, as read, agreed to.	3045
Schedule, as read, agreed to.	3045
Third Reading	3046
Division: Question put—That the bill be now read a third time.....	3046
Resolved in the affirmative.....	3046
Long Title	3046
Division: Question put—That the long title of the bill be agreed to.	3046
Resolved in the affirmative.....	3046
MAJOR SPORTS FACILITIES AMENDMENT BILL	3046
Second Reading	3046
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Article from the <i>Courier-Mail</i> , dated 25 October 2022, titled 'Gabba upgrade	
needed anyway'	3056
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Bundle of photographs depicting rally for East Brisbane State School and	
Raymond Park, Wellington Road on 20 October 2022	3067
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Bundle of photos depicting the Minister for Tourism, Innovation and Sport and	
Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics and Paralympics Sport and Engagement,	
Hon. Stirling Hinchliffe, at sports facilities.....	3075
MOTION	3075
Rockhampton Ring Road.....	3075
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Extract, dated 26 October 2022, from the Facebook page of the member for	
Keppel, Ms Brittany Lauga MP, regarding the Rockhampton Ring Road.....	3081
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Article from the <i>Courier-Mail</i> , dated 26 October 2022, titled 'Federal Budget 2022:	
Labor turns its back on regional Queensland'	3083
Division: Question put—That the amendment be agreed to.	3088
Resolved in the affirmative.....	3088
Division: Question put—That the motion, as amended, be agreed to.	3088
Resolved in the affirmative.....	3088

Table of Contents – Wednesday, 26 October 2022

MAJOR SPORTS FACILITIES AMENDMENT BILL	3088
Consideration in Detail	3088
Clauses 1 to 11, as read, agreed to.	3088
Third Reading.....	3088
Long Title.....	3089
INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL.....	3089
Second Reading.....	3089
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Education, Employment and Training Committee: Report No. 22—Industrial Relations and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022, government response	3089
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Bundle of photographs regarding Queensland Nurses and Midwives Union (QNMU) federal election material	3097
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Email, dated 29 July 2022, from the member for Kawana, Mr Jarrod Bleijie MP, to the Crime and Corruption Commission, titled 'Submission to Influencing Practices'	3100
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Organisational chart titled 'QAS Group and NPAA Services Organisational Chart as at 2 November 2021'	3101
ADJOURNMENT	3112
Buderim Electorate, Volunteers	3112
Cairns Bula 7s	3112
Burnett Electorate, Fire and Emergency Services	3113
Sharp, Mr C; Caboolture, Small Business Network	3114
Floods, Recovery Assistance; Resilient Homes Fund.....	3114
50 Shades of Pink Gala Ball; Clamp, Mr D and Mrs N.....	3115
Regional Queensland, Health Services	3115
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Letter, undated, from 'Regional Clinician' to the members of the Parliament, describing impacts of the Health Employment Directive No. 12/21 for Queensland Health staff in the Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health Service area	3115
Nicklin Electorate	3116
Southport Electorate.....	3116
Vela, Mrs L; Lytton Electorate	3117
ATTENDANCE	3118

WEDNESDAY, 26 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.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENTS

Logan Justices of the Peace



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, this morning in the gallery we have a group of 20 justices of the peace from Logan. They are here at parliament to have a morning tea with the Attorney-General and are in the gallery to observe proceedings. I welcome the Logan JPs to the parliament today. I also notice we have a large gallery attendance and I am sure reference will be made to that in the very near future.

School Group Tours



Mr SPEAKER: I wish to advise members that we will be visited in the gallery this morning by students and teachers from: Darling Heights State School in the electorate of Toowoomba South; the Islamic College of Brisbane in the electorate of Stretton; Mount Nebo State School in the electorate of Pine Rivers; and Genesis Christian College in the electorate of Kurwongbah.

TABLED PAPER

TABLING OF DOCUMENTS (SO 32)

MINISTERIAL PAPER

The following ministerial paper was tabled by the Clerk—

Minister for Health and Ambulance Services and Leader of the House (Hon. D'Ath)—

[1743](#) Business Committee: Report No. 2, 57th Parliament—Annual Report 2021-2022

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Federal Budget



Hon. A PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympics) (9.32 am): Last night's federal budget delivered on much-needed cost-of-living relief for Queensland families including: a \$4.7 billion package to deliver cheaper child care for more than 1.2 million families across the country; a \$530 million boost to paid parental leave, increasing by six weeks to six months from 2026; free TAFE places with 180,000 starting next year and 20,000 more university places; and an historic investment in housing with a National Housing Accord to target one million homes across the nation. The \$10 billion Housing Australia Future Fund has been locked in with an initial \$350 million for another 10,000 affordable homes. The National Housing Accord will be backed by our government's \$2 billion Housing Investment Fund. Importantly, there is another \$200 million for remote Indigenous housing. Q Shelter has said—

Both the federal and state government have listened to the many voices of people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

The budget backs good Queensland jobs in renewable energy, manufacturing, medical manufacturing, agriculture and critical minerals with a \$15 billion National Reconstruction Fund. There is another \$204 million to protect our iconic Great Barrier Reef. Regional projects include: a Townsville

hydrogen hub, nearly \$72 million; a North Queensland simulation park in Townsville to support the defence industry, \$32 million; support for the Lansdown Eco-Industrial Precinct, \$22 million; the Cairns Marine precinct and CQU's CBD Cairns campus, \$200 million; a new Services Australia Cairns Smart Centre with 100 staff; and \$600 million for Paradise Dam.

There is \$2.1 billion in new transport infrastructure and more than \$1.4 billion for New South Wales. I will say that again: there is \$2.1 billion in new transport infrastructure—and more than \$1.4 billion for New South Wales—including: \$866.4 million in Bruce Highway upgrades; \$400 million for the inland freight route; \$400 million for beef corridors; and \$210 million for the Kuranda Range Road upgrade. I am disappointed that there are delays to some transport projects and I will absolutely be discussing that with the federal government.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members to my right. The debate on that budget will happen in another chamber, not this chamber.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Despite these delays there is more funding for Queensland—

Mr Power interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: I am sorry, Premier. Member for Logan, you are warned under the standing orders.

Ms PALASZCZUK: The budget delivers \$2.5 billion to fix Australia's aged care system, taking pressure off our hospitals. There is \$235 million for urgent care clinics to reduce the pressure on our emergency departments. There is funding to improve primary care in rural and regional Australia. Another \$375 million is committed to fund half of the Queensland Cancer Centre. The extension of the COVID-19 response funding until the end of the year and other adjustments mean an extra \$1 billion in health funding to Queensland than under the Morrison government. I repeat: \$1 billion more.

Honourable members interjected.

Ms Boyd interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, member for Pine Rivers. Members to my left will cease their interjections or I will start naming members.

Ms PALASZCZUK: There is more work to do at National Cabinet when it comes to funding the health system, but the Albanese budget delivers more for Queensland's hospitals and primary care. I will continue to advocate for fifty-fifty funding for public hospitals and lifting the 6.5 per cent cap on federal funding for activity.

I expect more to come for Queensland in future budgets. The budget flags future funding for the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games. We are just starting detailed discussions on funding support for the Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan. The Prime Minister has been very positive in the discussions I have had with him on building new pumped hydro energy storage dams. Queensland will benefit from the \$20 billion Rewiring the Nation fund and the \$15 billion National Reconstruction Fund. We welcome those funds.

We are continuing to work on a funding partnership to connect Townsville to the North West Minerals Province and to progress the Hughenden irrigation scheme and support the proponent. All of those projects will mean more investment in Queensland's regions and good jobs. I will always put Queensland first and make sure that future funding stays in our regions.

The federal budget sets out a pathway to navigate through the challenging global conditions and waves of inflation that lie ahead of us. There is welcome cost-of-living relief for Queensland families and support for more good jobs in emerging industries. We have always advocated for more funding for Queensland and we will not stop now.

Honourable members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I am happy to talk about the budget later in question time. Ask away. There is a very stark contrast between Morrison and Albanese—a very stark contrast.

Mr Lister interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Southern Downs will cease his interjections. There is no benefit in yelling louder than anyone else to be heard.

Natural Disasters, Preparedness



Hon. A PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympics) (9.38 am): Since 2011 our state has faced 100 natural disasters that have come with a collective damage bill in excess of \$20 billion. We know that this summer the weather bureau is predicting an increased threat of flooding and an increased and early threat of tropical cyclones as we experience a third La Nina season in a row. We can never be too ready into the future. I want to thank every single fire officer, SES worker, rural firefighter, marine rescue crew member and QPS member who all go above and beyond to keep our communities safe. I pay tribute to their efforts each and every year when they walk toward danger to ensure our safety.

Today our government will announce key and historic reforms that will deliver improved and streamlined emergency services for a much safer Queensland. The Minister for Fire and Emergency Services will in a moment provide comprehensive detail of what these key reforms will involve, but they are part of our government's determined effort to make sure Queensland is in the best position to respond to ongoing and more intense natural disaster events, and in the best position to respond to these impacts.

The changes to be announced today follow an independent review of the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services which has presented a raft of recommendations, all of which we accept in principle. To achieve that, our government will commit more than \$400 million over the next four years, investing in almost 500 additional frontline personnel and delivering better frontline services for all Queenslanders. This is in stark contrast to the former LNP government which cut services right across the state. The minister will outline the restructure in a moment. Given the fact that we are the state most exposed to natural disasters, it is imperative that we are prepared. What my government is doing today is ensuring that.

War Widows



Hon. A PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympics) (9.40 am): Last Thursday, 19 October, Queensland set another first—the first state or territory to celebrate War Widows Day, an annual celebration to honour and recognise the incredible work of our war widows and widowers, those dedicated Queenslanders who provide ongoing crucial support and care to those who lost loved ones defending our country who made us all safe and secure. Queensland has the biggest veterans population with 163,000 and we must ensure that their futures are secure as well. That is just what War Widows Queensland do, providing services, care and support for those left behind.

We chose 19 October in recognition of Jessie Vasey who was born on that day. Jessie set up the first War Widows Guild 75 years ago and it grew into what is now War Widows Australia. To mark this occasion, I hosted a lunch in her honour with members of War Widows Queensland. I want to thank my assistant minister. I also want to thank the Minister for Education for attending as well. City landmarks like—

Mr Bleijie: I was there, too!

Ms PALASZCZUK: Yes, and I acknowledged you on the day as well. It was a good day. It was lovely to be joined by members of her family on that day as well. City landmarks like the Story Bridge and Parliament House were lit up in blue and white, the War Widows colours, and we have moved to ensure Jessie's legacy will never be forgotten. The government is providing \$10,000 so the State Library can set up an oral history of Jessie's work. It will be posted on the library website and on the Anzac Square and Memorial Galleries and will also be included in the library's school curriculum—a fitting, lasting tribute to Jessie Vasey. War Widows Queensland is among 203 organisations that receive funding from our Anzac Day Trust programs. They deserve and need our support and recognition. It is why we should mark War Widows Day each and every year.

Federal Budget



Hon. SJ MILES (Murrumba—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics Infrastructure) (9.42 am): Last night's federal budget will deliver for Queenslanders. It is a budget that puts people first, helping with the cost of living, with cheaper child care, cheaper medicines and more paid parental leave. It is a budget that will deliver a million more homes over five years to ease the pressure in the housing market.

Q Shelter said this morning, 'In just one week, the Queensland Housing Summit and the federal budget have changed the trajectory for housing in Queensland and Australia.' That is because this is a federal government that will work with us, not against us. Indeed, the National Housing Accord will be a first, acknowledging what we have been saying, that we need all levels of government and industry to work together.

There is \$3 billion put aside for natural disasters. That will be important as we go into another La Nina while we are still recovering from the floods this year. The Albanese government has fulfilled its commitment to remodel the Emergency Response Fund into the Disaster Ready Fund and allocate up to \$200 million per year for disaster mitigation projects such as flood levees, cyclone shelters, fire breaks and evacuation centres.

In Far North Queensland, the budget included \$150 million towards the \$300 million expansion of the Cairns Marine Precinct. We are working in partnership with the Albanese government to enable the maintenance, repair and overhaul of more and bigger ships in Cairns. A new common-user facility at the precinct will include a 5,000-tonne shift lift, enabling ships up to 120 metres long to be repaired and maintained on hard-stand areas. It is expected the expansion will open the region to more economic opportunities and create up to 150 local jobs. A common-user facility will ensure Cairns continues to ride a wave of success as northern Australia's home of vessel repair, maintenance and overhaul, and allow local service providers to pursue additional defence maintenance contracts. Our government has been committed to this project since day one and now, thanks to a federal Labor government matching our investment, dollar for dollar, we are able to deliver this significant expansion.

Also in Cairns, \$107.5 million has been committed to the Cairns Water Security project, again matching the Palaszczuk government's commitment, and the Australian government confirmed the \$600 million needed to restore Paradise Dam to its original capacity. There is acknowledgement that the federal government will continue working closely with us in preparation for the Olympic and Paralympic Games. This budget is a good start, refocussing on the priorities of Queenslanders. I want to congratulate Queenslanders Jim Chalmers on his first budget. We look forward to working with him on many more to come.

Federal Budget



Hon. CR DICK (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (9.45 am): Last night's federal budget steps up to the challenges facing our nation. There are many good things in the federal budget for Queensland—cheaper child care, cheaper medicines and more affordable housing. After five long years where the federal LNP housing minister would not even convene a meeting of housing ministers, it is great to have a federal Labor government that has heard our government's call for united action to respond to the housing pressures facing the nation, a response that sees all levels of government working together with industry and big sources of capital like superannuation funds.

Queensland led the way with our partnership between the Queensland Investment Corporation, the Brisbane Housing Company and Queensland's own Australian Retirement Trust, harnessing superannuation investment to get more affordable housing onto the market. The Albanese Labor government has followed our lead with the establishment of the Housing Accord, bringing investors, industry and government together.

On health, we all remember the last LNP federal budget which cut funding to Queensland hospitals. In contrast, the Albanese Labor government has increased our health funding by \$1.1 billion over the forward estimates. Health funding going up instead of going down is a change we should all welcome. We also welcome the \$2.9 billion commitment to establish 50 Medicare urgent care clinics which will help more Queenslanders get to see a GP, taking pressure off public hospitals.

The Albanese Labor government's commitment to increasing childcare subsidies and expanding paid parental leave address major constraints on productivity. They will enable more women to get into the workforce and back into the workforce sooner.

We also welcome the budget support for road and infrastructure upgrades, like \$866 million for continued Bruce Highway upgrades, \$400 million for the inland freight route from Charters Towers to the New South Wales border, another \$400 million for beef corridors, and \$210 million for the Kuranda Range road upgrade.

This budget is framed at a time of unprecedented global instability and at a time when our nation faces unprecedented challenges. Unlike the Queensland budget, which has recorded the largest surplus on record, the federal government is burdened by nearly a trillion dollars of LNP debt and deficit.


It is the legacy of a decade of roting, waste and pork-barrelling. Let me say that again: it is the legacy of a decade of roting, waste and pork-barrelling by the LNP. Sadly, the previous LNP government wasted billions on rorts in southern states, contributing to inflationary pressures and construction that must be addressed.

Mr Lister interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Southern Downs, you are warned under the standing orders. There is no need for those kind of outbursts.

Mr DICK: The federal budget forecasts show just how challenging the times ahead are for our nation. Continued inflationary pressures, the war in Europe and energy prices will test us all, but they also show that Queensland, under the Palaszczuk Labor government, will continue to be the powerhouse of the nation. We are as well placed as anywhere in Australia to deal with the challenges that lie ahead, to maintain and strengthen our great lifestyle, to deliver the better services and the good jobs that make Queensland the place to be.

Federal Budget, Education

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (9.49 am): Mr Speaker, I acknowledge John Oliver and members in the gallery. What a difference an election makes. The first budget of the Albanese government is solid and sensible, delivers on their election promises, and is exactly what the country needs after years of chaos and neglect under the LNP with nothing to show for a \$1 trillion debt. What an impact it is going to have on Queensland families, schools and workers.

Opposition members interjected.


Ms GRACE: They do not like the truth. The \$4.5 billion plan to make child care cheaper is an absolute game changer and will support more than 285,000 families right across our state. After a decade of policy neglect and rising childcare costs, we finally have a federal government that gets it. Targeted, affordable childcare cost-of-living relief is good for families, good for children and good for the economy by improving workforce participation, particularly for women. It goes hand in hand with the Palaszczuk government's \$1 billion investment to make kindy cheaper or free for 40,000 Queenslanders, with full details available very soon.

The Albanese government also delivered on its \$530 million promise to deliver the biggest expansion to paid parental leave since it was introduced, reaching six months' paid leave in 2026. This budget also invests more than \$770 million for better schools, happier and healthier students and more qualified teachers, including mental health support and an investment in respectful relationships education. It complements the investment the Palaszczuk government is making with our \$100 million wellbeing program, our new respectful relationships material and our nation-leading EB agreement.

There is an investment in the future of our education workforce as well. We welcome \$485 million for 20,000 extra university places. There are 4,000 places for teachers and educators, including around 1,470 early education teachers. Five thousand bursaries worth up to \$40,000 will be given to Indigenous, remote and rural students who aspire to teach, with a bonus \$2,000 payment if they complete their final year practical placement in a regional area. I am excited about the \$14.1 million plan to teach First Nation languages in primary schools. Speaker, 480,000 fee-free TAFE and vocational training places will support industries experiencing skill shortages, including early education, with extra support for priority cohorts including women, Indigenous Australians and those living with a disability.

There is no doubt that this is a great family-friendly Labor budget. It is great for schools and students, it is great for workers and parents, and it is great for Queensland.

Federal Budget, Health

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (9.52 am): Last night's federal budget was the first step in rebuilding Australia's shattered primary healthcare system after a decade of neglect. After a cut to Queensland hospital funding only in March this year, we now have an Albanese Labor government increasing our health funding by \$1.1 billion over the forward estimates. Total national health reform funding for Queensland is projected to rise by \$861.9 million, assisted greatly by the extension of the National Partnership for COVID-19 Response to the end of this year which the former government rejected. The Albanese government is also delivering \$375 million towards our Queensland Cancer Centre to provide world-leading cancer care to Queenslanders, which we have already set aside \$750 million for in this year's Queensland Health and Hospitals Plan.

As every member in this House knows, access to a GP and primary healthcare services has been in rapid decline in this country, and it is pleasing to see a federal government that recognises the problem and is willing to work with states and territories to address pressures on our health systems. Speaker, \$229.7 million for the GP grants program and \$235 million for urgent care centres will improve access to primary care and reduce pressure on our hospitals so that we can focus on the specialised services they were designed for.

Rural and remote Queenslanders will also benefit from the \$143.3 million to be invested in rural and regional primary care services, training, workforce incentives and trials for innovative models of care, including \$13.2 million to assist James Cook University to provide an additional 20 Commonwealth sponsored medical school places and establish a new medical training campus in Cairns. Mr Speaker, \$314.8 million over five years to strengthen First Nations health means more funds to complement Queensland's investment to help eradicate rheumatic heart disease, address and prevent chronic disease, and provide renal dialysis to First Nations people.

Queensland is also partnering with the federal government's \$38.5 million newborn screening program, complementing our June announcement to expand testing to up to 80 new conditions. \$2.5 billion for aged care will help our most vulnerable Queenslanders access care in home, and a 29 per cent reduction in the PBS maximum copayment, budgeted at \$787.1 million, will greatly assist Queenslanders who are struggling to make ends meet.

In addition, states and territories continue to meet monthly with the federal government to advance analysis and consideration of short-term measures to improve health care in Australia and funding reform opportunities, including: the removal of the 6.5 per cent annual cap; fifty-fifty funding; and the suitability of current funding partnerships and methodologies in the National Efficient Price in a post-pandemic world. The 2022 Albanese federal budget is a budget that puts the health of Queenslanders first.

Fire and Emergency Services



Hon. MT RYAN (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (9.55 am): Mr Speaker, I begin by acknowledging the brave Queenslanders of our dedicated Fire and Emergency Services agencies who are in the gallery today. It is great for them to join us for this important announcement.

This morning I announced a number of key reforms that will deliver better fire and emergency services for a safer Queensland. These changes followed an independent review of Queensland Fire and Emergency Services which also considered the findings of the State Emergency Service review and the Blue Water Review, among others. I table these reviews and the government's response for the benefit of the House.

Tabled paper: KPMG report, dated 21 November 2021, titled 'Independent Review of Queensland Fire and Emergency Services: Prepared for Queensland Fire and Emergency Services: Final Report' [[1744](#)].

Tabled paper: Report by Mr Campbell Darby DSC AM, dated 13 March 2020, titled 'SES Review: "Sustaining the SES-Partnering for Change"' [[1745](#)].

Tabled paper: Report by Mr Campbell Darby DSC AM, titled 'Review into the Volunteer Marine Rescue Organisations in Queensland—Blue Water Review' [[1746](#)].

Tabled paper: Queensland government, titled 'Good Jobs and Better Fire and Emergency Services to Support Queensland's Great Lifestyle' [[1747](#)].

In relation to the QFES independent review, the government has carefully considered the recommendations alongside the findings of the Inspector-General of Emergency Management's review into the South-East Queensland rainfall and flooding event and has resolved to accept all recommendations in principle with the exception of recommendation 12, which was not accepted. Recommendation 12 relates to the introduction of a new levy. Not only does this government reject that recommendation but this government is also acutely aware of cost-of-living pressures facing Queenslanders, and we will do everything we can to provide cost-of-living relief for Queenslanders.

To implement the recommendations the Palaszczuk government will commit more than \$400 million over the next four years, investing in almost 500 additional frontline personnel and delivering better frontline services for all Queenslanders. These reforms will ensure Queensland is best positioned to respond to the ongoing and expected intensification of impacts from natural disasters, including bushfires and floods, as a result of climate change.

They will see a restructure of emergency and fire services which will include the creation of a dedicated Fire Services Department and the transition of the State Emergency Service, volunteer marine rescue services and disaster management functions to the Queensland Police Service. The

change will respect and maintain the identity of these rightly proud services. The State Emergency Service, Marine Rescue Queensland and the Rural Fire Service will all become separate entities within their respective host departments with their own dedicated budgets. The significant additional funding and resourcing provided will see a watershed investment in these volunteer entities, enhancing service delivery with more personnel and more equipment. There will also be a boost to the ranks of the Fire and Rescue Service by bettering our election commitment and now delivering 500 firefighters over six years—all up, an extra 143 firefighters.

To oversee these critical reforms the government will stand up a reform implementation task force led by State Disaster Coordinator Steve Gollschewski. The task force will ensure that the required changes will be undertaken in a measured and considered way and will not have any impact on preparations and responses to the upcoming severe weather season.

Importantly, I would like to assure all QFES employees that this Labor government values job security both now and into the future. It always has and it always will. To the members of Queensland Fire and Emergency Services, we thank you for all you do. You do your job, you do your duty, and now it is time for us to work with you as we together build better fire and emergency services for Queensland.


The approach that the government is taking has been welcomed by stakeholders, and many of them are in the gallery this morning. These outstanding Queenslanders dedicate themselves to keeping us safe and we owe them a debt of gratitude. While I would never wish to upset you, Mr Speaker, or the standing orders, I take this opportunity to applaud these brave Queenslanders and I invite other members to do so—thank you, members. I also acknowledge—and it is unusual to do so—a member of my team, Nick Barter, for his exceptional policy work in respect of this proposal.

Queensland experiences more natural disasters than any other state in the country, and it is crucial that we continue to be well prepared. These changes will provide better alignment of services and allow the state to enhance its disaster and emergency response into the future. More personnel, more resources, focused services, better alignment—I am proud of this government commitment.

An incident having occurred in the public gallery—

Mr SPEAKER: Order in the gallery! Before calling the minister, I remind all members that there are appropriate ways to show appreciation in this chamber without acclamation.

Federal Budget, Road and Transport Infrastructure


 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (10.00 am): Mr Speaker, with your indulgence, I acknowledge the birthday today of my mother, Beryl Bailey, who is 93 years old today. I need to get her into *Hansard* otherwise I get in trouble.

I welcome the Albanese Labor government's federal budget and its commitment to tackling a trillion dollars worth of debt and the soaring inflation left by the Morrison LNP government. It is a federal government tackling the cost of living for Queenslanders and Australians after the inflation mess left by the defeated Morrison government. Importantly, unlike the fake March Morrison government budget, this budget will actually be voted on by the federal parliament. There is funding in there that Queensland can depend upon. Queensland and the nation will not be left hanging, as we were in March when the previous government had the numbers to pass and vote upon the budget and chose not to.

This budget delivers more than \$5 billion in new funding towards road and transport infrastructure projects across Queensland, including: \$586 million towards the \$733 million upgrade of the Bruce Highway between Anzac Avenue and Uhlmann Road; \$400 million towards Queensland beef corridors to keep Queensland industries moving; \$210 million towards safety upgrades in Far North Queensland on Kuranda Range Road as we continue to roll out the intelligent transport system there; \$200 million towards the widening of the Bruce Highway between Anzac Avenue and Dohles Rocks Road; \$200 million towards the \$250 million upgrade of the Bruce Highway between Rockhampton and Gladstone; a confirmed \$1.6 billion initial funding allocation on the Sunshine Coast direct line and \$1.1 billion towards the Kuraby to Beenleigh rail upgrade, which is a really important project for our growth; \$133 million towards the Boundary Road, Coopers Plains level crossing removal, which was matched by the Palaszczuk government in this year's record state budget—our seventh record QTRIP; \$100 million towards the Cavendish Road level crossing removal; \$22 million towards the upgrade of Loganlea Road; more than half a billion dollars for the Gympie bypass; continuing funding for the Cairns Southern Access Corridor; Riverway Drive in Townsville; \$5 million towards the \$10 million Gympie Road planning study; \$4 million towards the Charters Towers industrial precinct; and \$3.4 million for the Ipswich to Springfield rail extension business case as we plan for better connectivity between the growing regions of Ipswich and Springfield.

In fact, of new priority rail and road projects across the nation, Queensland is getting more than 25 per cent of national funding—finally our fair share from a federal government. With the budget papers in hand, the Palaszczuk Labor government can now get on with delivering our record program of road and transport infrastructure across Queensland—our seventh record QTRIP in eight budgets—supporting more than 25,000 good jobs, delivering better services and protecting Queensland's great lifestyle.

Thompson, Ms E; Federal Budget, Women

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (10.03 am): Can I start by extending my thoughts and deepest sympathies to the family and friends of Emily Thompson. The 18-year-old woman has been described as smart, kind and loving but she tragically had her life cut short, allegedly at the hands of her ex-boyfriend. As I have stated many times in this House, our government remains absolutely committed to eliminating all forms of violence against women.

Women across Australia have raised their voices. They have been calling for change. They have been calling for gender equality and an end to the gender pay gap. They have been calling for economic security, affordable child care and secure housing. Because of these women, we have a national conversation focused on women's safety and their economic security. After so many years of these calls going unanswered, I am so pleased to see women back at the centre of the federal budget. The chief executive of the Business Council of Australia, Jennifer Westacott, backed these reforms, saying—

... advancing women is not about the budget, it's about changing social norms. It's about how we think about women in society, how we respect women, how we think about them in work, how we think about family structures,

The plan for cheaper child care, coupled with modernising paid parental leave, will promote a more equal distribution of paid and unpaid work within households. This will directly reduce barriers to women engaging in the workforce and strengthen their economic independence.

Parenthood executive director, Georgie Dent, has rightly observed that these reforms are now on the agenda 'because of decades of campaigning largely led by women'. She said, 'This budget reflects a government willing to listen to their voices.'

Further barriers will be reduced by fee-free TAFE and community-based vocational education places targeting priority groups, including women and those studying in non-traditional fields. It strengthens housing affordability and stability for women, especially those experiencing violence, older women and women from rural and regional areas.


This budget also delivers on women's health, safety and wellbeing, particularly for First Nations women. This budget will complement the significant body of reform that Queensland is undertaking to end domestic, family and sexual violence. These initiatives will be shaped by the voices of victim survivors and recognise and address the disproportionate frequency and severity of violence against First Nations women.

It supports the hardworking and already stretched frontline services who deliver support to victim survivors every day. It builds on investment in programs to support perpetrators of domestic and family violence to change their behaviour. This includes trialling innovative ways to hold perpetrators to account. We know how overwhelmed these services have been and this budget shows a clear commitment to supporting frontline services and victim survivors. The voices of Australian women are being heard. This budget will deliver a pathway towards gender equality.

Mr NICHOLLS: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. On a matter of clarification, the Attorney referred to a matter that I believe is in breach of the sub judice rule of the standing orders, which is section 233(2). That section requires that no matter be mentioned that is currently before a court, particularly in a criminal matter, after a charge has been laid.

Mr SPEAKER: I will take that under consideration. However, the matter was mentioned and left at the mention. I will review that. Thank you, member for Clayfield.

Federal Budget, Tourism

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Tourism, Innovation and Sport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics and Paralympics Sport and Engagement) (10.07 am): With international tourists starting to return in larger numbers, now more than ever Queensland tourism operators need the federal government in their corner. The Albanese Labor government's first budget

delivered by Jim Chalmers builds the foundations for the recovery of Queensland's \$6 billion international tourism industry. It includes a welcome \$48 million nationwide investment over four years in workforce recruitment, upskilling tourism staff and tourism marketing.

Queensland leads the nation in domestic overnight visitor expenditure, at \$19.6 billion, but there is no doubt that workplace shortages are a handbrake on the tourism industry's pandemic recovery. Traditionally, international backpackers have made a significant contribution to the industry's workforce, as members will be aware, so I know tourism operators will welcome the Albanese government's \$36 million plan to clear a backlog of visa applications, including international working holiday-makers who want to work, live and play in paradise.

The federal budget honours a \$15 million commitment to Tourism Tropical North Queensland to bring international visitors back sooner. TTNQ CEO, Mark Olsen, has said that the budget's three-year investment will generate more than \$100 million in extra overseas visitor spending and support almost 1,000 jobs in the Far North. Marketing will focus on the Far North's traditional strengths, with a clear emphasis on nature experiences that the region is so famous for.

Queensland's recent independent Tourism Industry Reference Panel action plan identifies that the state's natural attractions are one of the priorities for reshaping our visitor economy to welcome the world in the lead-up to 2032. That has been recognised in the Albanese government's first budget with a \$1.2 billion contribution towards the Wangetti Trail in Far North Queensland under the National Tourism Icons Program.

Members will have noticed Tourism Australia's \$125 million global tourism campaign. Ruby the kangaroo and her little unicorn companion are on the air overseas and inviting the world to come and say g'day. Tourism and Events Queensland is supercharging Queensland's international brand with Tourism Australia's global initiative. Our new video campaign 'Say G'day the Queensland Way' highlights Queensland's world-class visitor experiences. We are encouraging international visitors to stay longer, enjoying Queensland's great lifestyle and supporting more good Queensland jobs.

Federal Budget, Energy



Hon. MC de BRENNI (Springwood—ALP) (Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement) (10.10 am): This morning the Prime Minister has responded to federal Treasury forecasts the war in Ukraine would see global high energy prices persist. Here in Queensland, though, our Energy and Jobs Plan sets us on a path to achieve our state's independence from those global energy markets. We have laid out a bold plan—a plan to shield this state and every Queensland business and household from the volatility of fossil fuel markets, a plan that will deliver \$150 lower energy bills by 2032.

We know that Queensland's most vulnerable need this protection more than ever—Queenslanders, especially like those in the Torres Strait, whose very existence is threatened by global warming. That is why we are taking urgent action on climate change and the cost of living. Right now, many of Queensland's remote communities are more exposed to the fossil fuel price shocks reverberating globally. They are reliant in many ways on diesel fuel but, just like every other Queenslanders, they deserve to share the benefits of clean, reliable and affordable energy into the future. That is why our Energy and Jobs Plan takes real action to protect Queenslanders from expensive global energy markets, especially in remote communities.

Last night the federal Treasurer, Jim Chalmers, backed our plan. The Albanese government matched our commitment with \$5.5 million to co-design and commence implementation of Australia's First Nations Clean Energy Strategy. They have committed \$15.9 million to establish the Torres Strait Climate Change Centre of Excellence. They announced \$83.8 million on top of our \$10 million to develop and deploy microgrid technology across First Nations communities. It is a plan for all Queenslanders wherever they live, a plan for energy independence.


When commentators talk about a global energy crisis, what they are really referring to is a global fossil fuel energy price crisis. There are only three ways to break from that: first, hope the war in Ukraine ends overnight, which is unlikely; build cheaper, firm renewable energy—that is our plan; and address the effective operation of the market, which is the next step. We welcome comments from the federal Treasurer to that effect. He said—

I think any reasonable Government, facing these kinds of price hikes for electricity and gas, needs to consider a broader suite of regulatory intervention.

In 3,178 days in office, the most significant regulatory action we saw from the LNP was a secret regulation that was taken to the Governor-General on the eve of the election to mislead Australians and hide energy prices. They misled Australians, and now Peter Dutton denies this betrayal. This is a copy of Angus Taylor's secret regulation to hide energy price rises from all Australians. That is what they did. They did it because they knew that those price rises would lay bare the results of their energy policy failure. Together, Labor governments in this nation are turbocharging Australia's energy transformation, despite where Angus Taylor and Peter Dutton have put this nation. We welcome the Albanese budget and commit to working in partnership to deliver our Energy and Jobs Plan, a plan for more jobs, lower prices and a stronger economy.

TRANSPORT AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Report


 **Mr KING** (Kurwongbah—ALP) (10.13 am): I lay upon the table of the House report No. 24 of the Transport and Resources Committee titled *Public works inquiry into the Sumners Road Interchange Upgrade project*.

Tabled paper: Transport and Resources Committee: Report No. 24, 57th Parliament—Public Works inquiry into the Sumners Road Interchange Upgrade project [\[1748\]](#).

This report presents a summary of the Transport and Resources Committee's examination of the public works inquiry into the Sumners Road Interchange Upgrade project in furtherance of our committee's responsibility to scrutinise public works within our portfolio area of responsibility. I commend this report to the House.

NOTICE OF MOTION

Rockhampton Ring Road


 **Mr MINNIKIN** (Chatsworth—LNP) (10.14 am): I give notice that I will move—

That this House notes the importance of delivering the Rockhampton Ring Road as planned and the failure of the members for Rockhampton and Keppel in advocating for their communities.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Mr SPEAKER: Question time will conclude today at 11.14 am.

Federal Labor Government, Health

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (10.14 am): My question is to the Premier. On dozens of occasions the Premier injected herself into the federal election campaign telling Queenslanders the only way to secure fifty-fifty health funding was to vote Labor. Has the Premier failed Queenslanders by not getting our fair share of funding to heal the Queensland health crisis?

Mr Brown interjected.

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

Ms PALASZCZUK: The answer is no because on this side of the House we deliver for Queenslanders. Finally, like a breath of fresh air, we have a federal Labor government that we can work with, that we can communicate with and that we can talk to. In the first four to six weeks of the Albanese Labor government, I had more phone calls and discussions with the Prime Minister than I had with the three former LNP prime ministers. There we go. That speaks volumes.

Finally, we have a federal Treasurer who actually understands Queensland. What we are seeing is an understanding that families are feeling the cost-of-living pressures and that child care is important to families in terms of enabling women to be able to contribute to and work in the workforce. We have a Prime Minister who understands that our energy transformation is going to—

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

Mr Dick: Stop talking over women. Stop shouting down women.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, Treasurer and Leader of the Opposition! I will wait for silence, members. Correct titles will also be used in this House.

Ms PALASZCZUK: The federal Labor government understands that there is an aged-care crisis in this state and is prepared to stand up and do something about it. The federal Labor Prime Minister has been a former transport infrastructure minister and understands that a whole transport infrastructure system is needed across the nation and he will deliver nation-building infrastructure. What we have for the first time in Canberra is someone Queensland can work with. For the first time in 7½ years we—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, member for Buderim and member for Nanango!

Ms PALASZCZUK:—someone we can work with, someone who listens and someone who visits.

Mr Bleijie interjected.

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

Ms PALASZCZUK: We will not talk about the Leader of the Opposition federally. How is that going? How is that working out for you? How is that going?

(Time expired)

Federal Labor Government

Mr CRISAFULLI: My question is to the Premier. The Premier promised a new era of cooperation with Canberra. With projects cut across the state, when will the Premier pick up the phone and deliver Queensland's fair share?

Mr Smith interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Member for Bundaberg, you are warned under the standing orders. The question was not finished. I ask that questions be heard in silence.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I say to the member for Broadwater that for seven years we had fights with the Prime Minister and not once did the federal government pick up the phone and fight for Queensland. On this side of the House we fight for Queenslanders; those opposite fight amongst themselves.

Government members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right. They probably do not know how to use it. I say to the member for Broadwater it took the former prime minister right up until an hour before the deadline for the Olympics to say, 'Yes. We'll sign up and go fifty-fifty.' It was the final hour. The time was ticking. It was the final hour when he decided to sign up to the Olympics.

I say to those opposite: how did the former LNP federal governments go when it came to housing? Health, housing—how did that work out? Remember Cross River Rail? There was no money for Cross River Rail.

Government members: Zero!

Ms PALASZCZUK: There was zero, but we went ahead with it ourselves. We went ahead ourselves and committed to that nation-leading project. It was No. 1 on the infrastructure list and it was completely disregarded.

Opposition members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: It is good to see they are awake today. We know that the—

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Kawana, you are warned under the standing orders. This is not stand-up time.

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members to my right.

Mr Butcher interjected.

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

Ms PALASZCZUK: For 7½ years we had an LNP federal government that did not listen to Queenslanders, that would not talk to us and that treated us with disdain. Now we finally have a government that is prepared to work with us. The housing ministers did not even have a meeting.

Mr Dick: For five years.

Ms PALASZCZUK: For five years the housing ministers across the nation did not even have a meeting because the LNP do not care about housing. They do not care about it. They cut funding to remote Indigenous housing in this state—a shameful record, absolutely shameful. Here we are with a federal—

Mr Crisafulli: Do your homework.

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

Ms PALASZCZUK: He is just like Campbell Newman. I sit here and all I see is images of ghosts. It is like Banquo's ghost sitting there.

(Time expired)

Federal Budget, Health

Mr SULLIVAN: My question is of the Premier and Minister for the Olympics. Will the Premier update the House on how the federal budget delivers for the health care of Queenslanders?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Stafford for the question. The member for Stafford is in touch with his community and understands how important health care is for families in his community and across the state. The member for Stafford also knows how important it is to have a hospital dedicated to looking after families and patients who are going through cancer.

What the health minister did during the most recent budget is announce, along with the Treasurer, the Deputy Premier and myself, a dedicated cancer hospital in Queensland. What we are seeing from the federal government is a federal government that has compassion and actually understands that families go through a really tough time and that has put the money on the table to support that cancer centre.

Last night the federal government handed down \$375 million to fund half of our new \$750 million Queensland Cancer Centre. I say to those opposite: there you go, state and federal government are building a brand new cancer centre hospital in this state for Queenslanders. That is what cooperation looks like. I repeat: that is what cooperation looks like. That is what phone calls look like. It is called action and it is called delivery. We will stand up for Queenslanders when it comes to health care.

Of course, we know how hard it is for Queenslanders to access a GP at the moment. What did the Morrison government do for three years? Absolutely nothing! They did absolutely nothing when it came to GPs in this state. What we know now is that extra money is going to be put into urgent care clinics—\$235 million—to reduce pressure on our emergency departments. Then of course there is the aged-care crisis that I mentioned earlier. Once again, what did the Morrison government do? Nothing! The report was handed down, but there was no action. What we see straight away is cooperation and action. There is going to be increased funding of \$2.5 billion to fix our aged-care crisis. Having those nurses in our aged-care centres will reduce the pressure on our emergency departments.

Those opposite had seven years to look at these issues. They did nothing. They did absolutely nothing. Now we are going to have \$1 billion more in health funding. Let me say that again to the member for Broadwater: \$1 billion increase in healthcare funding for Queenslanders in this state. In contrast, they cut health funding by \$20 million. Shame, shame and more shame!

Federal Budget, Health

Mr JANETZKI: My question is to the health minister. In March the health minister said the measure of success of the federal budget was delivering fifty-fifty health funding. Given there is no fifty-fifty funding in the federal budget does the minister stand by this measure of budget success?

Mrs D'ATH: I thank the member for his question. What I remember about the March Morrison federal budget was \$176 million being cut out of health. That is what happened in the March Morrison budget: \$176 million cut by the Morrison government in the March budget.

When it comes to fifty-fifty funding, all state and territory health ministers are continuing to work with the Commonwealth on what the next national health reform agreement will look like. In fact, there is agreement across every health minister including the Commonwealth, which we never got under the Morrison government or the Abbott government—I am losing track of how many prime ministers they had. Under the Liberal federal government there was never any commitment to genuinely look at reforming the health funding model in this country. We had that commitment, those discussions have been brought forward and we are talking about not just fifty-fifty funding but what that funding should actually look like, how it should be measured, how it should be weighted, how it should be priced and the cost of delivering health care now. These conversations are happening right now.

I also know when we invest in aged care it will take pressure off the health system. When we put money into a cancer care centre it will help the health centre. When we put money into primary health care it will help the public health system, something that Greg Hunt and Scott Morrison never, ever acknowledged or did anything about to try to take pressure off our EDs and health system. In fact, those on the other side kept saying, 'Don't talk about the feds; it's a distraction,' but suddenly today they say, 'Let's talk about the feds. Let's talk about the feds.' It was all about, 'Why are you talking about the federal government when it comes to health? Health is a state responsibility. No, no, no. Don't look over here. Don't look at the federal government. They don't have any responsibility,' but suddenly today they do.

How enlightened is the LNP in Queensland now? Well done now that they are all finally enlightened that the Commonwealth has an important role in the healthcare system in this country. I congratulate those opposite for finally realising that the Commonwealth must work hand in hand with state and territory governments to improve the health system; they have to help in funding care in aged care and the public health system. I really welcome the fact that the LNP have realised that there is a contribution to be made. They have been silent for seven years.

(Time expired)

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

Federal Budget, Housing

Ms BUSH: My question is to the Premier and Minister for the Olympics. Will the Premier update the House on the measures in last night's federal budget to ease the pressures on social and affordable housing?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Cooper for that very important question because she understands how important housing is. It is a big issue in every electorate. It is a big issue across Queensland. It is a big issue across Australia. That is why when National Cabinet meets next month we will be discussing further the issues around housing as well as ongoing issues around health. Finally, we have a Prime Minister who listens. He listens, talks and participates. He understands Australians, he understands pressures and he understands dealing with natural disasters as well.

An opposition member interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: There is \$1 billion more allocated for health. What part of this does the member for Surfers Paradise not understand? After the last federal budget they all had their heads down. They did not talk about the federal budget; they did not ask any questions. Were there any questions asked? We are always happy to talk about these things.

We know that housing is a big issue and, as I said yesterday in this House, I thank the representatives from across the political divide who came along to the housing summit. We had stakeholder engagement, with everyone in the room recognising that it is a very complex issue and wanting to work on workable solutions. That is why I welcome the announcement of the National Housing Accord to deliver one million new homes over five years from 2024, including 10,000 additional affordable homes. This will begin with 2,000 affordable homes right here in Queensland. As I said earlier in my ministerial statement, \$200 million has been allocated for remote Indigenous housing.

How many times do we stand in this House and talk about how the previous federal LNP government cut that funding? It was absolutely disgraceful. Now there is a budget of \$200 million and, as I said before, finally the housing ministers can meet. What sort of federal government does not allow housing ministers to meet? Why? It is very simple—they do not believe in housing. They do not believe in funding housing, but, now all of a sudden, they get out the violins and pretend to care. Actions speak louder than words. These one million homes are additional supply. We are a party of action over here—yes, we are.

(Time expired)

Federal Budget, Water Infrastructure

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: My question is to the Minister for Water.

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I will hear the question in silence, members.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I refer to the Labor federal government's decision to shelve Urannah Dam, Emu Swamp Dam, Hells Gates and the HIPCo project, turning their back on rural and regional Queensland. Why did the minister fail to fight for these job-creating nation-building projects?

Mr SPEAKER: I would suggest there was an imputation at the end of that question. I will give the minister latitude in terms of his response.

Mr BUTCHER: We all know that during the federal election, the then federal government made hypocritical announcements of funding for projects that did not even have business cases and did not have EISs done. It was the nation's biggest pork-barrelling exercise to attempt to save National seats in regional Queensland. The farmers were conned.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: I have tried to call the House to order on multiple occasions. Member for Nanango, you are warned under the standing orders. Member for Buderim, you are warned under the standing orders.

Mr BUTCHER: We all know on this side of the House that this pork-barrelling exercise was the biggest con job in electoral history. Those opposite know, and the Nationals know, that they were in trouble during the federal election. These announcements were all specifically designed to try to get support for the Nationals, who they all knew were in big trouble.

Mr Hart interjected.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock! The member for Burleigh is warned under the standing orders. The level of interjection is too high from both sides if a member cannot hear me calling them to order or being warned.

Mr BUTCHER: It is good to see tweets from the member for Nanango. I have one here that I will table.

Tabled paper: Extract, dated 12 October 2022, from the Twitter account of the member for Nanango, Ms Deb Frecklington MP, regarding Paradise Dam [1752].

It says—

You just can't trust Labor when it comes to Paradise Dam. Our farmers deserve certainty and this critical water source must be restored.

Guess what? The Labor Party has delivered on Paradise Dam with \$600 million from us. They can ask questions about these type of projects, but some of them can still go forward, and the member for Nanango knows that. Some of the announcements from last night are \$600 million for Paradise Dam—

Mr Lister interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock! The member for Southern Downs, you can no longer grace us with your presence. You are warned under standing order 253A and you will leave the chamber for one hour.

Whereupon the honourable member for Southern Downs withdrew from the chamber at 10.36 am.

Mr BUTCHER: Another \$383 has been recommitted for Rookwood Weir, which is going through a great building phase; \$107 million has been allocated for the Cairns Water Security project, matching the \$700 million that the Queensland Labor government delivered; \$12.5 million for groundwater improvement in the Lower Burdekin; \$11.5 million to support further strategy planning of priority projects up there; a further \$8 million for Big Rocks Weir, taking the federal government's total investment in that project to \$38 million; and \$3.5 million to match our funding for the pipeline that is connecting Mount Morgan to support those communities.

Those members opposite want to talk down the federal budget when it comes to water projects and water that is being delivered. Out of the \$1.1 billion worth of announcements that were made last night on water, \$730 million was committed to Queensland. The member for Nanango can continue to talk down water investment here in Queensland, but this government has made \$3.5 billion of investment in water projects since we have been in government. The dams are coming out of the ground, the weirs are coming out of the ground and we will continue to invest, along with our federal partners in government.

Federal Budget, Infrastructure

Mr HEALY: My question is to the Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics Infrastructure. Can the Deputy Premier outline how the federal budget invests in new industries for Queensland, and is the Deputy Premier aware of any alternative approaches?

Dr MILES: I thank the member for Cairns for his question. I can see the smile on the face of the member for Cairns because there is so much in this budget for Cairns. Whether it is the massive expansion of the Cairns Marine Precinct or the Cairns Water Security program, we finally have a federal government that will work with us to deliver for Cairns.

After 10 long years of an LNP government that could only pick fights with Queensland, we now have a government that delivers for Queensland. After 10 years of an LNP government that was obsessed with culture wars, we now have a federal Labor government that is focused on the things that matter like the cost of living, delivering cheaper child care, cheaper medicine and free TAFE. After 10 years of an LNP government that was determined to make housing less affordable, we now have a federal Labor government that will deliver one million new homes, making houses more affordable for Queenslanders. After 10 years of undermining Medicare and cutting health funding, we now have a federal government that will make it easier to see a GP and have delivered an extra \$1 billion in health funding for Queensland. After 10 years of the LNP denying climate change and saying that it will ruin everything from the lamb roast to the weekend, we finally have a government that will work with us on disaster mitigation, disaster recovery and to create the jobs of the future that will come with the energy transformation, including in Townsville at the Lansdown Eco-Industrial Precinct and the new hydrogen hub.

After 10 years of the LNP failing to deliver any energy plans, we finally have a government that will fund and work with us to deliver on an energy transformation for our country. When you change the government you change the country, and Australia has changed for the better. Those opposite might hope that Queenslanders will forget what the LNP has done to them but they will not. After seven years of all those faces coming in here and saying, 'It's all good. We've got plenty of money. We don't need more money from the federal government. Don't blame the federal government; we don't need more from them,' suddenly, more money from the federal government is not enough. For seven years we heard, 'They don't need to give us any more'; now an extra billion dollars is not enough! That is what those opposite have come in here and tried to do today. Queenslanders will see through it. They remember what the LNP did to them for three long years here in Queensland and they will never forget what it did to them over the last 10 years federally.

Federal Budget, Infrastructure

Mr BLEIJIE: My question is to the Deputy Premier. In last night's federal Labor budget, road, rail, dams and other Queensland infrastructure projects were slashed, Sunshine Coast heavy passenger rail from Caloundra to Maroochydore was pushed out to the never-never and there is now serious doubt over the fifty-fifty Olympic funding. Will the Deputy Premier admit that Queensland was duded by his federal Labor colleagues?

Mrs D'ATH: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I believe that there is a responsibility on members asking questions to ensure that the question they are asking is factually correct and that they can ensure the question is factually correct when asked and substantiate it.

Mr SPEAKER: That is absolutely correct. Member, as long as you believe you can substantiate that, you will stand by your question?

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Speaker, I can. Media reports indicate that today as well.

Mr SPEAKER: So you are standing by the question, member?

Mr BLEIJIE: Yes.

Mr SPEAKER: I call the Deputy Premier.

Dr MILES: He is just without shame—to come in here, after seven long years of saying that Queensland should not get an extra cent from the federal government, and mislead the House and mislead Queenslanders about what is in the budget, just to score a cheap political point. More for Queensland: that is what is in the budget. After year after year of you coming in here and defending less for Queensland, you cannot come in here when we get more and say that that is not enough.

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

Dr MILES: They have absolutely no credibility when it comes to standing up for Queensland—no credibility whatsoever when it comes to assessing a federal budget and getting what Queenslanders deserve. Who could forget that the Leader of the Opposition would not even pick up the phone to ask the then prime minister for additional hospital funding? Now we get an extra billion dollars, and that is not enough!

Right across Queensland this budget is delivering. In Cairns there is the marine precinct and the water security project. In Townsville there is the Lansdown Eco-Industrial Precinct and the hydrogen hub. There are projects in every single part of this state that will deliver a better future for Queenslanders. There is an investment in the NBN, which those opposite have done nothing but trash and undermine. In fact, we now know that they intentionally undermined it. They oversaw cuts to Medicare and loss of access to GPs, and this budget begins to turn that around. It does not turn it all around—you cannot turn around 10 years of LNP government in a single budget—but it begins the hard work of repairing the damage done by the LNP over that decade.

Clearly, more will need to be done. This is the start but it is an important start. It is good progress. It is a good outcome for Queenslanders. If those opposite were honest in their representation of Queenslanders they would at least admit that this budget delivers more for Queensland than the previous budget, which those opposite said was great. This should at least be more than 'great', because it is more than that one.

Federal Budget

Mr MELLISH: My question is of the Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment. Will the Treasurer tell the House how the Albanese Labor government's first budget delivers for Queensland?

Mr DICK: I thank the member for Aspley for his question. As I said earlier today, last night's federal budget squarely faces up to the problems and challenges that are ahead for our nation. I want to commend and acknowledge my good mate Jim Chalmers, the federal member for Rankin and the federal Treasurer, for an outstanding job—facing these challenges head-on on behalf of the federal government and our nation.

We have secured some important wins for Queensland out of this budget in difficult and trying times and difficult fiscal conditions. There is \$200 million for the Cairns Marine Precinct; nearly \$72 million for the Townsville hydrogen hub, as well as more money in Townsville for the Lansdown eco-industrial estate; \$400 million for the Inland Freight Route; and \$210 million for the Kuranda Range road upgrade. Importantly, the federal budget delivers better access to child care, parental care and aged care and more affordable housing for Australians and Queenslanders.

What the federal budget does not do is make false promises and false commitments to the people of Queensland. On that score, I remember the very hollow words of the then member for Mundingburra and now member for Broadwater and current Leader of the Opposition after the first Newman LNP budget. He said—

This is an honest and responsible budget that will deliver lasting benefits to regional Queensland.

It was not and it did not. Who could forget that in that horror 2012 budget, signed off and championed by the Leader of the Opposition, they cut infrastructure spending? They complain about infrastructure spending now. As soon as they got their hands on the levers of power in this state they cut infrastructure funding. When they cut infrastructure funding they are not ashamed; they brag about it. They were so proud to lay waste to the capital stock of our state.

The record of the LNP is clear. When they were in government they never had a budget with a capital program more than \$50 billion—unlike our government. They cut infrastructure every year they were in government and they deliberately advertised that fact. Then the hoaxes continued in opposition. Who could forget the fake Bradfield scheme and the Bruce Highway hoax—a four-lane Bruce Highway up the coast to the new 'Lake Frecklington' or 'Lake Mander'. All of it—the dam, the roads—was going to be built for under \$100 million. What a hoax perpetrated on the people of Queensland!

The LNP does not have one skerrick of credibility when it comes to infrastructure delivery in this state—not a skerrick of credibility either in government or in opposition. All of that is championed every step of the way by the Leader of the Opposition.

(Time expired)

Mr Nicholls interjected.

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

Minister for Health and Ambulance Services

Ms SIMPSON: My question is to the Minister for Health. Yesterday the minister released private information about former RBWH patient Erin, despite previously saying that she would not talk about individual cases for privacy reasons. Can the minister explain when it is correct to release private information and when it is not?

Mrs D'ATH: I thank the member for her question. I am more than happy to go back through *Hansard* and have a look at my exact wording yesterday. What I said was that, in relation to the individual who was reported in the media, it was a clinical decision at the time. I did not give any more details around the circumstances of that but that it was a clinical decision at the time to provide that support which was a direct question from those opposite in relation to that individual around the circumstances. Those on the opposite side come in here and insist that I give detailed responses around individual cases and then criticise when I give what is appropriate information that Queensland Health has said to me, 'You can provide this information without breaching any confidentiality.'

I will continue to take advice from Queensland Health and ensure that I do not breach people's confidentiality. I take that very seriously. Whether it is patients or whether it is staff who have worked for the health system, we will not release their private records, including their HR records—which we know in the past has happened, including when the LNP was in government—about people's actual employment arrangements and details. I find it quite extraordinary that those on the opposite side would accuse me of breaching the privacy of any individual patient and releasing detailed confidential information. As I say, I will go back and have a look at *Hansard*. It would not be the first time if those opposite have been misleading in their questions, but the advice that was given to me and what I said in this chamber yesterday was information that Queensland Health said I could provide to this chamber.

Federal Budget, Education

Mr BROWN: My question is of the Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing. Can the minister update the House on the opportunities ahead in the areas of education and in industrial relations following the handing down of the federal budget, and is the minister aware of any alternative approaches?

Ms GRACE: I thank the member for Capalaba. I know that he has a keen interest in industrial relations and making sure that the previous policy of the federal government in deliberately keeping wages low is no longer the federal government policy, and everyone on this side of the House welcomes that. As the member for Capalaba and others in the House know, the impossible done at once; miracles take a little bit longer—but a miracle has happened. Finally, it took an Albanese Labor government to show those opposite that a federal budget actually matters. For years the penny never dropped. There was blame-shifting. It was always the state that had to fund all of the hospitals. We would get an extra billion dollars and it was still not enough. It did not matter that the federal government was not meeting its share at that time, but of course now it is the most important thing since sliced bread.

Well, hallelujah! We finally get to see that those opposite accept that a federal budget is important and it is great to see the changes that we are going to experience in this state due to child care being more affordable, targeted cost-of-living relief, the expansion of paid parental leave, a million new affordable homes, supporting workers, delivering a world-class education and the expansion of university places. I say this to all of the students in the gallery here this morning: if you are thinking of a teaching degree, there is money there to assist you through it. It is a great profession. Talk to your teachers. It is a great profession and you will have a job for life if you take up one of these new university places, finally acknowledging that we have a shortage of teachers in this country and a federal government stepping up to make a difference.

In industrial relations it is going to get rid of ideological baggage that for 10 years has been carried in the industrial relations space. The ABCC will no longer exist, and its only claim to fame is stopping workers putting a union badge on their hard hat. We will see the end of zombie agreements that will keep wages down. They will go, just like we will see the end of zombie projects promised during an election campaign by the previous government and by a prime minister who had five portfolios that no-one knew about. When it comes to this budget, the federal government is going to deliver for workers, for families, for education, for the mental health and wellbeing of students and for a lot of other projects that are in this budget like fee-free TAFE for those students as well.

Minister for Health and Ambulance Services

Ms BATES: My question is to the Minister for Health. Former RBWH patient Erin is in the gallery today.

Mrs McMahon interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Macalister, you are warned under the standing orders. You can start your question again, member.

Ms BATES: Thank you, Mr Speaker. My question is to the Minister for Health. Former RBWH patient Erin is in the gallery today. Erin has requested we ask this question on her behalf: despite numerous requests to meet the health minister over the past year, why did the minister not agree to meet so as to allow a conversation about the damage caused by being in that ward?

Mrs D'ATH: I acknowledge Erin in the gallery today. I am happy to check with my office about any requests for meetings, but I will say this: firstly in relation to the previous question that the member for Maroochydore asked, what I said yesterday was—

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 had an open disclosure meeting with the woman since the incident.

That is the only information I released yesterday in this chamber. As I said yesterday, these are issues that do have to be decided by clinicians. As the health minister—as I am sure every other health minister before me and every other health minister who will come after me—I have to take advice from the clinicians in relation to these decisions. Based on the lines of questioning yesterday, I have spoken to Dr David Rosengren this morning and I have spoken to my director-general. I am more than happy to make available Dr Rosengren and also Dr Karin Lust, who is head of women's health at RBWH and an obstetrics medicine specialist, to brief the opposition. Of course, if Erin would like to meet with them today, I will make them available here in the parliament today. I think it is important for the opposition to understand the clinical decisions made—

Mr Mander interjected.

Ms Boyd interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Pause the clock. The member for Pine Rivers is warned under the standing orders. The member for Everton is warned under the standing orders.

Mrs D'ATH: Taking that interjection from the member for Everton, I explained yesterday that interim measures were put in place. I explained yesterday that stakeholders, including external stakeholders, were working with RBWH to find permanent solutions and that since we have come off the third COVID wave there has now been agreement to refurbish the previous gynaecology ward, which still sits within the women's health unit because that is where they are situated. Obstetrics and gynaecology sit within women's health units, but they are generally two separate parts of the same unit. That is usual because that is where all of the specialists are located. I explained that yesterday, so those who interject and say that we ignored and failed to act on this yesterday are misleading this parliament.

Mrs Gerber interjected.

Mrs D'ATH: It is misleading this parliament. The member for Currumbin can interject all she wants; she is misleading this parliament. We will continue to work with the staff and the stakeholders and consumer groups to get the best outcome here. As I say, the RBWH is refurbishing this ward now.

Federal Budget, Health

Mrs MULLEN: My question is of the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services. Can the minister advise how the most recent federal budget will impact our health system?

Mrs D'ATH: I thank the member for Jordan for her question. It has been quite interesting that today we have had multiple questions around the federal budget, because for the federal budget that was handed down in March by the Morrison government there was not one question from the opposition the whole sitting week. In fact, I do not think there was any question ever actually about then treasurer Frydenberg's budget. Those opposite did not ask about the \$176 million cut in that budget. They did not ask what investment the Morrison government was making in aged care, and I will tell members why: because they were not listening. They were not listening when we said that around the country there were thousands of bed days being lost by people who need to be in aged care or at home with a care package or have an NDIS package who are medically cleared but still having to stay in hospital beds.

The federal LNP were not listening and would not act. In fact, we saw how badly they handled aged care throughout COVID. It was shocking. During the COVID waves there were many lives lost in aged care that did not need to occur. I am so grateful that, until we opened those borders, we were able to get people vaccinated and there was not one life lost in aged care from COVID throughout 2020 and 2021 because of the actions this government took. We will stand up for aged care residents.

I am so proud to be working with the Albanese government that is committing to funding in aged care. The difference it is going to make to have a registered nurse on-site all day every day in nursing homes is immeasurable. It will make a huge difference. Funding of \$2.5 billion over four years is significant. There will be more affordable medicines through the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme because we know that if elderly people do not keep up with their medication because they cannot afford it they will end up with chronic illness and complex conditions in our hospitals—not just our EDs but long-term in our hospitals.

I want to acknowledge the more than half a billion dollars being invested to improve aged-care services and respond to the recommendations of the royal commission. We asked Greg Hunt to do this. We asked for funding in this area and it was ignored. There will be an \$8.8 billion increase in spending over the next four years in the NDIS. This builds on the 54 NDIS specialised hospital discharge planners. I thank Minister Shorten for recognising the need for and the benefit of that. The Morrison government failed Queenslanders. The Albanese government supports Queenslanders.

(Time expired)

Mental Health Facilities, Access

Mr BERKMAN: My question is to the Premier. Last week the UN subcommittee on the prevention of torture specifically denounced the Queensland government for breaching its anti-torture obligations by obstructing access to Queensland's mental health facilities for inspection. What will the Premier do to repair Queensland's reputation on human rights and mental health care ahead of the UN's anti-torture committee meeting in Geneva next month?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Maiwar. I understand that there were some legislative barriers that restricted some access. I am advised that the subcommittee was informed that access to prisons, police watch houses and youth detention facilities in Queensland would be facilitated. However, there were some restrictions around physical access to authorised mental health facilities and the forensic disability service. Advice was also provided about how to support the subcommittee visit within the existing legislation.

In August this year our government passed legislation to establish an Independent Inspector of Detention Services which will provide greater oversight of Queensland's detention facilities. An OPCAT bill will be introduced by the end of the year to address the current legislative barriers that restrict physical access.

Federal Budget, Funding Commitments

Mr HUNT: My question is to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. Can the minister provide an update on the federal government's funding commitments in Queensland and is the minister aware of any alternative approaches?

Mr BAILEY: Thank you to the member for Caloundra who is doing an outstanding job in his first term representing Caloundra. He has a sterling record already. What we have seen in Canberra is a new government grappling with a trillion dollars worth of debt with rampant inflation through the economy. Every person who is in the grocery store or buying fuel for their car knows about the soaring inflation that this federal government has to deal with. Aside from that, what we see is more than \$5 billion worth of new investment in transport infrastructure in Queensland.

Unlike the budget in March, this is a budget that will actually get voted on. In March we saw a phantom budget, a fake budget. They had the numbers, they could have passed it, instead it was all about political positioning for the election. They did not even vote on their own budget. They were that ashamed of their budget in March that they did not put it up for a vote. They raced to the election because they did not want to see it go up. The federal member for Fairfax needs to understand this. We saw a zero from the federal Turnbull-Abbott-Turnbull-Morrison-Morrison-Morrison-Morrison-Morrison government for a decade on heavy rail and at the last minute, as they are all worried about losing their seats, they cobble together a \$1.6 billion alleged commitment in a budget where Ted O'Brien points to the budget papers all the time—and this is a budget that did not even pass the parliament, did not even get voted on. Whereas this federal budget will be.

Even the independent mayor for the Sunshine Coast tried to assist 'Tetchy Ted'. He said—

By failing to have passed the budget, the Morrison Government placed the Sunshine Coast at considerable risk as it did not secure this funding contribution for our much-needed rail connection... So the Sunshine Coast loses out and we are left behind the eight-ball—yet again.

Yesterday in an MPI the member for Kawana tried to mislead this place multiple times. I picked him up on it and he had to correct himself. He did it again today in a question. The funding is in the budget for the planning for the Sunshine Coast direct rail link. It is in the budget. I will be re-reading that question very carefully and I may well write to you, Speaker. All the opposition does is overreach and over claim and we know that when they get in power it is cut, cut, cut. It is like a *Game of Thrones* horror episode when they get their hands on the budget.

Hughenden Irrigation Project Corporation

Mr KATTER: My question is to the Premier and Minister for the Olympics. The Hughenden Irrigation Project will transform mid-west Queensland. It has passed every economic, environmental, social and cultural hurdle it needs to, will provide 2,000 ongoing jobs and inject \$170 million into the economy. Tragically, the project is on the verge of being denied any state water access on an extraordinary technicality. Will the Premier commit to ordering a review of HIPCo's request for water?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Traeger for that question. I know how important this project is to him. I want to say at the outset that we are absolutely committed to progressing the Hughenden Irrigation Project. To give members a bit of background, the project involves the construction of a dam located beside the Flinders River, 45 kilometres west of Hughenden. A dam would form part of a greenfield irrigated agricultural precinct in the region. That is background for members who may not be aware of the project.

I am advised that the Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water is continuing to work with the Hughenden Irrigation Project Corporation to identify the scope of planning work. Our government supports this work and we will follow this up with the federal government. The funding for the Hughenden Irrigation Project remains in the federal budget and there remains \$1 billion in the National Water Grid Fund as well. I look forward to further progress on this important project for North Queensland.

Our government is also committed to continuing to progress discussions on CopperString 2.0 to connect the North West Minerals Province to the National Electricity Market in Townsville. I know that this project is also important to the member and for the future of Mount Isa.

Energy Prices

Mr MARTIN: My question is to the Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement. With the war in Ukraine contributing to a spike in energy prices, can the minister outline how the Palaszczuk government is protecting Queenslanders, and is the minister aware of any alternative approaches?

Mr de BRENNI: I thank the member for Stretton for the question. He is right: record gas and coal prices are hitting global energy prices. The global price for gas has gone up 217 per cent. The price for thermal coal has gone up a staggering 500 per cent. Prices are not slowing down. The war in Ukraine and its subsequent sanctions are distorting energy prices worldwide. The LNP knew this and they knew it since the war started in February. They knew it when they made this secret regulation signed by then minister Angus Taylor to hide price increases from every single Queensland and Australian family.

This was one of the largest electoral deceptions in Australia's history. What did the LNP do when then Minister Angus Taylor was caught out? When he misled and deceived Australians, they gave him a promotion! That is what the LNP did when he was caught out. Today, what is the LNP's answer to the federal Treasury forecast? They said, 'Let's double-down on fossil fuels.' They want more high-priced fossil fuel exposure.

In Australia, what we need is Queensland made and owned cheap, clean energy and that is what the Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan will deliver. It will deliver 22 gigawatts of clean energy. The LNP has never been serious about increasing energy supply in this nation. Under Angus Taylor's watch, four gigawatts or 4,000 megawatts of electricity supply across this nation left the national electricity market and only one gigawatt was put in. That is what is called a Taylor-made crisis.

In 2018, the LNP announced a \$1 billion fund to deliver more energy supply in this nation. I wonder how much that might have delivered over four years under their energy plan. Was it a gigawatt of new energy supply? Was it a megawatt of new energy supply? Was it a kilowatt or one single

electron? No, they did not deliver one single electron of new energy! We could have delivered more energy by shuffling our feet along this carpet, ramping up a bit of static and putting that into the national electricity market. How on earth is it that, in four years, with \$1 billion, the LNP could not muster one single electron of new energy for the national electricity market?

We know that their approach will be to privatise, delivering higher costs, fewer jobs and less economic growth for Queensland. Only the Albanese and Palaszczuk governments will deliver clean and lower priced electricity for all Australians.

Obstetric Services

Mrs GERBER: My question is to the Minister for Health. It has now been 24 hours since the health minister did not tell Queenslanders if other mothers who have lost babies are being put in the same ward as new mums and their babies in other Queensland hospitals. Minister, is this practice happening in any other Queensland hospital?

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

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, member, but I am ahead of you. Member, you need to rephrase the question and not direct it to the minister.

Mrs GERBER: Mr Speaker, is this practice happening in any other Queensland hospitals?

Mr Whiting interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: The member for Bancroft is warned under the standing orders. Minister, you have two minutes to respond.

Mrs D'ATH: I thank the member for her question. I did say yesterday that from time to time these decisions are made in women's health units. Let me make it clear that around the state, from time to time, as part of women's health units, which include obstetrics and gynaecology, clinicians will make decisions as to where they are best placed based on the needs of the individual woman and the specialists needed to support her. The answer is that, as I said yesterday, these are clinical decisions.

As I have already said this morning, they are separate units within health units. I have just said to the member for Currumbin that they are separate units within health units, but where those individuals are situated within those women's health units is a clinical decision. I would welcome the member at the briefing today to ask questions of clinicians around better understanding the decisions.

Federal Budget

Ms BOYD: My question is to the Minister for Communities and Housing, Minister for Digital Economy and Minister for the Arts. Will the minister update the House on how the federal budget delivers for vulnerable Queenslanders?

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, you have one minute.

Ms ENOCH: I will start with a quote—

In just one week the Queensland Housing Summit and the federal budget have changed the trajectory for housing in Queensland and Australia.

That is a direct quote from the Executive Director of Q Shelter and that is exactly what happened last night. Not only have we seen this government, the Palaszczuk Labor government, step up to the plate in terms of housing with an extra \$1 billion investment into our Housing Investment Fund, meaning that we will see thousands more social and affordable homes built in this state; we have seen the Albanese Labor government step up into this space as well. For the first time we are seeing a federal government take housing seriously. We could not even meet with the last federal minister for housing, after requesting meetings—

A government member: Who?


Ms ENOCH: Who? That is right; I take that interjection. Who was that? Funding for one million new homes to be built in appropriate locations is an absolutely welcomed announcement from the federal government. We will continue to work with them and we will continue to work as a Labor entity.

(Time expired)

Mr SPEAKER: The period for question time has expired. I remind members of those who have been issued a warning. The members on my right are the members for Logan, Capalaba, Bundaberg, Macalister, Pine Rivers and Bancroft. The members to my left are the members for Kawana, Broadwater, Toowoomba South, Nanango, Buderim, Burleigh, Clayfield and Everton.

CHILD PROTECTION (OFFENDER REPORTING AND OFFENDER PROHIBITION ORDER) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (11.15 am): I present a bill for an act to amend the Child Protection (Offender Reporting and Offender Prohibition Order) Act 2004, the Child Protection (Offender Reporting and Offender Prohibition Order) Regulation 2015, and the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000 for particular purposes. I table the bill, the explanatory notes and a statement of compatibility with human rights. I nominate the Community Support and Services Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Child Protection (Offender Reporting and Offender Prohibition Order) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022 [\[1749\]](#).

Tabled paper: Child Protection (Offender Reporting and Offender Prohibition Order) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022, explanatory notes [\[1750\]](#).

Tabled paper: Child Protection (Offender Reporting and Offender Prohibition Order) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022, statement of compatibility with human rights [\[1751\]](#).

This bill modernises the framework that underpins the child protection registry scheme by enhancing the Child Protection (Offender Reporting and Offender Prohibition Order) Act 2004 and the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000 with the objective of protecting the safety of children. I am not alone when I say that all children in Queensland have the right to be safe and to feel safe, whether in their homes, at school, at play or engaging with friends online. This bill enhances child safety by targeting the use of technology as a means of offending against our children and by increasing reporting for offenders who present the greatest risk to children in the community. These initiatives represent an Australian first and are indicative of the Palaszczuk government's ongoing commitment to protecting Queensland children.

Since the commencement of the COVID-19 global pandemic, child sexual offenders have moved towards technology as a means of targeting children. Through the use of anonymising software, such as virtual privacy networks and hidden phone applications such as vault and black hole applications, child sex offenders are able to remain invisible online and hide evidence of their offending in plain sight. This bill intends to disrupt this trend by requiring all reportable offenders to report the details of any anonymising software or hidden applications they possess or use during their reporting period. Failure to report this information will be a crime and carries a maximum penalty of up to five years imprisonment.

The bill also strengthens the digital device inspection framework under the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act by allowing police to enter the residence of certain reportable offenders to undertake an inspection of every digital device in their possession or to which they have access. This new entry provision is supported by a requirement for reportable offenders to report the media access control address, or MAC address, of the devices they possess or that are attached to any vehicle they own or usually drive. The media access control address is a unique hexadecimal number that allows a network to identify the device and provide access to that network. Access cannot be given if the media access control address is not visible to the network. Police will be able to use the media access control address of the reported digital devices as a checklist to ensure reportable offenders are presenting all devices during a digital device inspection.

The bill also extends the offences that trigger a digital device inspection to include the making, distribution and possession of child exploitation material within and outside of Australia, grooming a child under 16 or a parent or carer of the child, maintaining a sexual relationship with a child and trafficking in children. These new offences operate retrospectively to capture the current reportable offender cohort, ensuring the continued safety of children in our community.

Risk-based monitoring is an important theme of this bill. In particular, offenders who are considered to pose the greatest risk of offending against children will be required to report the details of every premises or location they stay or can be located for a maximum of three consecutive days within 24 hours of that change happening. This new provision targets reportable offenders who engage in short stays while maintaining a permanent residence in another location. This is a first in Australia and shows Queensland as a leader in the offender reporting space.

Risk to children in our community is not limited to sexual offending. The Child Protection (Offender Reporting and Offender Prohibition Order) Act also captures offenders who perpetrate significant harm on children. Offender reporting orders operate to protect children who have been the victim of significant harm, such as torture, or manslaughter. These orders can be made by the court where it is satisfied the offender poses a risk to children.

This bill restructures the offender reporting order framework to require the courts to consider additional information about an offender and about the child victim before deciding whether an order should be made. It is my hope that this small change will ensure those offenders who commit violent acts against children will be required to report to police in the same way as child sex offenders, to reduce ongoing harm to children in Queensland.

Overseas reportable offenders are also captured under these hard-hitting legislative reforms. The bill will recognise any international scheme where an offender is required to report to a registrar because of the offences they have committed against children. These offenders will be required to comply with the provisions of the Child Protection (Offender Reporting and Offender Prohibition Order) Act when they enter Queensland. The message to anyone who enters this state from another country with nefarious intent towards our children is: Queensland is not a safe haven for you.

The bill will allow Queensland Corrective Services to request information from a reportable offender about a place they will be residing or a locality they can be found when they are discharged from custody. Reportable offenders will also be required to give information when they are convicted of failing to report their details under the new legislation. In particular, they will be required to report the details subject of their conviction within seven days of receiving a notice to report the information or within seven days of their release from custody. This will ensure that the national child offender system has a complete repository of information regarding the activities of each reportable offender in Australia.

While information disclosure is generally limited under the current provisions of the Child Protection (Offender Reporting and Offender Prohibition Order) Act, this does not extend to the personal information of any child with whom a reportable offender has reported contact. In fact, currently, if a reportable offender requests a copy of that information, the Police Commissioner must provide it. I consider this to be counterintuitive to the work done by the staff of the Child Protection Offender Registry to prevent ongoing offending against children. Accordingly, this bill makes it absolutely clear that personal information about children will not be included in any report given to a reportable offender. While I accept that every person has the right to access information, I do not accept that child sex offenders should be provided with the address, telephone number or email address of children they have previously had contact with.

Finally, the bill makes minor administrative amendments which streamline the operation of the Child Protection (Offender Reporting and Offender Prohibition Order) Act and regulation. These new laws will continue this government's strong record when it comes to targeting child sex offenders in our state. The message to child sex offenders from this government is: do not come to Queensland, do not offend in Queensland. Our laws are the toughest, strongest laws in the nation and our authorities like the Queensland Police Service are amongst the best in the world. Wherever you might be, our authorities will hunt you down. I commend the bill to the House.

First Reading

Hon. MT RYAN (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (11.24 am): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Referral to Community Support and Services Committee

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

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

Second Reading

Resumed from 25 October (see p. 2990), on motion of Mrs D'Ath—

That the bill be now read a second time.



Dr MacMAHON (South Brisbane—Grn) (11.24 am), continuing: To resume my contribution, we welcome any measures to improve transparency and democracy in our COVID response and to apply public health directions to democratic oversight. I also note the incredible stress and strain that our hospitals and healthcare workers have been under and remain under over the period of the pandemic. This strain on our healthcare system is not down to COVID alone but, rather, years of systemic underfunding and lack of support for staff. Nurses, doctors and allied healthcare workers report: understaffing, overwork, poor conditions, caring for patients with increasingly severe conditions who cannot access primary health care like a bulk-billing GP or a trip to the dentist while the cost of living increases and wages flatline.

A recent survey by AMAQ found that 46 per cent of junior doctors at the Princess Alexandra Hospital in my electorate were working up to or more than 24 hours of overtime per fortnight and that 68 per cent were concerned about making a clinical error due to fatigue caused by hours worked. I have heard similar feedback from nurses and allied healthcare workers in hospitals in South Brisbane and elsewhere, many of whom are burnt out, exhausted and planning to leave the healthcare workforce for good. Similarly, workers are struggling with the cost of living, with the cost of housing, with the cost of transport and parking and then dealing with incredibly difficult conditions in their workplaces.

This bill acknowledges that the COVID pandemic continues, but the state government has pushed nurses, doctors and healthcare workers to breaking point. When healthcare workers suffer, patients suffer too. While other states have implemented measures such as COVID bonuses or offer free university and TAFE for new nurses, Queensland it seems has no plan to bolster the healthcare workforce or to support those workers who have been working so hard on the frontlines of the pandemic. If Queensland does not follow suit and follow states such as Victoria that are offering free university, Queensland will lose even more nurses and healthcare workers and the healthcare crisis will only get worse.

I reiterate: we welcome any measures to improve transparency and democracy in our COVID response, but our healthcare workers have been carrying the brunt of this pandemic and remain unsupported by this government. They remain underpaid. They remain understaffed in our hospitals and are stressed. These are the stories that healthcare workers bring to me. They are saying, 'We are at our wit's end and we need the support that we deserve so that we can give patients the care that they deserve.' In a wealthy state like Queensland with an extremely high surplus, why are we underfunding our hospitals and healthcare workers?



Mr POWER (Logan—ALP) (11.28 am): It is so disappointing in these tough times that there are those who seek to play politics and say that this government does not support our hardworking nurses and doctors. It is a disgrace because nurses in our state know that we back them with nurse-to-patient ratios, support, increased wages—the industrial relations minister is here—and good, safe wages and conditions. To suggest otherwise is taking the pressure of this pandemic and attempting to play politics with it in a way that is truly disappointing.

I now turn to the bill. I have three simple reasons members should support this bill. Firstly, we have come so far through this pandemic by sticking together, having a plan that we had from day one and delivering it. Queenslanders have done the hard work: they got vaccinated, wore masks when asked and stayed home when asked. They only went out to get necessities and they kept other Queenslanders safe. But it is not good enough to stay the course if the course is not the right way. What we have done so far has kept Queenslanders safe. Before we opened our borders seven Queenslanders had died—that is still seven families to whom it mattered a great deal—only one of whom got the disease within Queensland borders. We know that we can keep Queenslanders safe, so that is why it is important to keep this going.

Just as importantly, we have kept our economy strong. No economy in the world is going to be strong when people—your family members—are dying. I was speaking to a member who had family and friends working in nursing overseas—they were in the United States in southern New Jersey—and when they asked others around them, not one in their circle had not had a family member die. These are the stakes we are talking about. We have kept our economy strong, we have done the hard yards and we want to keep faith with that. I am extraordinarily proud of Queenslanders, and you have probably seen that in my three reasons. I am proud of our doctors. I am proud of the work they did to follow the directions of our Chief Health Officer. I am proud of our nurses who, prior to vaccinations, turned up every day knowing that any patient who was coughing had a dangerous infectious disease. I am proud of them, and to suggest that we do not support them frustrates me.

I also want to speak about Logan. I am extraordinarily proud of Logan. After we put out the directions we went down to Grand Plaza and we could see the transformation. People were wearing masks and separating from others. They were doing what was right. I am proud of communities like the Parklands Christian College. When one of their cleaners had a case come in from Victoria, the whole community transformed. They went to the Parklands gym and got tested multiple times, and they did that because they wanted to keep the Logan community safe. Following the directions of the Chief Health Officer was what kept the Logan community safe.

I want to point out that some members have misled the House. They seemed to suggest there has been this unique set of laws in Queensland to only deal with the COVID pandemic. In reality, we have dealt with infectious diseases and issued orders to keep people in quarantine right from the beginning of Queensland. When people sailed past Stradbroke Island through the heads they had to pass Dunwich. They were commanded to put up a flag to signal whether they had an infectious disease on board, whereupon they were directed to quarantine at Dunwich, later the Dunwich asylum. Right from the beginning of our history we have had these orders in place. As we should all know by now, this was exactly the same in 1917 when a highly infectious new strain of influenza was killing people around the world. We had these orders in place then. This is a part of our Queensland tradition. As I said, we have done the hard yards. It is part of our tradition. We should continue to stick with it. It is embarrassing that, right at this juncture when we have had success in this state, there are those who want to throw away the principles that have served us not just through the pandemic but right from the beginning of Queensland's history.

I want to talk about the role of the Chief Health Officer. I am firmly of the belief—and I have been strengthened in that belief by looking at what we have gone through with the COVID pandemic—that the role of the Chief Health Officer, which is to make scientific decisions about how we keep Queenslanders safe in the face of rampant infectious disease, is vital. We saw that this process can easily become politicised when there are tough and emotional decisions to be made. We saw this when the member for Broadwater—then not the opposition leader, so perhaps freer to say silly things—attacked Dr Young and said that her decisions had absolutely no connection to reality.

Ms Pease interjected.

Mr POWER: This is the point I am going to. In an interview with Alan Jones, where he felt free to be himself, the member for Broadwater said of Dr Young, 'This is punch-drunk bureaucrats who are power hungry and it needs to be called out.' It is disappointing when you attack a person who has done so much to keep Queenslanders safe and our economy strong, but that is the kind of character the LNP chose to lead their party. We know that the LNP called for the borders to be opened 64 times. Time and time again they called for the borders to be opened.

Dr Robinson: And you opened them.

Mr POWER: That is right. I heard the member for Oodgeroo say that the borders were eventually opened. We knew they would be, but if we had opened them when the LNP wanted to—

Dr Robinson interjected.

Mr POWER: This is how they try and rewrite history. How do we know they would not have opened them at the same time? We know what Gladys Berejiklian said before the election when she was on *Sunrise*. Speaking of this situation she said—

Oh look, Deb and I have a great working relationship.

I want to identify that the person she was talking about was the former Leader of the Opposition. She continued—

We are in touch with each other all the time, in fact I was in touch with her yesterday and she—

in this case the former deputy leader of the opposition—

feels very strongly about keeping jobs in her state and getting tourism back up and running, so I know if she was elected Premier she would definitely open the border—

Hold on! She goes on to say—

and she would have done it months ago because that's the way Deb and the LNP are up there.

We know because Gladys Berejiklian belled the cat, revealed the danger the LNP is and showed they would have opened it months ago, exposing us. We also need to know about this—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Member for Logan, do not use props, please.


Mr POWER: Apologies. We also need to know that Michael Hart, the member for Burleigh, put up a billboard calling for the borders to be opened. He called for Victorians to fly in in winter to infect the elderly of Queensland. I want to make it clear for the member—

Ms Pease interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Lytton, cease your quarrelling.

Mr POWER:—that in June 2021 these calls were made and it would have infected—

(Time expired)

 **Ms BOLTON** (Noosa—Ind) (11.38 am): Queensland's declared COVID-19 emergency, as we know, resulted in an extensive range of legislation to support the public health, institutional and economic response of our government. Temporary amendments were made to the Public Health Act 2005 to provide the Chief Health Officer and emergency officers with extraordinary powers to respond to the pandemic. This temporary framework is due to expire at the end of this month. This bill replaces that temporary framework with a reduced set of public health powers, specific COVID-19 measures in the Corrective Services Act, and the power of the CHO to mandate isolation, quarantine, masks and vaccinations for high-risk settings.

When the temporary powers were extended earlier this year there was extensive evidence from credible sources that they were not fit for purpose, including the Queensland Council for Civil Liberties, economist Gene Tunny, vice-president of the Economic Society of Australia (Queensland) and the Queensland Human Rights Commission. As submitted, the temporary powers at that time infringed on human rights without proper justification. They were not transparent nor backed up with data and evidence and contributed to trauma.

We saw divisions created across our communities based on economic capacity and vaccination status. I have spoken about the reality experienced in our aged-care homes and by our casual workers and everyday families who lost their businesses, homes, livelihoods and mental health. The introduction of this bill provides us with an opportunity to reflect on our, and Australia's, response to COVID-19, as well as to speak on behalf of those who may again be devastated by the decisions of those who have financial safeguards should we be placed in a similar situation going forward, whereas they do not have those financial safeguards.

The recently released report *Fault lines: an independent review into Australia's response to COVID-19*—which was funded by philanthropists, including the Paul Ramsay Foundation and Minderoo Foundation, and chaired by Peter Shergold AC—outlined who bore the brunt of the pandemic. These included our frontline workers who put their lives at risk to protect us all—and, again, I give our deep gratitude to them all—women and children, aged-care residents and people with disabilities. The long-term ramifications of this are still unknown.

COVID-19 exacerbated pre-existing vulnerabilities, exposed cracks in our health, social, economic, government and political systems and brought with it many challenges that impacted all. The *Fault lines* report found five overarching lessons from the Australian response to COVID-19 and how we can do better. As they stated in the foreword, it was not an undertaking to criticise; it was to improve our responses.

The five lessons included the need to consider societal fault lines—that is, how decisions impact on different groups in society, small businesses, the self-employed and regional areas as examples. As the member for Traeger outlined, the one-size-fits-all approach created even further divisions, leaving many feeling ostracised and discriminated against. Differing viewpoints or concerns should not be mocked, and empathy and compassion, as well as respectful debate in this chamber minus any labelling, are essential moving forward.

In addition, the review found that we need to plan, prepare and practise pandemic events and avoid the impacts of overreach. Importantly, the review found that we need to be transparent, clear and consistent and we need to better balance competing trade-offs. The *Fault lines* report reinforces points that other MPs and I have raised in this House over the last year about the reality confronted by everyday Queenslanders and how we could improve our response to viruses such as COVID-19 by making equitable and consistent decisions, and I go back again to those societal fault lines. Providing clear, consistent messaging, including a forward strategy, with the provision of requested data and evidence to support decisions and mandates, recognising the impact on everyday people, builds trust and greater surety.

The *Fault lines* report made a number of recommendations, and we need to look at these as part of preparing for what lies ahead. Importantly, they said that Australia should establish an Australian centre for disease control and prevention. As the only OECD country not to have one, it is reassuring that the federal government is proceeding with this. Another recommendation was the establishment of a broad panel of independent, multidisciplinary experts and representatives to advise governments alongside the AHPPC during health crises. This would take the onus off CHOs as well as reduce political interference and rebuild confidence. In addition to that is the need to better harness the frontline, lived experience of business, unions, the community sector, mental health experts and local government in crisis planning and response. These were not considered and led to decisions with ramifications that we are now living with.

They also recommended the need to modernise how governments use data, including availability, sharing and analysis. Most importantly, they recommended the public release of the modelling and evidence used in government decision-making, as was done in the UK and New Zealand. Previous requests last year by me and other MPs for this to occur were ignored, and this led to increasing distrust from many Queenslanders of us as MPs and government, and it fuelled the misinformation that was at times overwhelming. It is good to see in this bill that we shall now be doing this. However, as the Queensland Human Rights Commissioner said in their current submission, 21 days is too long.

Despite lessons learnt, the approach in this bill is to continue with what has been utilised previously, although it is narrower in scope. It does not appear to take into account what has been analysed, reported, raised or independently assessed. Although I acknowledge the efforts in this bill for improvement, it is not enough.

We can learn very vital lessons from the last two years—both the good, and there has been so much of that relayed in this debate, and the not so good, which has also been relayed. We need an informed, collaborative and bipartisan approach for the future, and this bill is not fit for purpose to take us into that future. We have heard that the CHO has said that the need to utilise these powers is unlikely and only for a severe variant. We also know we can be recalled into this chamber at any time to give the necessary powers where needed to respond quickly and keep Queenslanders safe. It is for the reasons I have outlined that I cannot support this bill without amendments.

In finishing, I ask the government to commit to reviewing and implementing recommendations from reports such as *Fault lines* in any of the roles that the state government has responsibility in. We have a long journey still to go. Keeping Queenslanders safe must mean all Queenslanders, and this can only be achieved by considering those societal fault lines.



Ms McMILLAN (Mansfield—ALP) (11.45 am): I rise to speak on the Public Health and Other Legislation (COVID-19 Management) Amendment Bill 2022. Queenslanders are known for their resilience and strength when the unpredictable happens. The past 2½ years have certainly proven this as we all navigated the unknown that was the COVID-19 pandemic. While we have returned to what is the new normal, there will always be that sense of the unknown. We do not know what ongoing risk or challenges COVID-19 will bring which is why I am supporting the Public Health and Other Legislation (COVID-19 Management) Amendment Bill.

The bill is an important step in Queensland's path out from the midst of the pandemic, whilst still ensuring there are safeguards in place should we see a spike in cases or an emergence of another strain of COVID-19. The transition from emergency to non-emergency work is vital to continue Queensland's booming economy. Just yesterday CommSec announced that the Queensland economy was the best performing in all of mainland Australia. This is all thanks to the precautionary steps taken by the Palaszczuk government, in particular the Premier and the Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment. The steps that we took through our unite and recover plan have ensured Queensland is in the best position economically—something which is the envy of other states.

Through the COVID-19 legislative measures that were introduced by the Queensland government in 2020, we saw Queensland come out of the first major wave of the pandemic with minimal loss of lives or extended lockdowns. While the measures within the amendment bill will not be as restrictive as those introduced in 2020, they will allow the Chief Health Officer to act accordingly and appropriately. I would like to draw the attention of the House to a couple of the main points within this amendment bill, in particular part 5A, 'Public health directions for COVID-19'.

The amendments to the bill will no longer allow the Chief Health Officer to restrict access to vulnerable settings, like aged-care facilities. The power to restrict visitors to these facilities was an extreme but necessary measure that was taken during the emergency phase of the pandemic when


the risks were severe and had to be managed. We are fortunate, through the incredible guidance and leadership of the Premier and the Chief Health Officer, to be in the position that it is not considered necessary or appropriate for the Chief Health Officer to have a broad power to restrict visitors to vulnerable settings.

During the pandemic, Queensland was blessed to have two incredible and knowledgeable chief health officers in both Dr Jeannette Young and Dr John Gerrard. The knowledge and experience of the medical field that a Chief Health Officer has is exactly why they are well placed to make decisions in a situation like a COVID-19 pandemic, where the data is continually changing and new medical and clinical information is constantly coming to light.

The bill will provide the Chief Health Officer with limited but targeted powers to manage any ongoing risks of COVID-19. The narrowing of the powers reduces the potential impacts on individuals and will minimise any limitations on human rights. The test in which the Chief Health Officer may assess and issue a public health direction will be strengthened. The public health order may only be issued if it is reasonably necessary to prevent or respond to a serious risk to the health system or the community as a result of COVID-19 or give effect to decisions of National Cabinet or advice from a COVID-19 advisory body.

The Public Health and Other Legislation Amendment Bill will not disapply any provisions of the Human Rights Act. This will mean that any administrative decisions made by a public entity which includes the Chief Health Officer under a direction may be found unlawful if incompatible with human rights.

While we all acknowledge that the future is uncertain, we must continue to remain aware of, agile and responsive to the virus and continue to protect our fellow Queenslanders and the Queensland community. This is what is expected of a good government, and this is what only a Labor government will do. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Mrs GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (11.50 am): Residents and businesses in the Currumbin electorate, which everyone in this chamber is aware straddles the border—residents who live with one foot in Queensland and one foot in New South Wales—shouldered the burden of state border closures enabled by this temporary legislative framework for over two years. Families were torn apart by a line on a map, my constituents and border locals lost precious time with their sick loved ones, many did not get to say a final goodbye, patients were cut off from their doctors, and businesses were left stranded in a ghost town. My community understands better than most the impact of COVID-19 restrictions, restrictions enabled by amendments made to the Public Health Act like this bill over the past two years which upheaved the lives of so many in our community, and every day my office had the human toll of the government's abrupt lockdowns and rushed mandates.

The emergency powers are set to expire on 31 October 2022. This means that in five days' time, the Chief Health Officer will no longer have the power to issue public health directions which would allow for interstate border closures or restrict the movement or gathering of people. The expiry of the temporary legislative framework on 31 October 2022 was set to restore the Public Health Act to its pre-pandemic state, except that this Palaszczuk Labor government wants to hold onto some of the extraordinary parts of the legislative framework with this bill.

The current state of the pandemic has shifted so greatly since a bill of this nature was introduced into parliament that these powers, in my view, are no longer necessary, and that is why the LNP will not be supporting this bill. Unlike two years ago, COVID-19 is no longer an unknown enemy on the horizon. It is now something that we live with. I have also said that our response must be proportionate to the risk at hand, and I do not think it is a proportionate or reasonable response to continue these emergency powers even watered down as they are drafted in this bill. We cannot go on living indefinitely with these types of extraordinary legislative provisions in place. It is wrong and I will not support it.

Today there are very few COVID-19 restrictions which impact our life. That is a good thing and it is reasonable given the risk and the threat of the virus has significantly subsided. Despite the vaccination rollout being hampered by the Palaszczuk Labor government's mixed messages on AstraZeneca, and the Premier's refusal to have it, more than 90 per cent of our state's adult population are now vaccinated, and many Queenslanders have now chosen to have a third or even a fourth dose.

Many businesses and organisations in our community are choosing what, if any, COVID-19 measures they wish to keep. Most have none. Others have decided to keep some protections in place. Both are fine because that is their choice, and the same can be said for individuals. The decision to

stay at home if you are unwell now rests with the individual. Individuals can take precautions to protect themselves from a contagious virus if they wish to do so and, in my view, that is a reasonable and proportionate approach to the current risk we face.

The other reason it is unnecessary to extend the extraordinary emergency powers with this bill is because, in the event that we do need these powers again, this parliament can be recalled on short notice to swiftly debate and pass any necessary laws to protect Queenslanders. In fact, we saw this is indeed possible just this month when parliament was recalled on extremely short notice in order to give Queenslanders a public holiday for the passing of the Queen. If we can recall parliament to legislate for a public holiday, then surely we can do it if the interests of public health require it.

The other aspect of this bill that I want to touch on is the fact that it has taken the threat of COVID-19 dissipating for the foreseeable future for this government to introduce measures of accountability and transparency like we see in this bill. If the gall of this government were not so insulting to Queenslanders, it would be laughable. It is only now that COVID-19 restrictions are all but gone that the government decides it is time to front up to the Queensland public and start being a little bit transparent with the parliament and the public around directions and advice. It is gobsmacking.

Where was this transparency over the last two years? Where was the rationale to justify upending the lives of my border community over the last two years? Where were the details to keep loved ones apart from each other, to keep loved ones from saying their final goodbyes? Where was the transparency for that over the last two years? This is an insult to every single person in my community who was left reeling by decisions made by this government, decisions that were made without a shred of accountability or transparency.

Where was this transparency and accountability for Kerri from Currumbin Waters when her husband was locked out of this state? During the pandemic Kerri told me—

We had barely settled into our new apartment when my husband was given a directive he could no longer return home across the border.

They had to relocate, which Kerri said ‘cost us unbelievable and unnecessary financial hardship’.

Just last week during a mobile office, I had two primary school aged girls and their dad come up to me to say thank you for getting them an exemption so they could see their mum across the border. I had to fight to get them that exemption. This family would have loved some accountability and transparency as is contained in this bill. They would have loved that two years ago so they could have had some measures in place for their children.

Melissa from the Gold Coast would also have loved transparency and accountability two years ago when we called for it. During the border closures, Melissa told me—

My parents are in their mid-eighties and live in Kingscliff. I live on the Gold Coast. The border pass allows for travel to supply support and care to a family member. However, each time I cross back into Queensland, I am having to justify my reasons to see and look at my parents. I have anxiety every time I go to see them as I am afraid of being turned away at the border. I have letters from doctors, stat decs and a whole lot of other supporting documents but the pressure and anxiety I feel at the border is indescribable. No-one should have to go through this for almost five months now. I limit my visits to one day per week because of this ridiculous border situation and it is time with my parents that I will never get back.

Angelika from Bilinga also needed this kind of transparency two years ago. During the pandemic she told me—

My family all live outside of Queensland. Twice I had to flee like a refugee when I visited them due to border closures, and for seven months I had not seen anyone. My parents were hospitalised and my son was in Canberra receiving life-threatening surgery, but I was stuck here, double vaccinated and I couldn’t go any further.

I have so many stories from constituents who were crying out for transparency and accountability during the pandemic, and I will continue to tell their stories in this chamber because I will not let this chamber forget what my community went through and what my constituents bore in order to keep the rest of Queensland safe. Fiona from Currumbin told me during the pandemic—

‘I have two kids in Melbourne who I saw once in two years and the rest of my family is in Ballina. My husband’s father is in Ballina and lives alone as my husband’s mother, who I have not seen in almost 18 months, has been diagnosed with dementia. The last 12 months her decline has been so quick, she no longer recognises family and my husband did not get the opportunity to visit her.

Kerri, Melissa, Angelika and Fiona would have all loved these transparency measures two years ago when they could not see their loved ones, when they were locked out of their homes, and when they were prevented from seeing their children.

Queenslanders deserved the transparency measures contained in this bill right from the very beginning. But in typical Palaszczuk government style, only concerned about how things look rather than how things are, they are implementing transparency measures when it is too late, to give the facade that they are transparent. This is a government that is only open with Queenslanders when it suits them politically—transparency only when there is nothing left to be transparent about.

Queenslanders have learned to live with the virus. They have learned to take careful personal responsibility in going about their daily lives. It is time that this government accepts this and removes these extraordinary provisions that were introduced at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic.

I want to finish my contribution by acknowledging all of our healthcare workers who fronted up to work every day, who took on whatever risks were presented pulling double and triple shifts, who traversed border crossings in order to get to their employment, who were told that they could not come to work and still fought to be able to go to work to protect and serve our community. I want to thank every single one of those health workers for doing their job during the pandemic and for supporting our communities

(Time expired)



Ms BOYD (Pine Rivers—ALP) (12.00 pm): If ever honourable members needed an example of the stark contrast between the LNP and the Labor Party, I think the member for Currumbin just demonstrated it where the choice and the decision of the individual were at odds with the safety and security of the many. While border closures were tough decisions, they were made with the consideration of the safety of all Queenslanders at their centre.

I rise today to support the Public Health and Other Legislation (COVID-19 Management) Amendment Bill 2022. This legislation continues the fantastic work that the Palaszczuk Labor government has been doing throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. In fact, the Palaszczuk government is renowned for being one of the world leaders in terms of managing the virus, suppressing the virus and then moving to get our population vaccinated and safe prior to the general entry of the virus. We have achieved that because we implemented the expert health advice in a really measured and responsible way.

I commend the Premier, Minister Miles, Minister D'Ath and our chief health officers, Dr Gerrard and Her Excellency Dr Jeannette Young, for the work they have done in this space over the last two years. While they have made difficult decisions, time has shown that they have been the correct decisions and they have been the decisions that have kept Queenslanders safe.

I would like to start my contribution by reflecting upon the words of the opposition in their dissenting report. It states—

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. There can be no escaping from the fact that COVID-19 took away many things from many people. We have previously expressed that sentiment when examining similar legislation ...

Let's reflect upon the comments of the LNP, repeated almost verbatim by the member for Mudgeeraba in the context of the LNP's record during this pandemic, a record that continued to disregard and undermine expert health advice throughout the duration of the pandemic.

Mr Watts: Hard to know. None of it is published.

Ms BOYD: I see the member for Toowoomba North interjecting, and what a delight this is. This is the former shadow minister who had a street party and lied about being on his driveway when he was in fact on the road. He absolutely disgraced himself during the COVID-19 pandemic. It was a disgrace.

Mr Watts interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Member for Toowoomba North, you are on a warning.

Mr WATTS: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take personal offence at the word 'disgrace'. I made a mistake and I apologised to this House and the people of Queensland. I ask for it to be withdrawn.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Taking a point of order is not an opportunity to debate a matter or provide further explanation, but I will grant that. The member has taken personal offence and I ask that you withdraw.

Ms BOYD: I withdraw. Let's reflect upon these comments of the LNP and their record of disregarding and undermining the expert health advice throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. It is nice to hear that some of that disregard and some of that undermining is, in fact, a mistake. That is probably

the first time that we have heard that from an LNP member in this chamber during this debate. Certainly no other LNP members have admitted that disregarding and undermining the expert health advice was a mistake or an error. We had the former leader of the opposition, after a crushing electoral defeat in November 2020, go on the public record. The member for Nanango is quoted as saying—

“The LNP was in a very strong prospect of winning this election.

“There is no doubt that COVID has had a huge impact on Queensland politics, just as COVID has had an impact on politics and other elections in both Australia and New Zealand.

“I am proud of the policies and the candidates that we put forward at this election.”

I can tell honourable members what may have actually played a part in this. It may have been that her own party referred her to the CCC during an election campaign. It may have been—

Ms SIMPSON: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member is—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order. I have not called you yet, member. Member for Maroochydore, what is your point of order?

Ms SIMPSON: The member is not relevant to the bill and I ask for her to remain relevant to the bill.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will seek some advice from the Assistant Clerk at the table.

Ms BOYD: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. So—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Resume your seat please, member. Member, I would ask you to come back to the long title of the bill. If you are explaining a point, please bring it back to the bill.

Ms BOYD: Thank you for your guidance, Mr Deputy Speaker. In terms of the LNP's record in the pandemic as it relates to their dissenting report, the member for Mudgeeraba came into this place only yesterday and said, 'We can't go on living indefinitely with these measures in place.' With respect, the member for Mudgeeraba's favourite pastime is politicising the health care of Queenslanders. The best people to provide that advice is not any of us who are elected to this place. It is actually epidemiologists and the Chief Health Officer; it is the very health experts that we rely on who are best placed to provide health advice on this pandemic, both since 2020 and well into the future.

The member for Southport said only yesterday that rather than bureaucrats making these decisions, the voting public wants elected representatives to do that. I can highlight that there was significant comfort provided to the public through having these decisions and actions informed by health professionals rather than politicians. That was a result we saw in 2020 at the ballot box. During the pandemic we saw the LNP call for the opening of borders an unsafe 64 times.

Mr Watts: And the borders were opened after those comments.

Ms BOYD: I take the interjection from the member for Toowoomba North. The borders were not opened during that time and the borders were not opened just after that time. They certainly were not opened after the member for Burleigh put up a billboard.

The borders were opened according to the roadmap when the majority of Queenslanders were actually vaccinated and it was safe to reopen the borders. Do honourable members know why it happened that way? We had a roadmap that was informed by expert health advice. It was informed through the Chief Health Officer. It was not because a politician in this place said, 'Open up the borders.' That is not the way we have operated during this pandemic and it will not be the way we operate in this pandemic into the future.

That is why these provisions are so important. I tell you what: I would not have wanted the member for Mirani advising anyone on what we should have done throughout this pandemic. That would have resulted in carnage. We see time and time again the LNP—and they still cannot help themselves right up to this very moment—come in with comments around this pandemic and the work that our hardworking health professionals have done.

I refer to an article titled 'Power hungry: LNP slams Queensland's top doctor's coronavirus advice'. Thank you, Lydia Lynch, for this article published on 24 April 2020 where Tim Mander, the member for Everton, is bagging out public servants. He is not to be outdone by the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr MANDER: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. That is a misleading statement. I will be writing to the Speaker about that. I take personal offence at that issue and ask for it to be withdrawn.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): In relation to misleading the House, that is not a point of order. You can follow the due process. The member has taken personal offence and asks that you withdraw. I ask you to withdraw.

Ms BOYD: I withdraw. Directly quoting from the article—

Mr Mander said his criticism was of the government, not the Chief Health Officer.


Who is making these decisions? No wonder the LNP want people in this place to make decisions—it is where their criticism is very much levelled. He was outdone by the member for Broadwater, the Leader of the Opposition, who said that Dr Young's decision had 'absolutely no connection with reality'. An article states—

"This is punch-drunk bureaucrats who are power hungry and it needs to be called out," he told radio broadcaster Alan Jones.

This is the record of those opposite; this is the reason that they do not like to hear it. If this was my record, I would not want to hear it either. After what has been proven to be a world-leading response from the Palaszczuk government, it is astounding that we still continue to see criticism from those opposite. Quite frankly, they should be saying thank you.

Let us get some perspective on the privilege that those opposite hold. If they want to talk about a human toll, let us have a look at how this pandemic ripped through other countries. Let us have look at what happens when you open up borders in situations where people are not vaccinated against a deadly mutating virus. We have seen that right across the world—not just in one or two or three waves. In some countries, there have been even more. I do not want to see refrigerated trucks driving around on our roads picking up dead bodies—that was the reality in many countries right across the world. I do not want to see mass graves. If we had followed the advice of those opposite, then that would be the situation. Those members opposite are quick to criticise, but they take no responsibility.

(Time expired)

 **Mr LISTER** (Southern Downs—LNP) (12.12 pm): I rise to make a contribution in the debate on the Public Health and Other Legislation (COVID-19 Management) Amendment Bill 2022. I echo what my honourable friend the member for Glass House said when he commenced his contribution earlier in this debate which was 'Enough is enough.' In my electorate of Southern Downs, which has a uniquely advantageous position to have an opinion on this matter, the handling of COVID was a very costly exercise.

I say from the outset that I have never called for the borders to be opened. I understood the need for those orders for them to be closed. But because my electorate spans 400 or 500 kilometres of border country with communities which are situated on both sides of the border that regard themselves as part of their community of interest, the closure of the border caused enormous disruption. I am not talking about personal inconveniences; I am talking about businesses, primary producers and families who have been forced to travel very long distances in order to cross a border, if they were allowed.

One of the reasons I oppose this bill is I do not trust that the government is sufficiently in connection with the people to be able to make decisions quickly that are correct for the management of COVID or other infectious diseases. I was never consulted about any of the measures to do with border closures. I was always rebuffed by the government when I insisted on being at the table when decisions about border closures were made. On a number of occasions decisions were made regarding how border closure measures would operate which did not further the cause of containing and keeping COVID out of Queensland, but rather caused unnecessary cost and inconvenience to the people whom I represent. I want to make one exception in saying that: the Minister for Small Business, the Hon. Di Farmer, called me directly about measures associated with her department. I was grateful for that, and I thank her for that.

I am naturally suspicious about leaving these sorts of powers on the table without us coming back for a proper debate. As many speakers on my side of the House have said before, there is the opportunity, as we have seen, at short notice to convene parliament to pass necessary amendments or measures to empower authorities to deal with emergencies as they arise. I doubt very much that an emergency response would be so fast that it would need to be considered before politicians were available to come back and consider it in the House.

When I listened to the debate in this chamber on this bill and its predecessors, I was disappointed to hear members of parliament making haughty statements and mocking people who have a different view to them on matters such as vaccination. Although I am vaccinated myself, it became very apparent to me—

Debate, on motion of Mr Lister, adjourned.

LAND TAX AND OTHER LEGISLATION (EMPTY HOMES LEVY) AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction

Resumed from 13 October (see p. 2720).



Dr MacMAHON (South Brisbane—Grn) (12.15 pm), continuing: I rise to continue my introductory speech on a bill to enact an empty homes levy on vacant homes. We only need to listen to renters to know how necessary this bill really is. Across the state, rental availability is at an historic low—less than 0.4 per cent in some parts of the state. Every week we see more and more stories of families moving into caravans, cars and tents because they cannot find anywhere to live. Yet, we know from census data that there were around 87,000 homes that were long-term vacant across our state, while thousands of working Queenslanders are struggling to find an affordable place to live, paying hand over fist for a roof over their heads or raising their kids in caravans.

I am continuing my speech today on an empty homes levy on a residential property that has been sitting empty, encouraging wealthy investors to rent out those empty properties. This will boost rental availability so that we can house those Queenslanders who are struggling to find a place to live and bring down the skyrocketing rents we have been seeing across our state. The Australian Bureau of Statistics estimates that there are 87,000 long-term vacant homes in Queensland sitting empty and unused while kids grow up in cars, workers sleep on couches and pensioners move into tents. There are tens of thousands of homes that wealthy investors would rather let sit empty than house a Queensland family.

Governments across the world are tackling this head on. Cities like Vancouver and Paris already have levies on vacant residential property. Places like Los Angeles, Hong Kong, Barcelona and Ireland are all implementing a range of policies to tackle long-term empty homes—from vacant property taxes to forcing the sale of empty properties. These policies have been a resounding success. In Vancouver an empty homes levy on vacant residential properties has brought a quarter of that city's long-term vacant properties back into the rental market. It is time to enact a vacant home levy here in Queensland. We could see more than 21,000 homes that are now sitting empty house a family, house a working Queenslanders or house someone's grandparents.

An empty homes levy is a straightforward solution to boosting supply, but this government has been dragging its feet on actually addressing the housing crisis. We have a chronic undersupply of social housing. We have uncontrolled cost of rent increases, tens of thousands of vacant homes and wealthy real estate lobbies calling the shots. I urge this government to listen to everyday Queenslanders, to listen to housing advocates and even to listen to its own Labor colleagues in the Brisbane City Council or in Victoria.

The government's own Labor counterparts in Victoria introduced a vacancy levy five years ago. Just last month, Labor councillors on the Brisbane City Council backed a Greens' motion to increase rates on vacant properties. I urge the Premier and the housing minister to take this bill and the rent freeze bill, read them and implement these straightforward solutions to Queensland's housing crisis. The empty homes levy bill introduces a levy for any residential property which has been left vacant for more than six months of the year for no good reason. It will target the tens of thousands of vacant properties that could be used for housing people right now. Any residential land that is left vacant without good reason will be subject to a levy equal to five per cent of the capital improved value of that land. This levy will incentivise property investors to use these properties to house people rather than speculate on property prices.

The empty homes levy will also apply to empty land that is reasonably suitable for building new homes. This levy will discourage land banking during a housing crisis and encourage the development of housing in high-demand areas. The investors who do not want to pay the levy on empty land will have to put it to use or sell up. If investors want to avoid this levy, they need to house people or sell to someone who will.

Again, this is not a novel idea. Across the world governments are taking genuine action on high rents and low vacancy rates. We know that this works. Dublin and Singapore have restricted short-term accommodation like Airbnb. New York, Scotland and Berlin have frozen or capped rents. Spain, France and the Netherlands have levies on vacant properties. The federal government has also implemented a vacancy tax on foreign owners. In Seoul and Washington DC, governments tax empty, undeveloped

land in the inner city, encouraging developers to build housing or sell to someone who will. Cities around the world, from Washington DC to Seoul, are already doing this. Governments across the world recognise that residential properties should be used to house people and not just as a way for property investors to get even richer. This bill looks at some of these global examples to create a more humane, sustainable and economically sensible housing system that will actually help keep people in their homes.

It is worth noting that the average investor who already rents out their property will not be affected by this levy. Only those property investors who are wealthy enough to leave a house empty for no good reason in the middle of a housing crisis will be impacted by this levy. Only those property investors wealthy enough to sit on a block or a home for years and years, waiting for a rezone or for property prices to rise, while mums and dads raise their kids in caravans, will be impacted by this levy.

We only need to listen to renters to hear about what everyday Queenslanders are going through, and the picture is grim. Record low vacancy rates, skyrocketing rents, bullying by real estate agents, no-grounds evictions—my office hears these stories every day. These stories of desperation and suffering are happening in every electorate in Queensland, and I am sure every MP in this place has heard similar stories. A renter in West End said—

I am living in a one bedroom apartment in West End. Trying to find a place to live was an atrocious experience. Every open inspection had at least 30 people, and on many occasions I overheard prospective tenants tell the property manager they are willing to pay more rent than advertised.

A tenant in Coorparoo said—

After the recent flooding in and around Brisbane I was forced to find a new place to rent. Because so many people had been displaced at the same time the competition made finding affordable housing increasingly difficult, on top of which my then roommates and I had to split up to find somewhere suited to us and in our price ranges. I ended up going from paying \$190 to \$340 a week.

A research scientist in Burnett said—

With the current price increases on everything there is little chance that I will ever own a home in my life ... If I cannot afford a home by myself when I am earning much more than the minimum wage then how is it possible for everyday Australians to make it in this country. I thought the promise of Australia was that everyone 'gets a fair go'.

A renter in the electorate of Cooper said—

My rent has increased by 15% since last year, while my wages haven't changed. As a result, I'm unable to afford basic health care like a visit to the dentist. Wealthy property investors keep increasing rents past what working Queenslanders can afford.

A tenant in Carindale wrote—

I personally was forced to vacate a property two months ago due to rent increase and haven't been able to find housing since. I've been applying for a total of 4 months for housing in Brisbane and have been unsuccessful for every one. I am tired. I am overwhelmed. I cannot settle down or relax or be at home.

A renter in Miller wrote—

I know too many women in our local community who have no other choice but to stay in abusive relationships because they have no hope of being able to find an affordable and vacant rental home.

I was heartbroken to hear this story from a single father who had custody of his child half the time. Two months ago he was given notice to vacate as his landlord was renovating. He is fully employed with a perfect rental history. He managed to secure another rental property and attempted to negotiate an earlier end date on the lease so he could move into his new rental. He was given a flat 'no'. Not being able to afford double rent, he had to turn down the other property. Since then he has been unable to find another property. He has been denied any extension on the lease. He cannot find a rental that would allow his child to get safely to and from school. He is now homeless, living in a car. He has had to give full custody of his child to his ex-wife while he finds a place to live. Another renter said—

If landlords continue ... to fleece working families, hundreds of thousands of families will be forced into poverty in the next few years.

An empty homes levy will make it less lucrative for those wealthy few who would rather let a perfectly good home sit empty and wait for property prices to rise while people across our state are crying out for housing. A government that puts the interests of investors and their ludicrous property portfolios above kids having homes to grow up in is a government that has lost touch. Every family with nowhere to go, every unhoused person, every worker sleeping on a couch and every child going to school hungry represents a choice that this government has made.

An empty homes levy would also help first-time home buyers break into the housing market. An empty homes levy would put downward pressure on house prices, making it easier for young working Queensland families to buy a home, for a pensioner to get out of renting and settle into something more stable, or for a young professional to buy an apartment close to work.

We held high hopes for last week's Housing Summit, but I and others came away reminded just how disconnected politicians and wealthy investors are from the lives of everyday people. I had a conversation at the Housing Summit with an investor who disclosed to me that she owns 10 homes. She said to me that some investors will leave a home empty because they are just exhausted from all the maintenance requests. Upholding human rights sure is exhausting! The break-out session on rental affordability and supply asked no questions about affordability. Out of the maybe 30 people in the room I think there were maybe two renters. The overwhelming feedback in the room was: 'What more incentives can we give investors? How much more public money can we tip into personal investments? How much more public money can we tip into the private sector, whose core business is not providing a home but getting a decent return on investment?'

The Treasurer managed to get in a few wisecracks about this very bill, as if 87,000 homes left empty in the middle of a housing crisis is funny. I was reminded yet again of the gaping chasm between the experiences of everyday Queenslanders and the opinions of people in this place.

Whilst solving the housing crisis will not be easy, there are so many simple solutions this government could be implementing. Alongside an empty homes levy and a rent freeze, regulating short-term accommodation would be another excellent place to start. While Queenslanders are crying out for an affordable home, property investors are turning what could be good, secure homes into Airbnbs for tourists. Instead of homes and apartments being used to home families, tens of thousands of Queensland properties are being turned into short-term hotels. I will share a story from South Brisbane. A constituent contacted me after discovering that all of the long-term residents in their apartment block are being kicked out so that the owner can turn the whole block into Airbnb accommodation. They will make thousands more than they would from providing long-term homes to families and workers. This is a whole community that will be displaced.

Other states are tackling this head-on. New South Wales has a 180-day limit on short-term accommodation across the state and the Byron Shire Council has implemented its own 90-day limit. A similar limit here would be a significant step to easing the housing crisis. According to data from AirDNA, a cap on short-term hotels could open up nearly 6,000 homes on the Sunshine Coast, nearly 6,000 homes on the Gold Coast and nearly 5,000 homes in Greater Brisbane. For everyday owner-occupiers, a cap means you can still put up your home as an Airbnb if you leave town for a holiday or if you are offering your spare room to someone visiting town, but a cap would stop those property investors who would rather turn a unit block into short-term accommodation than home families. Of course the empty homes levy will make some inroads into regulating Airbnb because if a home is not occupied for six months or more in a year it will attract a financial penalty in the form of the empty homes levy. Short-term accommodation does not count towards this.

The government has to decide whether it wants our cities and towns to be places where people can raise their kids and live close to work and study or it wants our cities and towns to become yet another plaything for wealthy tourists and investors and Airbnb landlords. Without regulating short-term accommodation, this government is choosing the latter.

I am just not confident that this state Labor government or the federal Labor government really understand the core issues in the housing crisis here or nationwide. I keep hearing that governments just need to work with the private sector more and that if only we could encourage more investors and property developers and super funds from the non-profit sector we could solve the housing crisis, but relying on the private sector, which—do not be naive—is motivated solely by profit, not by what will get affordable and secure roofs over Queenslanders' heads, is what has gotten us into this crisis in the first place.

For decades housing policy by successive state and federal governments has been geared towards maximising the profits of banks, of property developers and of wealthy property investors. We see this in just how much negative gearing costs the federal budget each year, costing anywhere up to \$9 billion a year. We see this in the state government handing public land and money over to private developers for build-to-rent schemes or a luxury hotel right next door. Combine this with chronic decades-long underinvestment in social housing.

Thirty years ago six per cent of all housing in Australia was social housing. Now it is less than four per cent. We have gone backwards. In Queensland it is even worse, down to 3.6 per cent, and then add in some of the weakest tenancy laws in the developed world, further incentivising property investors to buy up more properties. Why not when there are no restrictions on how much they can hike up rent by and when they can kick out their tenants when they ask for too many expensive repairs?

As we heard earlier, investors will leave a home empty rather than maintain it. They do not even need to rent out their investment property if they cannot be bothered and they can still make substantial profits. Over the last year the median Brisbane house price increased by \$162,000. Just by holding on to a property over the last year, people could make \$162,000 without having to rent it out. Everything about the housing system here in Australia makes it easier to buy your fifth home than your first, so is it any surprise that house prices have skyrocketed?

Where has this decades of housing policy that has prioritised private investment in housing left us? It has left us with nearly 50,000 people on the social housing waiting list. It has left us with families across the state forced to sleep in tents and cars. It has priced middle- and low-income people out of the housing market, putting increasing pressure on the rental market. It has left millions of Queenslanders struggling to pay their mortgage or rental payments. In South Brisbane, as in other parts of the state, we have seen not only increasing levels of rental stress but also increased levels of mortgage stress. It has left us in the worst housing crisis of our lifetime, and decades on it is crystal clear: leaving housing up to the private market does not work. Treating housing as a commodity does not work.

There has been a lot of discussion today about the federal budget, but let us be clear: this federal budget is very similar to everything we have seen from previous coalition governments. It is not a breath of fresh air and it will mean very little to millions of Australians who desperately need support from the government. Let us look at the housing announcement called the one million homes announcement. Just like the state government's housing announcement to put more fake money into the Housing Investment Fund and sit around waiting for some magical investors to bail it out of our severe housing shortage, the federal housing budget is also largely smoke and mirrors.

Over the last five years the private sector has built just under a million homes. In terms of this federal Labor announcement, under its plans the private sector would build about a million homes over five years from 2024. This is embarrassing! These homes would have been built anyway. This is not an announcement; this is the status quo. These homes, which would have been built anyway, will not be affordable homes. The federal Treasurer has called them 'well located'. As the member for South Brisbane, I can tell members that we do not need any more luxury inner-city apartments; we need well-designed public housing in places where people want to live. When you get past the sleight of hand, the reality is that federal Labor has announced \$350 million for 10,000 affordable homes over five years. This works out to about \$35,000 per home. The math does not really work out for me, so we will need a few more details on how these 10,000 homes will be built on that kind of math.

We have nearly 50,000 people on the social housing waiting list here in Queensland alone and a massive underinvestment in social housing with plans that will not keep up even with the increases in the housing waiting list, and our federal counterparts do not have a plan either. As for the Housing Accord, planning deregulation and handouts to the private sector to build so-called affordable housing will not fix the housing crisis any more than housing tax breaks or planning deregulation has over the past decade.

If the federal government really wanted to do something about the housing crisis, it would have properly invested in public and community housing last night and put that money directly into capital builds. It would have frozen rents and it would have absolutely scrapped the tax breaks for property investors that drive up the price of housing. It would have put in place a vacancy levy. Negative gearing and capital gains tax concessions and the distortion of a housing market in favour of investors has to go. We could easily fund this by scrapping federal Labor's stage 3 tax cuts. Anyone expecting Labor to stick up for everyday people after last night's budget will be feeling very disappointed today.

The empty homes levy will apply to any long-term vacant land that is suitable for housing people or reasonably able to be made suitable for housing people. Owners of investment properties who do not have a tenancy registered with the Residential Tenancies Authority will be sent a notice of assessment. If the investment property does not have a tenancy registered with the RTA, investors will have to supply evidence of occupation, pay the levy or apply for exemption if they qualify.

There are a number of exemptions in this bill, an acknowledgement that there may be good reasons why a residential property is empty. These exemptions include if ownership of the property has changed in the past year; if the property is being renovated or constructed upon; if the land provides valuable wildlife habitat; if the owner of the land has passed away in the previous year; if the occupants of the land have moved into an aged-care facility, have gone to hospital or supported accommodation during the previous year; if a government authority or court order prevents the land from being used for housing; if the land is being used for primary production; or any other reason where the Commissioner of State Revenue is satisfied that imposing a levy would be unfair and would not further the aims of the levy.

Some properties that are automatically excluded from the levy include aged-care facilities, retirement villages, supported accommodation services and commercial residential properties such as hotels. The levy, however, will apply to short-term accommodation like Airbnb as I have mentioned. Each day a property was let out as short-term accommodation counts as a day that that property is vacant. Therefore, an owner who lets out an entire residential property for six months or more in the year would have to pay the levy. Owners would not be hit with the levy if they only let out part of their residential property or if the property remains their primary residence. This would allow owner-occupiers to let out their property for some parts of the year and let out rooms or adjacent buildings for short-term accommodation.

This levy of five per cent of the capital improved value of the land will only apply to those investors who without good reason leave property unoccupied for more than six months of the year. To be clear, the goal here is not to raise any revenue; it is to get these tens of thousands of homes back into the rental market. This bill means more Queenslanders with roofs over their heads. It means lower rents. It means lower house prices and lower mortgages, and it means better, happier communities to raise our kids in.

For those investors who would rather pay the levy than house a family, those investors will potentially be helping raise billions of dollars over the next four years—money that could go into public housing, better schools, better hospitals, more infrastructure—but again I reiterate: the goal here is to raise no revenue and to get tens of thousands of homes back into the rental market. Ideally this levy will make zero dollars, incentivising wealthy investors to rent out their property to a Queensland family or to sell it to an owner-occupier or to sell it to an investor willing to rent out the property.

In Queensland housing is treated as a commodity. Houses are treated not as homes, as human rights or a basic necessity but largely as a tool for investors to make money, and it has been this way for decades. Labor and the LNP have designed a system where investors can endlessly profit from buying land and existing homes and selling them for a massive profit. This is so lucrative that the richest do not even need to worry about renting out their properties.

Over the past year the median Brisbane house price has increased by \$162,000. This means the capital gains alone on investment properties have made thousands more than the typical household. By virtue of investors having enough wealth to own just one investment property, they will make more in capital gains than nurses, teachers, tradies or retail workers will earn in wages working full time.

For too long Labor and the LNP have defended and propped up this rigged system. The ability for the rich to get richer is prioritised over everyday Queenslanders having somewhere affordable, safe and secure to live. There are 87,000 long-term vacant homes in our state when families are living in cars and tents. There are record property price increases, billions in bank profits and yet struggling renters cannot afford fresh vegetables for their families. An empty homes levy says to those property investors who leave their properties empty during a housing crisis that if you are going to own these investments you are going to use them to house everyday Queenslanders. Rather than using it to increase your wealth, you have to use that investment to house a family, to house a worker, to house a Queenslanders. It means that those investors who land bank, those multinational investment funds buying apartments in the inner city and leaving them empty, those investors hoarding property and waiting for prices to rise, will either have to pay the levy, house a family or sell that property to someone who will.

Importantly, this tool will throw a lifeline to the tens of thousands of Queensland renters who are doing it tough. As this place knows very well, after years of government inaction we are experiencing record low vacancy rates. We have more than 45,000 Queenslanders struggling to get social housing. We have everyday people sleeping on the streets of our cities. We have tent camps popping up in our suburbs and we have families living in cars.

Rents have skyrocketed across our state as investors take advantage of these record low vacancy rates. Yet we know from ABS data and from media reports that there are tens of thousands of perfectly good homes sitting empty across Queensland. This is the result of government inaction, a direct result of this government propping up a housing system that benefits wealthy property investors at the expense of everyday Queenslanders, everyday renters, or first home buyers.

This bill says to those wealthy investors who are land banking, who are sitting on empty properties, who just find it too difficult to manage tenants rather than getting someone into that home: find a tenant or sell it to someone who will. By getting these thousands of empty homes onto the rental market we will see more homes to rent and more rental availability. We will see lower rents. We will see a stop to long lines stretching around the block outside of rental properties each week. We will see a stop to the stress caused by putting in hundreds of rental applications and never hearing back. By genuinely tackling the housing crisis we will acknowledge that housing is a necessity, a human right, not a choice. People who cannot afford to buy a home have no alternative to renting, and when there are no rentals they can afford, when there are hundreds of other desperate tenants scrapping for the same overpriced rental, that is when we see families living on the streets and working people sleeping in their cars.

The empty homes levy will mean renters and first home buyers will have greater choice. They will have more money in their pocket at the end of the fortnight and they will no longer be faced with either skipping a meal or paying rent. Some investors may decide to sell their empty properties. That is great. For too long we have seen inflated house prices keeping working people out of the market. We have seen people who could, under normal circumstances, afford a home, stuck in a rental spiral with no way of saving up for a house deposit. As long as rents remain high and investors hoard empty properties, working Queenslanders will be stuck paying for someone else's mortgage, for someone else's property, instead of saving for a home of their own.

This bill gives the government and property investors a clear choice: do they think our housing system should be putting a roof over people's heads, or do they think the housing system should be about keeping the returns high for a few wealthy investors? It is not the government's job to manage the personal investments of property owners.

This bill is an immediate solution to the housing crisis, a housing crisis that the government has allowed to fester and grow to levels we see in the news every day. This is not the only solution, but an empty homes levy alongside things like a rent freeze would give the government time to build more social housing and put in other measures to address the housing crisis. If this government genuinely wants to protect workers, pensioners and an entire generation of young people from the stress and trauma of the housing crisis then they will support this bill. If the government wants to take genuine action on the housing crisis they will support a levy on vacant properties and get those empty homes across our state back into the market.

As the gap between ordinary Queenslanders and the top end of town continues to grow, our state will continue seeing property speculation and land banking at the expense of everyday people having a roof over their heads. As I have said, this is not a new idea. Look at what Victorian Labor are doing. Look at what Brisbane City Council Labor are supporting. This is a straightforward measure: the lowest hanging fruit to addressing the housing crisis. While a few people get incredibly rich from the housing crisis, ordinary Queenslanders cannot find an affordable rental, families are prevented from ever owning their homes and working people are pushed into homelessness. This is the cost of inaction.

I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

SPEAKER'S RULING

Land Tax and Other Legislation (Empty Homes Levy) Amendment Bill, Order Discharged



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, the Land Tax and Other Legislation (Empty Homes Levy) Amendment Bill 2022 seeks to enact a levy on empty homes and vacant land. It is clear that it is a revenue bill. The explanatory notes to the bill concede that it is a revenue bill. It seeks to increase or impose a charge on the people of this state.

On 17 November 2021, I ruled that the Big Bank Levy (COVID-19 Health Response) Bill 2021 sought to impose revenue and breached the fundamental constitutional convention of the financial imperative of the Crown. The bill was, therefore, out of order and was discharged from the committee and the *Notice Paper*.

The member for South Brisbane moved a motion of dissent to my ruling. The notice of dissent was—

That the Speaker's ruling of 17 November 2021, that the Big Bank Levy (COVID-19 Health Response) Bill 2021 is out of order because it is a revenue bill, be dissented from.

That dissent was debated on 1 December 2021. The House affirmed my ruling. Indeed, so few members supported the dissent motion that the vote was not recorded. A ruling being challenged by a dissent is effectively an appeal to the House. The affirmative decision by the House to support a Speaker's ruling is a higher form of precedent than the initial ruling by the Speaker. The House has made a clear decision to support that ruling. The House is the master of its own proceedings. The House has upheld the principle of the fundamental constitutional convention of the financial imperative of the Crown. The House has held that a private member's bill which seeks to increase or impose revenue would breach that convention and is out of order.


The Land Tax and Other Legislation (Empty Homes Levy) Amendment Bill 2022 is a private member's bill that seeks to increase or impose revenue and breaches the fundamental constitutional convention of the financial imperative of the Crown. It is therefore out of order and it is discharged from the *Notice Paper*.

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

Second Reading

Resumed from p. 3034, on motion of Mrs D'Ath—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mr LISTER** (Southern Downs—LNP) (12.47 pm), continuing: For those who are watching at home, I resume my contribution to the debate on the public emergency bill. I know that the people in my electorate who have dealt with the inconveniences and the hardships of COVID will be interested to know what my position is on this particular bill and why I am voting against it.

I said earlier that the government systematically failed to consult me when measures concerning communities that I represent and the border along my electorate with New South Wales were involved. That was very disappointing. I wrote to the government on many occasions: to the health minister, to the Premier and to the Chief Health Officer. On those occasions when I did get a reply they did not address the issue I raised: that the democratically elected representative of that area should be systematically excluded from consultation obviously because I am a member of the opposition and not the government. As a result, a number of decisions were made which imposed unworkable situations for those in my electorate and needlessly caused economic hardship and pain for the people I represent.

Already we are not off to a good start when the government asks me to agree to the extension of the very powers that enabled them to do those things arbitrarily. I did not oppose the closing of the borders as such, but I wanted it to be done in a workable fashion which did not needlessly disadvantage the people I represent.

I also wish to say that I have been disappointed in the course of this debate and others before it about the way in which members of parliament have referred to people who have a differing view from them on matters such as vaccination. As a vaccinated person myself I do believe that the vaccine reduced the severity of my own cases of COVID. Not everyone agrees, however. When we last debated these powers, I made the point that it has never been disclosed satisfactorily that there was a need to exclude people who have chosen not to be vaccinated from the daily life of Queensland. I am talking about cafes, pubs and music venues. There was a lot of disruption to people who have exercised what is their fundamental right to not be vaccinated.

I say again: I believe in vaccination. I am vaccinated and my family is vaccinated. They all caught COVID from me in the 12 hours after I returned home from parliament. I think the case has not been met that it was necessary, under the kinds of powers that we are talking about here, to exclude people who have chosen not to be vaccinated from the life of Queensland. If being vaccinated does not stop

you from spreading the virus to other people, the case has not been met that to protect the public at large—and I am not talking about nursing homes or hospital wards but newspaper shops and local restaurants—we needed those kinds of restrictions. That has never been satisfactorily addressed. It was not addressed in the last debate. Nobody has interjected while I make these points so I take it that it is a matter that the government is not prepared to address. I am opposed to the extension of the powers that enable those kinds of restrictions to be imposed. I believe that the House needs to give very careful consideration to them the next time they may be necessary, although I certainly hope that they will not be.

I say to the people of Southern Downs: the hardships that we endured were perhaps greater than in any other part of Queensland. I understand that. I understand that many people made great sacrifices in order to have the borders shut so that the rest of Queensland could be safe. I will always fight for the interests of my electors, whatever their views are on medical interventions and border interventions. I ask the government to never again systematically exclude members who occupy border electorates, such as myself and the member for Currumbin, from consultation when extreme measures regarding border closures are being arranged. It was clearly a case of either the staff of the minister, the Chief Health Officer or the Premier systematically excluding us for political reasons or the ministers themselves. Whatever the reason—

Mrs D'Ath: You have just accused the Chief Health Officer of being political.

Mrs Gerber: Politics over people.

Mr LISTER: I take the interjection from the member for Currumbin; it is politics over people. That the health minister should seek to interject while I make that point is disappointing because, in my experience, the minister has a very poor record of replying to letters. On several occasions I have had to write two or three times to the minister's office before receiving a response, as the current minister and also when she was the attorney-general. I ask the government to remember that the people of the Southern Downs who elected me to represent them expect that I will not be excluded from the table when decisions that impact their lives are being made. It was disgraceful. People were unnecessarily inconvenienced in the process of having the border closed.

Mrs Gerber: And they didn't get a voice.

Mr LISTER: They did not get a voice; I take that interjection.

One of the most pressing matters, which was never satisfactorily addressed in my view, was that an ambulance that has to travel from New South Wales to Queensland or from Queensland to New South Wales can be obstructed by a concrete barrier across a road. I am not saying that the barrier should not be there but that it should be able to be opened by someone on the gate so that somebody who has had a heart attack, been involved in a vehicle accident or something like that can get to the nearest hospital. In my part of the world, the communities are connected with one another. If you need hospital treatment, you may go from Wallangarra to Tenterfield District Hospital or from Liston to Stanthorpe Hospital. I would not like to think that my ambulance had to take an hour-long round trip to reach the nearest border crossing.

Again I say that these powers need to be taken back and disposed of for the moment. If the government would like my vote on further powers to impose restrictions on the people I represent then I invite them to bring in another bill and I will consider it at that time.



Mr BROWN (Capalaba—ALP) (12.53 pm): I rise to speak in support of the bill. I start by thanking our frontline health workers and all frontline workers who helped in the COVID pandemic. I know that nurses and doctors get a lot of the shout-out and they deserve it, but I want to give a shout-out to my old profession of pathology scientists. Both in the public and private sectors, they did test after test. They did hundreds if not millions of tests to make sure that this state could keep moving and that people could keep going to work, to school and about their daily business.

Our state did extremely well. Queensland and Western Australia were probably the best performing states. That is highlighted by people voting with their feet. More and more people from southern states are moving to this state than ever before, as shown by the statistics that the Treasurer released this week. That is no accident. It is because, for two years, this government and the powers of the Chief Health Officer gave confidence to people that they could come to Queensland and have an open and safe life, free from the virus. I particularly thank the health minister of the time, the member for Redcliffe, and the Chief Health Officer for making the hard decisions to ensure that we were kept safe.

Members have only to listen outside. At the moment, we cannot hear a thing. There is no protest.

Mrs Gerber: That's right; we're living with COVID.

Mr BROWN: I take the interjection from the member for Currumbin. The opposition supports these bills when there are protests outside and then when they sign up to the anti-vaxxer agenda they go missing. They leave them hanging outside. There are no cookers outside any more.

We do not have to go far back in political history to see which oppositions have done well. The Albanese opposition did not get in the way of the Morrison government and their health measures. Guess what? They were elected! Malinauskas did the same thing. Look at the polling in New South Wales with Chris Minns. I am glad that the opposition oppose this bill. They have not learnt the lessons of 2020 when they got a shellacking at the polling booth because they did not agree with the science. They have not learnt a thing. I am glad of that because there is no doubt that the people who endorsed us in 2020 will be looking on and saying what a fantastic job we have done over the past two years with record unemployment, business booming and people moving here in greater numbers than ever before. As I said, that is no mistake. That comes down to the health minister and the Chief Health Officer making the hard calls to keep Queenslanders safe so that we could roll out the vaccine.

We have forgotten a few points in all of this. We had to come to the rescue of the Morrison government time and time and time again. I remember the health minister having to come in here to rescue aged care during the rollout of the vaccines. Who rolls out a program in aged care, gives it to 10 per cent of the aged care residents but forgets about the workers? It was this health minister who said, 'No, we are going to pick it up. We are going to open up clinics and we are going to take staff out of our hospitals.' That put pressure on the hospitals, which those opposite do not acknowledge.

Mr de Brenni interjected.

Mr BROWN: That is right. I take that interjection; they were very busy at the cricket and putting up billboards to try to take political advantage of this. I acknowledge the people in my community, the people of Redlands. It is fitting that I follow the member for Southern Downs because his predecessor knew the importance of getting vaccinated. The mayor of Goondiwindi went hard. He knew that they needed a 90 per cent double-dose vaccination rate as quickly as possible and they led the state. Who came second? The people of Redlands and I thank my community for that. Redlands came second because we were putting out strong messages locally, which were undermined by those opposite. We wanted to get on with our daily lives and that is what we are doing right now. I thank my local community. There were a couple of bad apples and I remember one particular cafe owner, who has now gone. However, the community as a whole rolled up their sleeves literally and got vaccinated.

As I said, we do not hear protests outside, which sends me the signal that we made the right calls every single time on these types of bills. We make sure that the measures that we bring in here are fitting for the situations that we face. We do not know when there may be a mutation. We do not know what will happen over the winter period in the Northern Hemisphere and whether there will be outbreaks and mutations that we will need to be prepared for. This bill is fitting and I say that because, again, we do not hear any protests outside. The only protests we hear are from those opposite who are choosing to sign up to the minority anti-vaxxer agenda—the cookers. They have supported other bills, but they feel it is now time to come out and oppose this one just when people have deserted them in their campaign.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.00 pm.



Mr BROWN: In summary, I want again to thank our frontline health workers who have done a tremendous job over the past two years for everything that they have done. It has been appreciated by this side of politics. We will back our frontline health workers. We will not sack them as did those opposite. I also congratulate the minister on her actions during this pandemic to step up mostly to cover the holes that the federal government left us during this pandemic and, as I alluded to earlier, coming forward with these COVID vaccination clinics. There should have been a federal rollout, but the minister introduced measures such as this which get right the tone and the measures.

As I also alluded to, the protests are not happening outside. We have the measures right again. We now have the ability to act if something changes in the future, if there is another mutation or if something happens in the northern hemisphere to ensure that we have the ability as a government—and the Chief Health Officer also has the powers—to act in a way that is responsible and measured for the rest of this pandemic.



Hon. YM D'ATH (Redcliffe—ALP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (2.01 pm), in reply: I thank members for their contribution to the debate on the Public Health and Other Legislation (COVID-19 Management) Amendment Bill 2022. The World Health Organization has warned us not to become complacent by risking the progress we have made. To drop our guard now right at the precipice

of normalising COVID-19 as part of our daily lives would be irresponsible. It would be doing a disservice to our frontline health workers who are still dealing with the cumulative impacts of this novel virus. It would be an affront to all Queenslanders who have sacrificed so much to protect the health and safety of our communities and to keep our institutions and economy functioning in the face of an unprecedented global pandemic.

COVID-19 remains unpredictable. While we think and hope the worst is behind us, this virus could continue to mutate and new waves of infection could occur. As we saw during the recent winter period, this can place pressure on our health system and, if not managed effectively, put the health of the community at risk. This bill contains sensible, proportionate and targeted measures to manage these risks for the next 12 months.

If the risks of COVID-19 remain low, these measures do not need to be used. As the Chief Health Officer explained, if we remain on our current trajectory there will be soon be limited, if any, public health restrictions still in place. However, if the risks increase, the bill will ensure the government can take the necessary steps to preserve the capacity of our health system and protect the health and safety of our community. That includes protecting the most vulnerable members of our community who are still experiencing the effects of this virus. This is not only our job; it is the right thing to do.

I now turn to the issues raised during the debate of this bill. Members opposite have repeatedly claimed there is no longer a justification for the ongoing powers in this bill. The member for Mudgeeraba suggested the measures are no longer required now that the emergency is over. Six million people have died from COVID-19 worldwide so far. This number is only ever going to go one way—up. While the risks of COVID-19 are generally plateauing over time, it is statistics like this that remind us how serious COVID can be. When I say statistics, we are talking over six million lives—loved ones, husbands, wives, sons, daughters, brothers, sisters, children, grandparents, great-grandparents.

It is easy for the opposition to stand here and claim legislative measures are no longer needed when they are not the ones responsible for managing the public health response. My priority and the priority of the Palaszczuk government has always been to preserve the health and safety of Queenslanders throughout this pandemic, even if that means having to make the hard decisions.

In one breath the opposition talks about the ongoing impact COVID-19 has had on our frontline workers and health system. In the next they suggest we do not need measures designed to prevent our health system from being overwhelmed. It is a mistake to make decisions about the ongoing response to COVID-19 based on the low level of risk we are experiencing right now. Throughout this pandemic we have seen the trajectory of the virus change course time and time again. There are still so many unknowns that may impact the health system and the community such as the long-term and cumulative impact of repeated COVID-19 infections.

The members for Southport and Bonney suggest the better approach is to let the laws lapse and to return to parliament should new emergency laws be needed. A number of members on the other side have said this. We have heard how easy it would be to recall parliament in an emergency. It is an interesting point to make given that the Palaszczuk government implemented this exact measure in early 2020. The opposition criticised government for progressing urgent emergency legislation. If we can prevent the need for urgent emergency legislation, why wouldn't we? It would be irresponsible and inappropriate to wait until we find ourselves without sufficient powers in an emergency situation. We have to learn from the past 2½ years.

Even urgent legislation takes time, crucial time that would put lives and our health system at risk unnecessarily. Rather than waiting for an emergency to arise, the responsible approach is to insert a temporary, targeted framework to enable the Chief Health Officer to respond rapidly if the situation changes and protective measures are needed. Interestingly, I have not heard anyone from the opposition referring to other jurisdictions. Do they think Queensland is going it alone? What are the other jurisdictions doing? In fact, all mainland states have a pandemic management framework in place. Some have temporary and transitional provisions such as we are proposing here. Some have permanently embedded the powers into statute going forward. Some have given those powers to the minister of the day and not the health officer. Some have given it to their health officials, but they have made it permanent. We believe that the appropriate course is transitional provisions for the next 12 months.

The member for Bonney claims people know how to self-manage the virus without government intervention. It is easy to look at COVID-19 through the lens of our own experiences and to overlook the experiences of others. For many Queenslanders COVID-19 does not pose a significant threat, but this is not the case for all Queenslanders.

Mr O'Connor interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Martin): Order! Member for Bonney.

Mrs D'ATH: I take that interjection now that the member for Bonney is in his seat. The Chief Health Officer also gave evidence to this committee that it is important to have these powers.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The members for Nanango and Bonney!

Mrs D'ATH: For many Queenslanders COVID-19 does not pose a significant risk, but this is not the case for all Queenslanders. Some have suffered greatly from the virus and others with immunosuppress systems continue to live in fear given the serious consequences that may follow if they contract COVID-19. I wonder if those opposite have met with any disability groups, because I know they feel very strongly about this. If risks remain low, the opposition will get their wish. The measures in the bill will not be activated and people will continue to adapt their lives to self-manage COVID-19. We all hope that is the case; we really do.

However, as I said in my second reading speech, the bill is not only about people's individual capacity to manage the risks of COVID-19; it is also about making sure we retain the ability to mitigate impacts on the health system during waves of COVID-19 infection. The bill provides the safety net we need to support our community and protect our health system over the next 12 months.

Several members suggested the power to make directions should be exercised by an elected representative—not the Chief Health Officer. The ability for the Chief Health Officer to issue public health directions has served Queenslanders well. The Chief Health Officer makes decisions based on the best medical information available at the time. He considers and gives relative weight to: epidemiological information, the capacity of the hospital and health system, the latest evidence from across the world about the course of the virus and available treatments and community behaviour.

He makes those decisions in an environment where new information is constantly coming to light. Queensland's successful response to COVID-19 is in large part thanks to the leadership of our Chief Health Officer. I want to acknowledge both our current Chief Health Officer and our former Chief Health Officer, who have done an incredible job. The people of Queensland had confidence in Her Excellency Dr Jeannette Young and now Dr John Gerrard when they stood up almost daily to give briefings around COVID-19. As I have already outlined, the bill inserts a range of checks and balances over the Chief Health Officer's decision-making to enhance accountability.

We would all prefer not to need measures to respond to COVID-19. Hopefully the risks will stay low and we will not need to activate any of the protective measures in the bill over the next 12 months, but that is not guaranteed. We cannot simply ignore the risks of COVID and expect the virus to be managed without a controlled scaling down of measures. In fact, the budget announced last night gave a further extension to the end of the year for COVID payments to support the health system across states and territories, acknowledging it is not over yet.

I would like to take this opportunity once again to thank Dr Gerrard for his exceptional work leading Queensland's public health response as the state's Chief Health Officer. As I say, I thank the former chief health officer, our deputy Chief Health Officers and all of our health workers and the private sector who stepped up, including our medical students and nursing students. It was an extraordinary effort for them in everything they did with testing, vaccination and support in our hospitals in both the public and private systems. I call on all members to support this bill. This bill is not about party lines; it is about safety in the community in the face of a health threat. Preserving our world-class health system and protecting our most vulnerable is everyone's responsibility. I commend the bill to the House.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Consideration in Detail

Clauses 1 to 15, as read, agreed to.

Schedule, as read, agreed to.

Third Reading



Hon. YM D'ATH (Redcliffe—ALP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (2.12 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a third time.

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

AYES, 49:

ALP, 47—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, 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, Palaszcuk, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.

Grn, 2—Berkman, MacMahon.

NOES, 35:

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

KAP, 3—Dametto, Katter, Knuth.

PHON, 1—Andrew.

Ind, 1—Bolton.

Pairs: Dick, Leahy; Farmer, Stevens; A. King, Purdie; Scanlon, Camm.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Bill read a third time.

Long Title



Hon. YM D'ATH (Redcliffe—ALP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (2.18 pm): I move—

That the long title of the bill be agreed to.

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

AYES, 49:

ALP, 47—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, 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, Palaszcuk, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.

Grn, 2—Berkman, MacMahon.

NOES, 35:

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

KAP, 3—Dametto, Katter, Knuth.

PHON, 1—Andrew.

Ind, 1—Bolton.

Pairs: Dick, Leahy; Farmer, Stevens; A. King, Purdie; Scanlon, Camm.

Resolved in the affirmative.

MAJOR SPORTS FACILITIES AMENDMENT BILL

Resumed from 17 August (see p. 2054).

Second Reading



Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Tourism, Innovation and Sport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics and Paralympics Sport and Engagement) (2.20 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

I am pleased to contribute to the second reading of the Major Sports Facilities Amendment Bill 2022. I thank the Economics and Governance Committee for its prompt consideration of the bill. The bill seeks to implement recommendations under the 2018 Stadium Taskforce interim and final reports through amendments to the Major Sports Facilities Act 2001. The Major Sports Facilities Act 2001 establishes Stadiums Queensland as the authority responsible for managing, operating, using, developing and promoting facilities in Queensland. As a statutory authority, Stadiums Queensland is governed by a board of directors. As members will be aware, Stadiums Queensland is responsible for several iconic and world-class major sports facilities across the state, including the Gabba and Suncorp Stadium in Brisbane and the Queensland Country Bank Stadium in Townsville.

Stadiums Queensland is known for its nimble and responsive approach and making our state owned facilities shine for national and international sports and recreational, entertainment or special events. This was evident particularly during the pandemic when over three million patrons went to Stadiums Queensland venues in the 2021-22 financial year when the states of New South Wales and Victoria were in lockdown. Along with hosting major events, Stadiums Queensland is also very community focused, welcoming over 1.2 million patrons to its venues for community use in 2021-22.

While Stadiums Queensland's large venues of Suncorp Stadium, the Gabba, Queensland Country Bank Stadium, CBus and Metricon are well known to members and the public, Stadiums Queensland also manages a variety of other venues which not only host events but also provide high-performance sport and training venues and community use, including the Sleeman Sports Complex, the Queensland Sports and Athletics Centre, or QSAC, and the Brisbane Entertainment Centre. In 2021-22, QSAC supported more than one million hours of high-performance athlete development at the Queensland Academy of Sport and also hosted more than 360,000 community use patrons, including school sport state and national championships.

The Sleeman Sports Complex is a training base for Australia's high-performance athletes for swimming, diving, and aerial and mogul skiers, as well as Queensland's elite and development athletes in sports including swimming, diving, gymnastics, BMX, track cycling, water polo, artistic swimming, basketball and weightlifting. The venue precinct encompasses the Brisbane Aquatic Centre, including the Geoff Henke Olympic Winter Training Centre and dry land diving facility, Anna Meares Velodrome, BMX supercross track, Chandler indoor arena, Chandler Theatre, Queensland state gymnastics training centre, Chandler outdoor velodrome and Chandler Lodge and Cabins, which provide short-stay accommodation facilities for those athletes who need to visit the facility.

The venue hosts international, national and state events and caters for a wide variety of aquatic and fitness activities, learn to swim programs, community sports, recreation and cultural events. Stadiums Queensland is already a diverse and agile authority which hosts international and national events, high-performance sport and training, and a huge range of community use activities.

The amendments in this bill allow Stadiums Queensland to become even more agile, community facing and community engaged, allowing the Stadiums Queensland venues to be utilised 365 days a year, not just for major events. We must make sure that the governance, commercial agility and performance of Stadiums Queensland is second to none as we journey towards the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games. To do this, the bill amends the functions of Stadiums Queensland to allow the use of facilities and facility land declared under the Major Sports Facilities Act 2001 for community purposes—for example, projects comparable to the childcare centre that is set to open at the end of 2022 at Metricon Stadium. This amendment will improve the commercial agility of Stadiums Queensland by allowing for projects in the future that offer commercial and/or community benefits without the need for special ministerial approval.

Additionally, the bill will amend the act to specify the skills and experience required for individuals to be appointed to the Stadiums Queensland board. This will ensure the board has a strong mix of skills and experience and will support public interest in the effective management of public assets. Let me assure the House that the board as it is currently constituted does have a great mix of skills but it is absolutely important that we get the settings right to ensure that is the case as we lead up to that opportunity in 10 years time.

The bill also reduces the number of annual board meetings from at least 12 times a year to at least nine times a year. This will improve governance efficiencies and contemporise meeting arrangements in the immediate term. The bill provides that the responsible minister can approve Stadiums Queensland's property transactions, rather than requiring Governor in Council approval. This will improve the authority's ability to achieve the best results in the commercial property market outside the time frames involved with securing Governor in Council approval. The responsible minister will,

however, continue to seek written approval from the Treasurer when Stadiums Queensland enters type 2 financial arrangements in line with existing approval conditions under the Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements Act 1982.

The bill will allow Stadiums Queensland to provide services in relation to the operation and management of other eligible facilities or land within the responsible minister's portfolio but only where it does not adversely affect the performance of their primary functions. This could allow Stadiums Queensland to provide venue management and maintenance services at commercially competitive rates in a local market. For example, we would love to see Townsville Sports Precinct—a very well-known and iconic part of the Townsville community—benefit from the expertise of Stadiums Queensland's staff, who are obviously doing a great job now managing Queensland Country Bank Stadium, particularly their ground staff.


An administrative arrangement will be in place to allow the responsible minister to exchange letters with the Stadiums Queensland board outlining government policies or priorities, as well as government's strategic intent for Stadiums Queensland facilities. The bill provides the responsible minister with the power to direct Stadiums Queensland on strategic matters and matters of public interest—for example, supporting an emergency response to a natural disaster. Before giving the direction, the responsible minister must consult the board.

The bill provides that the responsible minister may seek information or reports on matters of state interest and ministerial responsibility, including details on commercial-in-confidence information. To promote transparency and accountability, the bill requires Stadiums Queensland to outline within its annual report a summary of each direction and how the authority complied with each direction. While not a recommendation from the task force, the bill amends the act to clarify that a spent conviction does not disqualify a person from becoming, or continuing as, a director of the board. This clarifying amendment was identified by Stadiums Queensland during consultation on the draft version of the bill and is consistent with other legislation.

To support amendments to the act, the bill also proposes some transitional arrangements in relation to existing requests for Governor in Council approvals and for existing directors of the board. The Queensland government is committed to investing in existing Stadiums Queensland venues to ensure that they meet industry and community standards and expectations, and to ensure that we continue to attract world-class events that provide quality spectator and fan experiences.

The bill will provide Stadiums Queensland the increased ability to operate in an effective, contemporary, commercially agile and responsive manner to achieve government objectives, especially as we prepare for Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games. The passage of this bill will implement outstanding recommendations from the 2018 Stadium Taskforce established by the former minister for sport to review the pricing and practices of Stadiums Queensland.

I note the committee tabled its report on 7 October 2022. I again acknowledge the committee and the committee chair who is in the chamber with us here, the member for Logan, and I note that the committee recommended that the bill be passed without changes. I thank the committee for its prompt consideration. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (2.30 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Major Sports Facilities Amendment Bill 2022. As the minister mentioned, Stadiums Queensland is the authority responsible for managing, operating, using, developing and promoting facilities in Queensland, and those facilities do include some of the most iconic stadiums not only in Queensland but also in the country. We have the Gabba, Suncorp Stadium, Queensland Country Bank Stadium in Townsville, Cbus down the coast, Metricon Stadium at Carrara, the Brisbane Entertainment Centre, Queensland Tennis Centre, Sleeman Sports Complex, and also the Queensland Sports and Athletics Centre at Nathan. Do we still have Stockland Stadium? Is it the 10th?

Mr Hinchliffe: It is being divested.

Mr MANDER: It is being divested. So it is probably officially still with Stadiums Queensland?

Mr Hinchliffe: At this point in time.

Mr MANDER: Thank you, minister.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr MANDER: The reason I sought that clarification—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Martin): Order! Through the chair, please.

Mr MANDER: The reason I sought that clarification is that all the websites talk about the 10 facilities. I counted many times and there were nine. I assumed the other one was Stockland.

Mr Walker: It is like a tackle count.

Mr MANDER: I will take that interjection, actually, because it is a perfect segue to what I want to mention next. That is, I have a unique perspective on many of these stadiums because I have had a personal experience with most of them. Most of them are very non-controversial. Most Queenslanders are Rugby League fans, because Rugby League runs in our blood. My earliest memories of football was going to Lang Park. I think I can remember going there in 1970 and I said to my dad, 'Dad, which side are we going for?' He said, 'We are going for the red and black, the West Panthers.' We went through those glory days of 1975-76 and sliding down the old hill behind the outer, the hot chip shop which was just fantastic, getting up there on the scoreboard so that every time they went to the scoreboard, as a kid I waved so I could go home that night and show Mum that I was there. Those are my earliest memories of Lang Park.

The redevelopment of Lang Park was a decision that I fully supported—and I know it was quite contentious at the time with the Beattie government, and from memory I think it was about \$240 million or \$230 million—because it is very important that our premier stadiums are up to world standards. It is more than just a financial cost benefit. There are many benefits to having great stadiums. You will not understand the machinations of the NRL, but when you are a Rugby League referee—

Government members interjected.

Mr MANDER: Let me give you some insight. As a Rugby League referee you never ever ask for a game; you are just told what to do. I refereed in 14 seasons of first grade and I asked for one game. I went to the head of the referees at the beginning of the 2003 season and I said, 'Please give me the opening game at the redeveloped Suncorp Stadium.' I was the only Queensland-based referee and I was very fortunate enough to be given that appointment. It was unfortunately a bad day for the Broncos; Newcastle flogged them. There was a bit of controversy about the surface: it was a little bit sandy, to say the least.

Mrs Frecklington: What about the referee?

Mr MANDER: The referee was outstanding—no controversy whatsoever! Referees like one-sided games; there is never any contention—not that we make that happen! I have some very good memories of Suncorp Stadium that go back to when I was a child. When I go to Townsville—I have never refereed at the new stadium, which is one of my regrets. I would have loved to have refereed for another 10 years so I could do that, but my body would not be able to take it physically. However, I did referee the very first Cowboys game at Stockland Stadium when they played Canterbury. That was a big night. Fantastic—

A government member: You would have been surrounded by Cowboys supporters.

Mr MANDER: I will explain that. I cannot go into the full details of this because there will be a corruption inquiry if I do, but it was a very important game because it was the Cowboys' first game. The authorities were pretty conscious that they wanted them to be competitive. I will not say what was said to me before the game, but anyhow, in the eighth minute of the game, I sent off Adrian Vowles, the Cowboys home player, which was not really a great thing for the game, to send somebody off in the first eight minutes of their first game. The Canterbury players had to watch out because I was looking for someone else to send off, and Jason Smith came to the party and 12 minutes later I sent him off, so that was great, and we had 12 players each side. I have great memories of Stockland Stadium.

The Gold Coast is interesting. I refereed all versions of the Gold Coast whether it was the Chargers, the Giants or the Seagulls. Of course, they played at Carrara in my day and, before that, at Seagulls Stadium. What has happened there now at Metricon is an unbelievable transformation and a fantastic stadium. On one occasion I went down there to watch the Aussie rules. Hang on, I have these mixed up. Cbus is the Rugby League stadium and Metricon is for Aussie Rules, of course. I have only video refereed at Cbus. You might not have known, but I refereed 293 first-grade games and I video refereed another 200, so—

Mr McDonald: How many Origins?

Mr MANDER: I will not take that interjection from the member for Lockyer. They were good experiences. One of the other ones which was great experience was when the Queensland Sports and Athletics Centre was actually ANZ Stadium. ANZ Stadium, you might remember, was the home ground for the Broncos for some years.

I still remember a very famous incident there—famous in my mind—when I was actually the reserve referee and I was watching the game from the video box which is right up high in the stadium. There is a very old lift in that stadium. The referee on the field did a calf muscle and I thought, ‘Holy moly, I’ve got to get down to the field!’ They are all treating the referee and then what seemed like an eternity waiting for the lift to go from the very top floor down to the bottom. However, you do not go down to the bottom floor, you go to the mezzanine floor and you have to go out of the stadium.

By this time the commentators were all wondering, ‘Where is the reserve referee?’ I came down and I had a tracksuit which was not like a traditional tracksuit—it was a grey sort of thing which looked like normal clothes. The commentators saw me running down through the grandstand and thought I was in the crowd having a drink and eating a pie and they thought, ‘Thank goodness Tim Mander is here to watch the game because he is here on board to referee the game!’ It was the greatest ovation I ever received when I ran onto the field when they realised that a referee was there. At the end-of-year Grand Final Breakfast, where they have a bit of fun with the year past, they had this little video clip of me running down the grandstand onto the field and then they superimposed a telephone box making out I was like Superman, and I went into it and then I came out with my referee gear on. It was quite funny.

These were some of my experiences with the facilities managed by Stadiums Queensland. There are some very fond memories. I also have been to all these other centres, whether it was for the Commonwealth Games to watch the weightlifting at the Sleeman Sports Complex or the Queensland Tennis Centre which is fantastic or the Brisbane Entertainment Centre where I have seen some great concerts—not to mention Bob Dylan six or seven times. They were all great experiences.

I now turn to the substance of the bill. How did this bill come about? In 2018 the Queensland state government established the Stadium Taskforce to address concerns raised by some—

An honourable member interjected.

Mr MANDER: That took a whole 10 minutes. The Stadium Taskforce was set up to address concerns raised by some of the hirers of major sporting facilities in the Stadiums Queensland portfolio including issues related to the operation of venues, costs related to venues, particularly those located outside of Brisbane, costs of government services and venue infrastructure needs.

The final report was provided to the government on 28 November 2018. I know there is a bit of familiar ring about this, but it is now just one month short of four years since the government received that report and yet just now we are finalising all those recommendations—over 50-odd recommendations. Most did not need legislative change, but some did, which is why we are here today. To keep the Rugby League theme going and to quote Benny Elias, it feels like *deja vu* all over again. It was only yesterday we were debating the Racing Integrity Bill and how it took four or five years to act on. We have seen that pace again with how long it has taken the government to act on this particular bill.

The objectives of the bill are: to implement the recommendations of that task force and to modernise the legislation behind the statutory body. I totally agree with that principle. It is important that these bodies are agile and flexible and have appropriate authority delegated to them so they can act in a timely way to take advantage of situations. The bill has my full support because of that.

There were absolutely no submissions whatsoever. I do not know what we can take from that. Perhaps the bill was so straightforward that nobody was opposed to it. For that reason and the reasons I have just mentioned, the opposition will not be opposing the bill.

Mr Hinchliffe: Such a good minister.

Mr MANDER: He is such a good minister. He is the second best racing minister, according to the racing minister. That is questionable, but we will put him in the top 10.

A government member: You’re acknowledging it.

Mr MANDER: I said according to the racing minister. Later in my contribution I will raise some failings of the government in this space. Firstly, I want to address the contents of the bill.

The bill amends the Major Sports Facilities Act 2001, which established Stadiums Queensland as a statutory body whose functions are to manage, operate, use, develop and promote major sports facilities in Queensland. Stadiums Queensland is governed by a board which is responsible for the overall corporate governance of the authority which has portfolio responsibility for major sports facilities declared under the Major Sports Facilities Regulation 2014.

The explanatory notes of the bill detail 12 points which set out how the government intends meeting its objectives, as I mentioned earlier. I will not go through these chapter and verse—the minister has mentioned most of them—but I will mention a few.

The bill will amend the powers stipulated in the Major Sports Facilities Act 2001 to allow the responsible minister to deal with property in lieu of Governor in Council. This gives great authority to the minister. It will allow the responsible minister rather than Governor in Council to approve the acquisition of a sports, recreation, entertainment or event/exhibition facility. It says that the minister may give Stadiums Queensland a written direction about the performance of its functions or the exercise of its powers. The minister gave some examples of that. Of course, the upcoming Olympics and Paralympics are classic examples of how we want these stadiums to be used.

It will allow Stadiums Queensland to have more flexibility to use the facilities beyond their normal use. I see one of the examples is the childcare centre at Metricon. I think it is important that our facilities are used as much as possible and are not just sitting there to be used once a week or every couple of weeks. The facilities should have a whole range of different uses if that is appropriate. The amendment will also specify the skills and experience required for individuals to be appointed to the board. As I said, we have no issue with these changes or the majority of the provisions in the bill.

There was one thing that did catch my eye which raises a few questions. The statutory minimum number of yearly board meetings for Stadiums Queensland is to be reduced from at least 12 times a year to at least nine times a year. I am not sure what signal it sends that as we move into the period leading up to the Olympics we are asking one of the major bodies that is responsible for stadiums to meet less regularly. I do not think that is necessarily a positive look. I am not sure whether that has anything to do with the remuneration. I notice the report said board members were not remunerated as much as those in other states. I do not know if the solution was to make them work less but keep the same pay. I do not think that is a good signal. We have less than 10 years to get ready for the games and it is important that not only are we working hard but also it appears we are all working very hard to make sure our stadiums are ready for that particular major event in 2032.

We are yet to see a really clear and coherent plan for sporting venues for the 2032 games. We are also yet to see a plan for the associated infrastructure required to support the games. In fact, it remains totally absent. There is a major cloud over the Gabba redevelopment in terms of the practicality of the proposed refurbishment and the cost. Back in 2018 the task force noted that the Gabba may one day form part of the Olympic bid. Recommendation 5.5 of the interim report states—

Enhancements to the Gabba be made in conjunction with stadium access improvements delivered through the Cross River Rail project and any potential 2032 Olympic bid.


For some time the government has been planning a Gabba refurbishment if it won the games. The original cost that was made public was a billion dollars. Now the speculation is that that could not only double but possibly triple to around \$3 billion.

I see that the previous federal government committed to fifty-fifty funding for this project and the running of the games. I heard nothing last night from the federal Labor government about funding for the Olympic Games. I also question what sort of planning was done when this initial announcement was made. The billion dollar figure seems to have been plucked out of the air. Many people are concerned about what the investment for the Gabba refurbishment may be when it could be up to \$2 billion or \$3 billion. All that for a paltry extra 8,000 seats! It does not seem to have fantastic economies of scale.

There are serious questions to answer about the announcement made regarding the Gabba, the government's ability to put a proposal forward, the government's ability to cost this properly and, of course, the government's ability to actually deliver this. This has basically been presented as the centre legacy piece of the 2032 Olympic Games. That is of major concern. Thank goodness the Labor Party will not be in government after 2024 and we will be in control of those types of operations. No matter what happens during the next two years we will be able to bring that back on track again.

It is really important that this is done right. The Olympic Games is a fantastic opportunity. It is why there has been bipartisan support from the very beginning for the Olympic Games. I think the benefit to the state is just enormous. The catalyst for growth in relation to infrastructure support, particularly with transport, is something we are really hoping we can produce for Brisbane residents so these games can be the best games ever convened.

The starter's gun has fired for the Olympics. It is important that groups like Stadiums Queensland are positioned to be able to respond. I am concerned about how horrifically slow it was to bring this about. I am concerned about the government's record in delivering on major events in a timely and cost-effective way. It is time for the government to get on with it. The LNP will not be opposing the bill.

 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (2.50 pm): I was intending to start by reminiscing about my football career for the under-6s at Clairvaux, but, for the most part, I will be more agile than that and stick to the bill. I took a survey of some members to ask about the key moments for Queenslanders when it comes to sport. Obviously my under-6s career was not well known, so I did not bring that up.

People brought up events like the first State of Origin game in 1980 where Arthur Beetson led the troops and won the game in a comeback. I did not speak to those on the other side of the House, but they seem to share similar memories. Of course, there was the 1960 tied test at the Gabba against the West Indies—a truly historic cricket event. Following that, there was 1995 Sheffield Shield victory—one of the greatest droughts in our sporting history. In 2017, we had the extraordinary Jeff Horn and Manny Pacquiao event.

When it comes to AFL, the three years of the three-peat Lions victory was truly extraordinary, where the Gabba became the ‘Gabbatoir’ and a truly feared ground. I do not think we were taken seriously in terms of the AFL until that. Reflecting on the bill concerning COVID safety, Stadiums Queensland kept those at our stadiums safe through COVID and we had the AFL finals in Queensland—another historic event.

The thing we forget is that in our lifetime there will be an event that will top all of these. The Olympics will be historic and extraordinary for our state. They will be on this hallowed ground where we have already shared so many memories. All of our venues will be used. These are special venues for Queenslanders. They hold special memories for Queenslanders. It is fitting that the most extraordinary event of our lifetime will be held at the places that we find so special.

As the chair of the committee, I was pleased the committee was given this bill to consider which contains the gradual and sensible changes that were put in place by the minister in response to the Stadiums Taskforce. The committee asked about the non-legislated changes that have already been put in place. Some of the provisions are formalising measures that are already being used but require a strict and clear legislative backing. It is important that Stadiums Queensland becomes the agency that can deliver the memories of the future at these extraordinary venues. We have these huge venues that are monoliths that have been used for important events, but there are other opportunities.

I know that the minister is a great fan of a particular Boston team. I do not know whether he is a fan of the Red Sox, but the area around their ground is extraordinary in terms of its vibrancy, its commerciality and its continued connection to Boston residents. That is something that I think we could learn from—that is, having that atmosphere seven days a week rather than just one. It would be quite exciting to do that.

The committee noted that there is a proposal to have an early learning centre and childcare training college within Metricon. Those are the types of initiatives we want to see. If there are sensible and complementary commercial activities that can take place, we want Stadiums Queensland to embrace those opportunities.

I note that there were a few points made about modernisation. The shadow minister had a conspiracy theory about the number of board meetings. We asked a question—and it is in our committee transcript—about most modern boards having 10 meetings a year as a standard. There is no need for any weird conspiracy because we had already asked that question. We know that the quality of meetings is in the preparation. There may be quite a lot of hard work being put into those meetings. We know that the LNP turn up a lot but that is not reflective of quality. Turning up to vital meetings will make for good outcomes.

There are other elements to modernising the board structure—eligibility, remuneration and ensuring the ability to deal with property is smoother and clearer. There is clarity around the minister’s power to give a direction, how we would be informed of that and how we would transition through that. These are sensible, clear, well thought-out changes to ensure our peak sporting facilities—these fields of dreams and Queensland memories—are better administered. There was universal support for this from the committee. I thank the deputy chair and the other members for their participation. The process was conducted smoothly and in a good way.

I have spoken about Queensland’s greatest team memories; I want to talk about one of Queensland’s worst team memories. Remember that horrible referee who cheated the Queensland Cowboys at the sixth tackle? If I ran into that bloke again, ‘boy oh boy’.

Government members interjected.

Mr POWER: That is it. I remind members and those listening that Stadiums Queensland has a great responsibility for our sporting legacy, for the memories and for such important moments in Queensland history that we value so much, but also for the memories that we are going to make in the future, including Olympic memories which will truly be extraordinary.



Mr CRANDON (Coomera—LNP) (2.57 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Major Sports Facilities Amendment Bill 2022. The report was put together at quite a fast pace and I thank the secretariat for their work in that regard.

My sporting career started in primary school. It would not take me too long to fill in the story for members, but I am not going to bore them with that. Suffice to say that it has finished here at Parliament House with the sort-of annual touch footy game, where I was sent off to the country team. I will make the point that the country team has won most games over the years—six of the seven.

As members have heard, the LNP will not oppose the bill. The objectives of the bill are to implement recommendations from the Stadium Taskforce interim report and the Stadium Taskforce final report and modernise the legislation behind the statutory body Stadiums Queensland. The Major Sports Facilities Act 2001 established Stadiums Queensland as the statutory body whose functions are to manage, operate, use, develop and promote major sports facilities in Queensland. Stadiums Queensland is governed by a board which is responsible for the overall corporate governance of the authority and which has portfolio responsibility for major sports facilities declared under the Major Sports Facilities Regulation 2014.

In 2018 a Stadium Taskforce was established to address concerns raised by some hirers of major sports facilities within the SQ portfolio including issues related to the operation of venues; costs related to venues, particularly those located beyond Brisbane; costs of government services; and venue infrastructure needs. Amendments of note include: reduce the statutory minimum number of board meetings for Stadiums Queensland from 12 times a year to nine times a year; amend the powers stipulated in the Major Sports Facilities Act 2001 to allow the responsible minister to deal with property in lieu of Governor in Council—this will allow the responsible minister, rather than Governor in Council, to approve acquisitions of sports, recreation, entertainment or event exhibition facilities; and provide that the minister may give Stadiums Queensland a written direction about the performance of its functions or exercise of power—for example, a direction to use major sports or events facilities to support major events such as the Olympic and Paralympic Games, which is of course very important here.

Submissions to the parliamentary committee inquiry on the legislation closed without a submission being lodged. As a result, no public hearings were undertaken. While the opposition will not oppose the bill, I will by way of example make comments regarding the glacial speed at which this government moves and how that could pose a threat to the 2032 Olympic Games. The state government established the Stadium Taskforce in April 2018 to review the pricing and practice of Stadiums Queensland. The final report was provided to the state government on 28 November 2018. It is one month short of four years since the government received the report, yet it is only now that the government has chosen to act.

Coincidentally, the business case for exit 38 in my electorate was also provided to the state government through the Minister for Transport and Main Roads in November 2018 and, of course, construction on exit 49 has only just started, despite funding being available since mid-2019. That is the sort of example that demonstrates that it takes this government forever to actually deliver projects. Exit 38—this very important exit upgrade that will be crucial for the 2032 Olympic Games—still has no funding in the current budget nor the forward estimates, as confirmed by QTRIP.

Another example is the second M1, another crucial piece of infrastructure for the 2032 Olympic Games, confirmed as a so-called priority for this government—

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Members, there is way too much background noise. I am struggling to hear the member for Coomera now. Please take your conversations outside if you need to talk. I want to hear what the member for Coomera has to say.


Mr CRANDON: Another example is the second M1, confirmed as a so-called priority for this government prior to the 2020 election—coincidentally, two years ago. We are only now seeing some action on the ground. But wait! That is not for the whole project; that is only for stage 1 of stage 1. Stage 2 of stage 1 and stage 3 of stage 1 appear to be several years away from even commencing, let alone being completed. I make the point: these are crucial projects for the Olympic Games of 2032.

Where does that leave us with the crucial section from Shipper Drive to the Logan Motorway, the other two-thirds of the second M1—an estimated \$4 billion project? No funding is the answer, save for \$22 million for so-called planning. This is a crucial piece of infrastructure that is hugely important for the northern Gold Coast community as well as the Olympic Games. If that is the pace the government is

planning to set in planning and running our 2032 Olympic Games, we are in trouble. We are yet to see a clear and coherent plan for sporting venues for the 2032 games. We are yet to see a plan for the associated infrastructure required to support the games. It remains totally absent, as do the second M1 and exit 38 upgrades.

As noted by the shadow minister and member for Everton, there is a cloud over the Gabba along with a blow-out allegedly in the billions of dollars. May I suggest that if it turns out we have a \$3 billion project at the Gabba to provide 8,000 seats we might be better served using \$2 billion of that—or perhaps all \$3 billion—to do something about the second M1 and complete it, because it is going to be over \$6 billion all up. \$3 billion of that could come across.

We have heard whispers from ALP sources about the inaction and the inability of the government to begin planning for the 2032 Olympics. That leaked its way out into the press. The opposition supports the Olympic Games, as we have made clear all the way through. It can be a catalyst for growth for the whole state. If government ministers want to waste time internally squabbling over who gets responsibility to build what, we will all lose out. Whatever she does, the Premier should not give any more of it to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads, because he is stuck in the slow lane and has been since he took on the role. If we want to get somewhere with the 2032 Olympic Games planning, we really do need to get a move on.

 **Mrs McMAHON** (Macalister—ALP) (3.05 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Major Sports Facilities Amendment Bill and not some road bill that other members appear to be talking about.

Ms Boyd: Tell us about your sporting achievements.

Mrs McMAHON: I could tell you about my sporting achievements. If the member for Coomera feels that the Gold Coast's roads are not up to hosting any Olympic Games facilities, Logan will be more than happy to take all those sports off his hands.

Mr CRANDON: I rise to a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. That is not what the member for Coomera is saying. I find those comments offensive and I ask that they be withdrawn.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hart): Member for Macalister, the member has found those comments offensive. I ask you to withdraw.

Mrs McMAHON: I withdraw.

A government member: Unreservedly.

Mrs McMAHON: Unreservedly.

Mr Healy: Thanks for your direction.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Who said that: 'Thanks for your direction'? Member for Cairns, you are warned under the standing orders.

Mrs McMAHON: Bear with me. I am a little bit dusty this afternoon after the contribution from the member for Everton. We understand that he had some previous role in sports administration of some type. We were just having a bit of an activity where anytime he said the word 'referee' we had a bit of a sip, so we are all a little dusty this afternoon.

As a member of the committee that considered the bill, I would like to thank those who contributed to the inquiry by attending the public briefing and thank the secretariat for their work and diligence, as always.

By way of background to the bill, in 2018 the responsible minister established a Stadium Taskforce to review the practices of Stadiums Queensland. The interim and final reports delivered that same year outlined a total of 53 recommendations. The bill represents the implementation of the final six recommendations that required legislative change: recommendation 1.3 of the interim report and recommendations 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4 and 1.6 of the final report.

Stadiums Queensland is responsible for the current designated major sports facilities at the Gabba, the Brisbane Entertainment Centre, Suncorp Stadium, Metricon Stadium, QSAC, Queensland Tennis Centre, Cbus stadium at Robina, the Sleeman Sports Complex at Chandler and the Queensland Country Bank Stadium in Townsville. I have had the pleasure to either play or view sports and entertainment at all of these stadiums with the exception of Country Bank Stadium. I do intend to rectify that at my earliest convenience.

Ms Boyd: Take us through it blow by blow.

Mrs McMAHON: No, there are no roads mentioned in this speech.

It is timely that this review of the running and governance of major sporting facilities through the board has been done as we prepare for the 2032 Olympic Games. We have seen many examples of Olympic host cities left with white elephant sports facilities. Ensuring that our facilities and governance structures are agile enough to make sure these stadiums are managed and generate revenue to sustain their ongoing use for large events as well as community use is important to Queensland.

The bill primarily addresses the capacity of Stadiums Queensland to increase the commercial opportunities available at these major sporting facilities. This is about using facilities that the Queensland taxpayer has funded to their fullest potential and offsetting this by increasing revenue opportunities, but it is important for this House to note that these commercial opportunities must demonstrate a compatible social or community benefit in order to be approved.

During the committee briefing the deputy director-general of the department outlined a current example at Metricon Stadium where an agreement has been made to open a commercial childcare facility on the site. While this does generate a revenue stream for the venue, it also caters to the needs of the staff who work on site, and there are a number of organisations that are permanently housed at Metricon.

When I asked the deputy director-general about whether this amendment would see an increase in competition on site for food and retailers catering at major sports events, the answer was yes. I am sure just about everyone in this House has had a gripe—or at least heard one—about the cost of food and other items at major events. I have been to many sporting venues across the world and can attest that more food vendors and competition and variety on site facilitates cheaper food prices at major events. I can specifically think of venues even in New South Wales where on stadium sites there were food trucks—food trucks as far as the eye could see, and what a lovely sight it was!

The other aspect of the bill I want to mention today is in relation to the governance of the board of Stadiums Queensland. Firstly with respect to remuneration, the amendment seeks to bring the pay structure of the board in line with other states with similar boards. Currently, the board of Stadiums Queensland manages 10 venues and a total of \$1.8 billion in assets. The chair is remunerated at \$30,000 a year and members at \$15,000 a year. For members comparatively, Venues NSW manages five venues at a total value of \$273 million—so only a fifth—but its chair is paid \$60,000 and its members \$30,000. VenuesWest has similar rates of pay. This amendment seeks to bring Stadiums Queensland's board members and chair into line with other states. I would hate to see Queenslanders worse off than other states, so I support this amendment.

The other aspect is in relation to the appointment of board members and their requirement for qualifications to sit on the board. I do not think it should be any contentious issue that when being selected to sit on this particular board qualifications such as areas of asset management, building and construction, commercial enterprise operations, event promotion, financial administration, sports administration or governance should be a key factor or a key skill in being appointed as a member of the board. This is in line with many of the other amendments we have made to other boards throughout Queensland in terms of the merit of the person or people sitting on the boards.

I have no more to add in relation to this bill. I could talk about roads, but I do not think that that would be overly relevant. Otherwise, I commend the bill to the House.



Mr LANGBROEK (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (3.12 pm): I rise to speak on the Major Sports Facilities Amendment Bill 2022. The bill before the House aims to implement recommendations from the *Stadium taskforce interim report* and final *Stadium taskforce report* and modernise the legislation, the Major Sports Facilities Act 2001, behind the statutory body Stadiums Queensland. By way of background, the Major Sports Facilities Act 2001 established Stadiums Queensland as a statutory body whose functions are to manage, operate, use, develop and promote major sports facilities in Queensland.

As we have heard from the minister and others, Stadiums Queensland is currently responsible for a number of stadiums on the Gold Coast and throughout Queensland including the Gabba, Brisbane Entertainment Centre, Brisbane stadium—formerly known as Lang Park, Carrara stadium, Queensland Sports and Athletics Centre, Queensland Tennis Centre, Robina stadium, Sleeman Sports Complex and Townsville stadium. Stadiums Queensland is governed by a board which is responsible for the overall corporate governance of the authority which has portfolio responsibility for major sports facilities declared under the Major Sports Facilities Regulation 2014.

As we have heard, in 2018 the Stadium Taskforce was established to address concerns raised by some hirers of major sports facilities within the Stadiums Queensland portfolio, including issues related to the operation of venues, costs related to venues, particularly those located beyond Brisbane,

costs of government services and venue infrastructure needs. I recall clearly that Tony Cochrane, the Chairman of the Gold Coast Suns, had issues with those particular matters, as did Mayor Tom Tate, who made the suggestion that the Gold Coast city council would be happy to take those facilities off Stadiums Queensland and the city council would then operate them, but that was rejected I think from that review done by John Lee from which we have subsequently seen some action some four years later.

I note from the task force's interim report of July 2018 regarding development opportunities at Stadiums Queensland venues to generate additional sources of revenue that the Carrara stadium land parcel on the border of my electorate—it is actually in the Gaven electorate—in conjunction with Autism Queensland and Kool Beanz Suns has established an early learning centre within the precinct. As the shadow minister for disability services, I am particularly encouraged by Autism Queensland establishing a presence in the central Gold Coast region to support up to 30 children specifically requiring extra support.

As others have noted, this bill is largely uncontroversial, with amendments to note being the statutory minimum yearly board meetings for Stadiums Queensland to be reduced from at least 12 times a year to at least nine times a year and to amend the powers stipulated in the Major Sports Facilities Act 2001 to allow the responsible minister to deal with property in lieu of the Governor in Council. This will allow the responsible minister rather than the Governor in Council to approve acquisition of a sports, recreation, entertainment or event exhibition facility. There is also an amendment to provide that the minister may give Stadiums Queensland a written direction about the performance of its functions or exercise of powers—for example, a direction to use major sports or event facilities to support major events such as the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

We have already heard that the opposition is not opposing the bill, but its members are highlighting our concerns with the speed at which the government moved and we are concerned about that potentially being a threat to the 2032 Olympic Games. I want to draw the House's attention to a media release that I put out on 29 September 2022 highlighting the speed at which the Premier acted to include 'Paralympics' to her title. I asked the Premier about this during question time in October 2021, almost 12 months prior to her adding 'Paralympics' to her title due to pressure by the media. Of course, the wheels turn slowly in this government.

As I have already mentioned, the state government established the Stadium Taskforce in April 2018 to review the pricing and practices of Stadiums Queensland. The report was provided to the state government on 28 November 2018, so it is one month short of four years since the government received that report and yet it is only now that the government has chosen to act. If that is the pace the government is planning to set in planning and running our 2032 Olympic Games, then we are in a spot of bother because we are yet to see a coherent and clear plan for sporting venues for the 2032 games. We are yet to see a plan for the associated infrastructure required to support the games.

Turning now to the Gabba, I want to table a news article titled 'Gabba upgraded needed anyway' dated 25 October 2022 in which the article points out the desperate need for an upgrade, with the Gabba's last major redevelopment completed in 2005, meaning its newest section is now 17 years old.

Tabled paper: Article from the *Courier-Mail*, dated 25 October 2022, titled 'Gabba upgrade needed anyway' [\[1753\]](#).

Of course that means that the Gabba is now ranked last on the stadiums in which cricket is played. In fact, a couple of years ago Queensland lost the test—it went to Perth instead—because of the lack of improvements at the Gabba. The only reason we are having tests at the Gabba again is because of our great record at the Gabba. The last time we lost was only a couple of years ago against India in the final test, but it is an indictment on this government. Before then I think the last time we had lost was 1988.

The point is that other jurisdictions are improving their facilities. We have heard lots of plans from the government about what might be happening at the Gabba, potentially spending a billion dollars to get 8,000 more seats. Meanwhile, we have these concerns about the Gabba and what is happening to it in the short term when it comes to cricket. I also refer to an article from 25 June 2020 by Tony Moore from the *Brisbane Times* headed 'After two years, no takers for Gabba sponsorship naming rights'. I wonder if members remember this: in August 2018 the then sports minister Mick de Brenni noted the West Australian government received \$10.5 million for the naming rights to its revamped Perth Arena. He said—

That's why we're going out to market soon with the Gabba naming rights ...


As far as I am aware, the Gabba is still just called 'the Gabba'. They could not even get \$2 million for it. Continuing the quote—

Brisbane Times understands the Queensland government did not receive an offer close to the \$2 million a year it hoped to raise from a Gabba naming rights deal.

In Perth they got \$10.5 million. We have a stadium that is supposed to be the centrepiece of the Olympic Games and which we are talking potentially about spending \$1 billion on and the federal government has not committed to the infrastructure partnership to increase the attendance by 8,000, which might take it to in the early 40,000s. Seriously, can we not do better than this? This government clearly cannot.

At a time when urgent and ongoing action is needed to build and prepare sporting infrastructure for the 2032 Olympics, the government is also legislating that the Stadiums Queensland board can meet less than it already does. We would hate to have a repeat of the Rio Olympics infrastructure delays on our hands here in Queensland. I note the minister said, when asked about this a couple of months ago, 'Don't worry. There's still nine years to go.' Let us hope they actually get a move on.

The LNP will not oppose the bill. The opposition supports the Olympic Games. It can be the catalyst for growth for all of our state. We can all benefit from it if it is done well. It is just that under Labor I am not sure that it can be.

 **Mr TANTARI** (Hervey Bay—ALP) (3.20 pm): The Major Sports Facilities Amendment Bill we are debating implements government supported recommendations arising from the Stadium Taskforce interim and final reports and also supports Stadiums Queensland becoming a more contemporary, agile and responsive agency. The Major Sports Facilities Act 2001 established Stadiums Queensland as the statutory body whose functions are to manage, operate, use, develop and promote major sports facilities in Queensland. Stadiums Queensland is governed by a board which is responsible for the overall corporate governance of the authority which has a portfolio responsibility for major sports facilities declared under the Major Sports Facilities Regulation 2014.

As I have mentioned, the main objectives of this bill are to implement government supported recommendations that came about from the interim and final reports. Both reports applied a balance between the needs of venue users and broader community objections to achieve the policy objectives of implementing relevant government supported recommendations from both the interim report and final report aimed at contemporising Stadiums Queensland governance arrangements and allowing for its improved agility and responsiveness.

The bill will amend the functions of Stadiums Queensland to develop, or support the use of, land declared under the Major Sports Facilities Act or facilities associated with major sports facilities for commercial outcomes for the authority, or major sports facilities leaseholders, where a compatible social or community benefit can be demonstrated. A number of other outcomes are trying to be achieved by this bill and I will briefly touch on them.

The task force's interim report subsequently found that there may be development opportunities at Stadiums Queensland venues that could potentially be utilised to generate additional sources of revenue from operations. The task force considered that if commercial use of declared land in the act is permitted, they believe the use needs to be compatible with social or community benefit. We all understand that is important. The goal of allowing commercial outcomes from our major sports facilities, which are funded by the community, is to ensure that we get value added back into the public system, one that was funded by public outlay.

This would be a great outcome because we know that major stadiums are woven large into the fabric of our Australian history. Who could ever forget the glorious run for gold of Cathy Freeman at the Sydney Olympic Stadium; the John Aloisi penalty taken at Stadium Australia that electrified our nation; the AFL Grand Final at the Gabba; the countless State of Origin matches played across our nation from Townsville to Perth, and many places in between; or the many great Australian legends built off the back of performances at the MCG or the SCG. The heroic feats of many are writ large in Australia's DNA. The most deeply ingrained memories of outstanding performances were in major stadiums.

The Major Sports Facilities Amendment Bill enacts other outstanding taskforce recommendations including the required qualifications or experience of a person who may be appointed as a director to the Stadiums Queensland board. The task force determined in its final report that with Stadiums Queensland dealing with a portfolio of over \$1.8 billion in assets, skills in areas such as asset management, legal, commercial, construction, property development, event and governance would be beneficial on the board. The task force recommended that the act specify the skills and experience

required for individuals to be appointed to the board and this is contained with the bill. Any future appointments will also be required to consider the Queensland government's diversity targets. That is vitally important.


The task force recommended that the statutory minimum yearly board meetings be reduced from at least 12 times a year to at least nine times a year, which will, as the minister indicated in his introductory speech, improve governance efficiencies and contemporise meeting arrangements in the immediate term. Other matters include clarifying that a spent conviction does not disqualify a person from becoming or continuing as a director of the Stadiums Queensland board.

The bill will also amend the power stipulated in the Major Sports Facilities Act to allow the responsible minister to approve Stadiums Queensland's property transactions, rather than requiring Governor in Council approval. This amendment will allow the minister to approve a Stadiums Queensland acquisition of a sports facility for its declaration as a major sports facility under the act and other matters such as the acquisition of freehold land to undertake developments with the minister advising that it will improve the authority's ability to achieve the best results outside the time frames involved with securing Governor in Council approval.

Queenslanders have always prided themselves on their ability to match it with the best in Australia and the world when it comes to the outcomes we are able to achieve in the sporting arenas of the world. We recognise that we provide the venues for the great sporting achievements that our state and indeed our country hangs our history on. Queensland and Australia have always batted above the average when it has come to achieving incredible results for our state and country. We will go to great lengths to ensure the quality of the venues we provide are topnotch in comparison to the rest of the country and the world.

As a regional member, I believe that providing home-based facilities is what gives our future athletes—our kids—the desire to perform on the biggest stages in the world. With the 2032 Olympics not that far away, it provides a focus for our regional stars of the future to strive to make it and to perform in those great theatres of sport. Growing regional areas need their own smaller, but not any less important, venues for their communities to become active in sports and recreational pursuits. I will always advocate for the Fraser Coast region to have a stadium-sized facility to match the growing demand for sport and recreational pursuits in my region as we experience high population growth comparative to the rest of our region. These new facilities will enhance and grow our reputation as a sporting community of excellence that has seen a number of well-known athletes ply their trade across the world's great stadia and will require the appropriate operational framework provided for in this bill.

As a member of the committee that reviewed this bill, I congratulate the minister for introducing the bill and the Economics and Governance Committee for its deliberation on this bill and I also thank the secretariat. This bill modernises and contemporises the management of some of the state's largest assets and makes Stadiums Queensland a more agile and responsive agency. This bill should be supported and I commend the bill before the House.

 **Mr PERRETT** (Gympie—LNP) (3.27 pm): I rise to speak on the Major Sports Facilities Amendment Bill 2022. The Major Sports Facilities Act establishes Stadiums Queensland as the authority responsible for managing, operating, using, developing and promoting facilities in Queensland. Currently there are 10 major sports facilities which are able to hold national and international sports, recreational, entertainment and special events. This bill aims to implement recommendations from the Stadium Taskforce interim and final reports and modernise the legislation overseeing Stadiums Queensland.

The objective is that the legislation will support Stadiums Queensland to become a more contemporary, agile and responsive agency. The Department of Tourism, Innovation and Sport advised the committee that these objectives are particularly important as, 'Queensland prepares to host the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games.' At the public briefing, the deputy director-general of the department, Andrew Sly, told the committee that 'it is timely to revisit the role of this important statutory body in the lead-up to the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games'.

It has been 4½ years since the government established the Stadium Taskforce in April 2018. It received the final report four years ago, in November 2018. It is only now that the government has chosen to take some action. Four years to implement the recommendations of the task force shows the government is setting a slow pace to prepare for the Olympics, which is 10 years away. We have not yet seen a clear and coherent plan for sporting venues for the games. We have not yet seen a plan for the associated infrastructure required to support the games. There is nothing.

Global events such as the Olympic Games provide a once-in-a-lifetime chance to host sporting events and build legacy projects. The games also provide a once-in-a-lifetime chance to promote regions for tourism and business opportunities. There is no reason why regions such as Gympie cannot benefit from the Olympics. We are situated within the catchment for whatever happens in the south-east corner.

Last year I asked the Premier to advise what sporting, community and transport infrastructure, including upgrades of current facilities, will be considered for the Gympie electorate. The Premier advised that she would work with our region and community to ensure legacy benefits from the games are released for the region. We have seen nothing so far.

The Stadium Taskforce final report states—

A key purpose of stadiums is to attract events to provide community, social and economic outcomes to the state or region.

A multiuse sport and entertainment facility in Gympie should be brought forward and be part of the mix. The report also states—

Regional stadiums are important public and community assets that form part of the social fabric and desirability of an area.

That type of infrastructure will benefit locals and community, cultural and sporting groups as well as increase opportunities for economic growth and development. I have raised the need for this with ministers, but we have seen nothing so far.

Some of the amendments in the bill are to reduce the minimum number of Stadiums Queensland board meetings from 12 to nine times a year; allow the minister to approve the acquisition of a sports, recreation, entertainment or event/exhibition facility; and allow the minister to give Stadiums Queensland a written direction about the performance of its functions or exercise of its powers. It is concerning that, at a time when ongoing and urgent action is needed to build and prepare sporting infrastructure for the 2032 Olympics, the government is legislating that the Stadiums Queensland board can meet less than it already does.

During the committee's considerations, much was made about meeting the social and community benefits raised in recommendations in both the interim and final task force reports. Investment in community facilities and services is essential for the social wellbeing and economic prosperity of regional communities. Strong communities are magnets for investment growth and economic development. The Stadium Taskforce final report states—

The Queensland major sports facility portfolio is unique in Australia, as evidenced by three of Stadiums Queensland's venues being located in regional cities.

A major finding of the interim report was that, while there are additional costs in having facilities in regional areas, especially away from densely populated areas along the coastline, the uniqueness of the Queensland portfolio provides excellent community assets that can be accessed by residents of those regions.

As we are focusing on major sporting facilities in the bill, many regional sporting facilities face enormous hurdles. I wrote to the Premier advising that sporting clubs were among the most affected during the three floods that Gympie has experienced this year. They were among the first buildings to go under water. The financial and social repercussions are enormous. The Stadium Taskforce final report proposed that—

To reduce pressure for new stadiums, government should consider new regional event attraction funds to increase sporting and events in regional locations.

Not only were many sporting facilities directly impacted by and sustained serious damage during Gympie's floods but also a historical lack of high-quality sporting facilities disadvantages many in the Gympie region. It forces students, their parents and supporters to travel hundreds of kilometres to attend training, games and representative matches. Several clubs are being forced to share sporting grounds, with game nights extended until very late on week nights and games shortened to accommodate the demand. This cannot be sustained and it is very unfair to players, students, families and clubs.

The Olympic Games can be the catalyst for growth for everyone if it is done right. Internal Labor Party squabbling over who gets responsibility to build what means that everyone will lose out. It is time the government got on with its job. I support the bill.



Mr HEALY (Cairns—ALP) (3.34 pm): It will be of no surprise that I rise to speak in support of the Major Sports Facilities Amendment Bill 2022. Before I launch into reading the well-articulated speech that I have before me, I want to recognise the wonderful input by some, particularly ex-referees. I had

never really felt sorry for a referee until I saw one get accidentally hit between the legs with something during an event. That is the only time I have really felt sorry for a referee. It was one of the moments when you talk about the contribution that people make, and I want to acknowledge some of these contributions. It is wonderful. Everybody in this lovely chamber has a great sporting story but I certainly will not be burdening you with mine.

Mrs Gerber: Oh, come on. We want to hear it.

Mr HEALY: Tickets will be sold later for a show outside. I am just getting some videos lined up, so settle down.

In April 2018, the former minister for sport established the Stadium Taskforce, which examined the operating and pricing models for major sports events for each of the venues within the Stadiums Queensland portfolio. The bill responds to the task force's report, as we have heard from members of the committee. It seeks to amend the Major Sports Facilities Act 2001. This is to support Stadiums Queensland to be able to diversify the use of their land at their venues to provide both commercial and community benefits into the future.

Notably, clause 3 of the bill amends the functions of Stadiums Queensland under the Major Sports Facilities Act 2001 to allow it to manage, operate, use and promote facilities and facility land where a compatible social or community benefit can be demonstrated. This amendment is expected to contribute to the achievement of the Queensland government's objectives for the community, specifically through the Building Queensland objective, by ensuring eligible facilities or land use for sport, recreational or entertainment purposes or events or special events across Queensland remain contemporary and are positioned to attract new or additional events that stimulate tourism opportunities and drive sustainable economic prosperity.

I think it is important to acknowledge the investment that the state has made. I take the liberty of using, as an example, the outstanding world-class stadium in the electorate of the member for Townsville. Obviously, because of the nature of the sport, the use of these facilities is dictated to by weekends and major sporting events. This endeavour highlights the need for us to be able to get a far better commercial return, not only increasing the economic viability of the organisation but also increasing the ability for that infrastructure to be of better use to the community as opposed to just being a sporting facility. There have been examples given of that. As I said, a notable example is Stadiums Queensland diversifying the use of their land and venues to provide both commercial and community benefits, for example, the Kool Beanz childcare facility at Metricon Stadium. That new state-of-the-art childcare facility is expected to open at the end of the year. The facility is located on land owned by Stadiums Queensland.

Ensuring that we are always pursuing a better financial outcome is not only the expectation of government; it is also that of the electorate. Ensuring we increase economic viability is important. In partnership with Autism Queensland, the Kool Beanz Academy will pioneer a new model for integrated child care with a state-of-the-art 13,000-square-metre development, which is absolutely fantastic. The centre is designed for over 203 enrolments and up to 30 of those spaces will be specifically for children requiring extra care. This is fundamentally what the entire review was about, that is, ensuring that our sporting facilities are better used. It covers not only, obviously, the economics but also the needy components within our community. Over several years, the Queensland government and Stadiums Queensland have been working to facilitate opportunities for stadium operators and leaseholders throughout the state to provide greater benefits to their communities. This project will certainly increase community utilisation and engagement with, in this case, Metricon Stadium.

The amendments in the bill will complement the great community services already being delivered at Stadiums Queensland venues such as the Queensland Sports and Athletics Centre. I have so much more to say but I have been given 'the look' so I will end my contribution there.



Ms SIMPSON (Maroochydore—LNP) (3.39 pm): I rise to speak in this debate regarding major sports facilities and acknowledge that it is an opportunity for us to talk about how important it is to have venues which hold showcase events and provide the opportunity for the public to see their sporting stars and many other forms of entertainment. It has also been acknowledged that some of the recommendations of the task force have taken some time to come before the parliament to be legislated.

I want to make some comments firstly in relation to the 2032 Olympic Games. As has been acknowledged by members of this parliament, this legislation and the development and upgrade of our facilities is critical not only for the Olympics but also for our growing population. One message that I have received from sporting groups on the Sunshine Coast is that they want to see true legacy. They

want to see legacy in regard to facilities not only for showcase events but also for community sport development. I bring forward what was brought to my attention by some of the basketball groups on the Sunshine Coast. There is talk of a new facility, potentially in Kawana. It was also mooted when Olympic venues were being investigated that some of the basketball preliminaries could be held in Maroochydore. Those groups said that they would love to have a new facility. There is certainly a need for indoor facilities across the Sunshine Coast.

Those groups told me that they want not just showcase venues but that to develop their sports they need community-based facilities. If we have venues without a range of supporting facilities, we will lose out on the opportunity of true legacy. We need both. I think it was a valid point. I am supporting the legislation before the House. We have to ensure that we keep talking about true legacy that deals with both. Those groups brought to my attention that we need, for example, 10 to 11 indoor sporting facilities on the Sunshine Coast—not just in one new location but across the coast. That is particularly the case if we want to see the range of community and sporting groups grow. Those groups are able to go into their communities and gain the support, as they do, of businesses and other community workers so that sports grows at all ages. Professional and elite sport also depends on that pipeline.

I certainly want to see new facilities that are able to be a true legacy on the Sunshine Coast and in Queensland and will hopefully be a real showcase for us in the lead-up to the Olympics. We need to talk about the growth that is happening now and what planning is being done so that the true legacy—those young people coming through who are our sports stars of the future or maybe just the lovers of sport who want to play in their communities—have the facilities that allow them to do that. It is time that we saw far clearer strategic plans around a range of sports in our communities in the lead-up to the Olympics. This bill gives us the opportunity to put a focus on this.

We have talked about the growth in Queensland and the fact that we want the Olympics to be the opportunity for us to sing the praises of our state, to see benefits from the world coming here and to show them why we love where we live. Most importantly, it is for those who live here already to have clarity and certainty around the facilities that we need into the future. I thank those basketball groups that have come to me and said, 'Please, let's advocate for the need not only for showcase venues which are great but also for facilities that will allow us to grow sport across the coast.'

It is often forgotten by those who are visitors to the coast that the coast is about 100 kilometres long. If we put all our eggs into one central location without the accompanying community-based facilities, we are doing a disservice to the generation of young people who will be the sporting stars of the future or lovers of sport as lifelong participants in whatever code or activity they undertake. That was certainly the message that I received.


One proposal in the early IOC development work to identify potential venues was using a facility in the middle of Maroochydore. I know that I have advocated for the Maroochydore multipurpose facility to be used for entertainment and sport and for there to be staged growth. I will continue to advocate for that. It is disappointing that of the Sunshine Coast, with its about 350,000 people and Noosa and Greater Moreton on our doorstep, is a region without a convention or multipurpose facility. Cairns has facilities. Townsville and even Mackay and Gladstone have multipurpose facilities to cater for conventions, sporting events and entertainment. The Sunshine Coast, with over 340,000 people, does not have that. The stadium at Kawana is a great facility. I know there are proposals around that. There are some smaller places that have convention centres. There is not a premium multipurpose entertainment and convention facility. We need one.

Maroochydore was identified as being the central location for that. I advocate that this is the opportunity to develop this facility not only for current needs but also for the Olympics. Unfortunately, while the state has provided funding for business cases, we still have not heard whether or not it is supported. They keep kicking the can down the road. That is unfortunate. I do believe the answer to building this facility is to ensure that is staged and that there is a masterplan that allows it to grow. That is what has happened in all the other regions around the state that have had considerable state and federal assistance to build facilities. They were staged and can be grown. It is time that we saw agreement for a plan to do it. In a region such as the Sunshine Coast not only do we deserve it; we need it. It is also about deepening the economy.

I have mentioned indoor sporting facilities and basketball. It has been mentioned to me that with indoor sporting facilities there is the opportunity for a range of other complementary sports to use those facilities—sports such as futsal, table tennis, pickleball, racquetball and others. Those indoor facilities are multipurpose. I refer to the issue of a range of facilities that support those larger, perhaps centralised, facilities so that we do not lose the opportunity for a vision for the future for the whole of our community.

One of the concerns in the past around some of the state's centralised facilities is traffic issues. There have not necessarily been good transport systems around those facilities. People would perhaps be better off with the level of sports they are playing to have a network of facilities closer to them in their community. I need to bring that voice because, at the end of the day, having the best facilities going forward and the best legacy from the Olympics is about ensuring we do not lose sight of the everyday needs of our growing population.

I look at the pressure on our sporting facilities now. When I look at the growth that is occurring, I see that there are simply not enough new fields being put aside in these areas. We need to ensure that there are strategic plans in place so that everyone who wants to play sport has the opportunity to do so as close to their community as possible. Those organisations and sporting clubs that develop around a particular code should be able to be in a community where they are able to engender the support of that community. All of these things are about the sustainability of sport. When these wonderful showcase events occur we want to know that those young people who are inspired can go back home and know they have a place to play.

 **Mr McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (3.49 pm): I rise to contribute to the Major Sports Facilities Amendment Bill. In 2018 we established a stadium task force which examined the operating models for major sporting events for each of the venues within the Stadiums Queensland portfolio. This bill responds to the task force reports and recommendations and seeks to amend the Major Sports Facility Act to support the venues providing both commercial and community benefits into the future and ensuring that our facilities and the land that is associated with these facilities is used for sport, recreation, entertainment events and special events across Queensland and that they remain contemporary and are positioned for the future to attract new and additional events that stimulate our economy, provide tourism opportunities and will help drive more economic prosperity, particularly in the lead-up to the 2032 Olympics.

Our major sports facilities supported several Australian sporting competitions throughout the COVID-19 pandemic including the 2020 AFL premiership season, which alone contributed more than \$136 million to our state's economy. Metricon Stadium facilitated the training and playing needs of 12 AFL teams throughout the 2020 season. That season the Gabba hosted almost 30,000 people at Queensland's first ever AFL Grand Final, which is truly exceptional. Lang Park hosted the largest crowd for a sporting event anywhere in the world since COVID-19 was declared a global pandemic, with more than 49,000 fans at the NRL State of Origin. The reforms in this bill will help ensure that Queensland is best positioned to realise the \$8.1 billion in infrastructure, economic and social benefits that are associated with the 2032 Olympics. We expect a \$4.6 billion uplift in tourism and trade and, most importantly, employment opportunities in excess of 100,000 jobs.

In preparation for the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games, our eight Queensland government owned venues will receive major upgrades to support future sport development and community use. The facility upgrades include a significant redevelopment of the Gabba. It is going to be absolutely brilliant, because as we know the Gabba is home to our mighty Brisbane Lions and our Queensland cricket teams, including the Brisbane Heat side that is also taking games to the Gold Coast and Cairns for the upcoming BBL season.

I would also like to note that the Gabba has hosted concerts by Taylor Swift and Adele, who set a new attendance record for concerts at the ground by drawing 65,000 people on consecutive nights. This is a huge, huge benefit in terms of an economic boost to our state. Indeed, Lang Park has hosted the likes of U2, Phil Collins, Bon Jovi and the Foo Fighters right through to Paul McCartney. Next month Suncorp Stadium will host Guns N' Roses. I do not know if anybody in the House has tickets, but they might be standing in the November rain.

In just a few days single-game tickets to the FIFA Women's World Cup will go on sale to the general public, with eight games scheduled for Suncorp Stadium during late July and early August. I am sure that all members in this place are looking forward to supporting us hosting the Women's World Cup.

I will conclude my contribution by also pointing out that the Queensland Tennis Centre comes under the portfolio of Stadiums Queensland. As one of the co-chairs of the Parliamentary Friends of Tennis, I would invite all members here tonight not only to support the great game of tennis but also to attend this evening's Queensland Tennis Awards which are being held here at parliament.

This is a great bill. It has wonderful reforms that will ensure sport continues to be a key driver in our economic and jobs future and protects the great lifestyle we have here in Queensland. I commend the bill to the House.



Ms PUGH (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (3.54 pm): I am pleased to speak on the Major Sports Facilities Amendment Bill. In particular, I would like to speak briefly on the provisions that will assist stadiums to provide assistance during times of natural disasters. Under the bill, an administrative arrangement will be in place allowing the minister to exchange letters with the Stadiums Queensland board outlining the government's policies or priorities as well as the government's strategic intent for Stadiums Queensland facilities. This bill provides the minister with the power to direct Stadiums Queensland on strategic matters and matters of public interest; for example, to support emergency responses such as those for natural disasters following consultation with the Stadiums Queensland board.

I am sure this part of the bill is really important to many communities across Queensland—certainly to my community of Mount Ommaney—because during the February floods we all know that evacuation centres had to be stood up at short notice to service residents in my community, particularly in the suburbs of Oxley and Corinda, because their homes are inundated quite quickly and impacted by flooding. In addition to people whose homes were inundated, other homes were also isolated which meant that, especially for elderly residents, it was not safe for them to live in their home. Even though the home itself was in no danger of flooding, they did not have power or they could not traverse the suburb by road because their house was actually islanded and it was not safe for them to stay there in some cases. About 400 homes in my electorate alone were impacted, so you can only imagine the effect Brisbane-wide.

We know that for those communities impacted during the February floods statewide evacuation centres were vital. Brisbane only had two evacuation centres, and one of those was the Sleeman Sports Complex at Chandler, which is one of the facilities covered under this legislation. The Brisbane City Council commissioned a flood review conducted by Paul de Jersey. The report contained the recommendation that council should assess the adequacy of only having two major evacuation centres for a city the size of Brisbane. My community has certainly welcomed the view that more evacuation centres would be important and should be considered. We know from this bill that stadiums could have an important role to play as evacuation centres in strategic locations around our city. If you think for a moment about Suncorp and the flood impacted communities around the Suncorp Stadium, they could actually be a really great location.

A number of venues around Brisbane could provide several options for evacuation centres or other kinds of assistance locations. It does not just have to be evacuation: there may be other needs that could be met by these stadium locations. I think that all members of my community, and I suspect right across Queensland and the House of Representatives here, would all agree that more than two venues would be welcomed in the Brisbane city district next time.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Riverlife Baptist Church in my community, which did operate as an evacuation centre for locals in my community who were flooded and unable to reach formal council locations. In addition to Riverlife, we also heard stories about hundreds of locals who opened their hearts and homes to people displaced by the floods. Those people were looked after by their neighbours, and that happened literally with hundreds of local people in my community. This may not be an option for everybody, so for the members of the community who have nowhere else to go this is vitally important. This legislation will provide a clear methodology for enabling more evacuation centres to be stood up in times of natural disasters. That is a really important provision for my community. I know that we have lots of people who are really keen to make a contribution on the bill, so I will leave my comments there and commend the bill to the House.



Dr ROWAN (Moggill—LNP) (3.59 pm): I rise to address the debate on the Major Sports Facilities Amendment Bill 2022. On 17 August 2022 the Minister for Tourism, Innovation and Sport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics and Paralympics Sport and Engagement introduced this legislation into the Queensland parliament to amend the Major Sports Facilities Act 2001. Specifically, the amendments in this legislation pertain to the implementation of the remaining recommendations that are contained within the 2018 Stadium Taskforce interim and final reports, which I will expand upon further shortly.

Through the Major Sports Facilities Act 2001, Stadiums Queensland is the established authority that is responsible for the management, operation, use, development and promotion of major sports facilities in Queensland. These facilities are regularly utilised for the hosting and delivery of a range of state, national and international sporting, recreational, entertainment and special events. Many if not all of these major sports facilities, as declared under the Major Sports Facilities Regulation 2014, would be well known and greatly enjoyed by Queenslanders across our state.

As we have heard from many speakers, these facilities include the Brisbane Cricket Ground, otherwise known as the Gabba, where we have all enjoyed attending T20 matches and test matches. There is also the Brisbane Entertainment Centre, where I have been to see AC/DC concerts over many years. I know the former member for Rockhampton, Bill Byrne, was a great fan of AC/DC, as is the member for Chatsworth, Steve Minnikin. The member for Bundamba mentioned Guns N' Roses, and I have seen Guns N' Roses at the Brisbane Entertainment Centre. When they come to Suncorp in November, I might see them at that concert as well. They are two iconic and great bands.

The facilities also include Carrara Stadium, or Metricon Stadium as it is also known. I was fortunate to go to the closing ceremony of the Commonwealth Games there, along with the member for Surfers Paradise. Those 2018 Commonwealth Games were terrific for the Gold Coast and Queensland. Other facilities include: the Queensland Sports and Athletics Centre; the Queensland Tennis Centre, which hosted the Brisbane International over many years but obviously there has been some disruption over the last few years because of COVID; the Robina Stadium, known as Cbus Super Stadium; the Sleeman Sports Complex in Chandler, which as was mentioned before has been used as an evacuation hub during times of flooding and disaster; and the Townsville stadium, otherwise known as the Queensland Country Bank Stadium.

By way of background, it was in April 2018 when the then Labor minister for sport established the Stadium Taskforce to review the pricing and practices of Stadiums Queensland. Such a review was required given the concerns that were raised in relation to the general operation of major sporting venues, including associated venue and government services costs and also venue infrastructure needs. By the conclusion of 2018, the Stadium Taskforce delivered two reports with a combined total of 53 recommendations in order to improve the commercial agility and governance of Stadiums Queensland. As stated in report No. 33 of the Queensland parliament's Economics and Governance Committee, which was tabled on 7 October 2022—

Of the 53 recommendations, 16 of 17 recommendations from the Interim Report have been completed, with 29 recommendations completed and seven in progress from the Final Report.

If passed, the Major Sports Facilities Amendment Bill 2022 ... will implement all outstanding Taskforce recommendations requiring legislative amendments to the Act.

Whilst these amendments are welcome—particularly if, as is intended, they enable Stadiums Queensland to become a more contemporary, agile and responsive agency—the significant length of time it has taken this Labor government to deliver these reforms is deeply concerning. This concern is further exacerbated when we consider the implications of the Labor state government's lethargic approach to improving our state's major sports facilities in view of the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games. The eyes of the world are already on Queensland and specifically how Queensland intends to deliver the greatest international sporting event that Queensland will have seen. It is not that far away when we think of the length of time it takes to plan this; 2032 is not that far into the future.

The state Labor government's approach to the planning and delivery of the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games and associated major sporting venues at this point is deeply concerning. Just last month, it was revealed in the *Courier-Mail*—

The Palaszczuk government is nearly a year behind schedule on its Olympics infrastructure plan, and frustrated senior bureaucrats are warning venues, athletes' villages, road and rail networks risk not being built on time unless it starts to accelerate quickly.

Government members interjected.


Dr ROWAN: I hear government members interjecting, but it is senior bureaucrats who are identifying this to their government. The last thing we want here in Queensland—when the eyes of the world will be on Queensland—is for the proper planning to have not taken place, and they are already flagging that at this early stage.

As the LNP shadow minister for education, I also share the many concerns expressed in relation to the failed transparency and communication by the state Labor government regarding any proposed construction and redevelopment of the Gabba and any associated land resumptions which may impact on students, teachers and families of the East Brisbane primary school. That has been identified, and I know the member for South Brisbane has also raised those concerns. They have also been raised in estimates and in the House.

Whilst our state's major sports facilities are often considered as the gold standard of great sporting and entertainment infrastructure, we must not forget how vitally important it is that fit-for-purpose sporting infrastructure is also supported and delivered at a local level. Across our electorates in Queensland, there are many students and others who are aspiring to be athletes in the

2032 Olympics. In my own electorate of Moggill, we have the Moggill District Sports Park. There needs to be enhanced pedestrian and cyclist access to the Moggill District Sports Park, and that requires the cooperation of the state government and Brisbane City Council to work collaboratively to get the job done. There cannot be any ongoing and constant ambiguity and shifting of jurisdictional responsibility. This needs to be delivered to that important sports facility. I also take this opportunity to say to the Minister for Education that this provides a unique opportunity for some of our schools to get additional sporting facilities within them. I mention Kenmore State High School.

In concluding my contribution today, I wish to say that the purpose, intent and objectives of this legislation are worthwhile and stand to deliver for Queenslanders a more modern and responsive Stadiums Queensland authority. That being said, the time it has taken for Labor to finally deliver such reforms has been inadequate. The Labor state government must fundamentally and comprehensively shift its attitude and commitment to the organisation, planning and prompt delivery of infrastructure and services to support the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games. This is vitally important for the delivery of a successful 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games here in Queensland. We all want those games to be a success, but fundamentally it is about ensuring that we have a comprehensive investment, that the infrastructure is planned, that it is delivered on time and that the time frames are met and, in an ideal world, exceeded because 2032 will be a very important milestone for Queensland. We need to have successful games, particularly when the eyes of the world will be upon us.

 **Ms BOYD** (Pine Rivers—ALP) (4.08 pm): I rise today to speak in support of the Major Sports Facilities Amendment Bill 2022. This bill establishes Stadiums Queensland as the authority responsible for managing, operating, using, developing and promoting facilities in Queensland. As Queensland prepares for the world stage as host of the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games, it is a timely reform as stadiums will be the location to showcase our phenomenal Australian and Queensland talent. Already our facilities are used for the staging of national and international sports, recreational, entertainment or special events.

I personally have fond memories as a foundation fan watching my NRL team, the Brisbane Broncos, play at Lang Park, along with the mighty Maroons; sweltering in the sun watching the Bulls or the Heat at the Gabba or cheering on the Bombers as they trollop the Lions—

Mr McCallum interjected.

Ms BOYD: I take the interjection from the member for Bundamba. Or my first visit to Boondall to watch *Grease* as a teenager—

Mr Healy: Not so long ago.

Ms BOYD: I take the interjection from the member for Cairns—or my most recent show, my daughter's first, as The Wiggles came to town. These are the locations that bring us together, that allow us to form special memories or to form a shared bond. They are the locations where we cheer, laugh or occasionally cry together.

My most traumatising memory in a stadium actually happened in Sydney as my husband, a Cowboys fan, and myself, a Broncos fan, made a trip down to the 2015 NRL grand final. In the final minutes of the game, I turned to him and saw the look on his face and asked, with genuine concern I might add, if he would be okay when the Cowboys lost. Of course, JT crossed the line in the dying minutes and scored, winning the grand final—

Mr Harper: You have to remind the House of that. Fantastic! What a win for North Queensland!

Mr Walker interjected.


Ms BOYD: I take the interjections from the members for Thuringowa and Cairns. JT crossed the line in the dying minutes and scored, winning the grand final and after a moment of cheering, hollering and all round high-fives, he turned to me and said, 'Are you going to be okay?' I can update the House that I am still not okay, seven years on.

Mr Harper: You'll get over it.

Ms BOYD: I take the interjection from the member for Thuringowa. In airing my ongoing grief, I highlight the importance of these venues as the place they hold not only in the fabric of our communities but also the vehicle they provide for us to be able to form connections, or disconnections in my instance, with others. They are critical, and it is critical that we ensure that they are best placed to continue to remain contemporary and responsive so that they can continue to be a special place to go.

This reform delivers on the completion of the Stadium Taskforce review and interim review of all of the recommendations which will improve the commercial agility and governance of Stadiums Queensland. These reforms allow for development opportunities at venues to generate additional

revenue and community services. Whether you love to frequent the Gabba, Brisbane Entertainment Centre, Lang Park, Carrara stadium, Queensland Sports and Athletics Centre, Queensland Tennis Centre, Robina stadium, Sleeman Sports Complex or the Townsville stadium, this bill will allow for these facilities to be better placed for the future. They will be more agile, more contemporary and better governed. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Dr MacMAHON** (South Brisbane—Grn) (4.12 pm): I rise to speak on the Major Sports Facilities Amendment Bill. This bill significantly expands the powers of Stadiums Queensland. Under these changes, Stadiums Queensland will not just be managing facilities; it will be managing land as well. Stadiums Queensland currently manages recreational facilities. Under these changes, it will be developing and supporting the use of land declared under the Major Sports Facilities Amendment Act 2001 and facilities associated with major sports facilities for commercial outcomes and where compatible social or community benefit can be demonstrated. These can be used by Queensland Stadiums or leaseholders.

The explanatory notes for this bill are unbelievably dry and they mention the 2032 Olympics and Paralympic Games just once, extremely obliquely. The introductory speech is much more candid. This bill is preparation for the 2032 Olympics and Paralympic Games. In introducing this bill, the Minister for Tourism, Innovation and Sport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics and Paralympics Sport and Engagement stated that this bill will provide Stadiums Queensland the increased ability to operate an effective contemporary, commercially agile and responsible manner to achieve government objectives, all of which has even more prominence as we prepare for the Brisbane 2032 Olympics.

These Olympics are the government's white elephant. Sometimes listening to the extremely bland, unambiguous bills coming through this parliament, it is hard to imagine what kind of legacy this government actually wants to leave. Is it a legacy of housing? Is it a legacy of health? It does not seem so, and it does not seem to be making life better for everyday Queenslanders either. By joining the dots, this government does want to leave a legacy of a flashy, two-week event in 2032. It wants to be on the red carpet at the opening ceremony. It wants to throw the absolute maximum amount of money at the Olympic Games.

I really enjoyed the contribution yesterday from the member for Greenslopes. To be fair, the 2032 Olympics and Paralympic Games are a matter of public interest, certainly in my electorate of South Brisbane. He noted—

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?

People in the community actually think this. People in Greenslopes think this. People right across Queensland are concerned about billions of dollars going towards the Olympics when people are crying out for investment in housing, in health care, in underfunded state schools and public transport.

Rather than listening to Queenslanders, to say Queenslanders are just parroting opinions is incredibly patronising. There has been lots of activity preparing for the Olympics on the government's part but there has been zero community consultation about the games and their impacts, and is it any wonder given these opinions that people expressing opinions about the Olympics are just parroting Greens' lines. This lack of consultation contrasts sharply with cities like Munich or Hamburg where residents have the opportunity to vote in a public plebiscite. They said no in both cases. Brisbane City Council even closed its doors for the vote in favour of hosting the Olympics. Zero transparency.

As a local member of parliament, I have worked closely with the local community to represent them on these issues. I have hosted community meetings and an online survey. I have worked with East Brisbane State School P&C and the Friends of Raymond Park and other groups, and it is actually really sad that members representing neighbouring electorates, and members of this government, cannot tell when their own communities are also concerned about these games. People are not just parroting things they hear in Queensland parliament; it is just that people put more weight on what happens in here than what happens in the community. People are worried about the games. They are worried about what bulldozing the Gabba and rebuilding it will take, and they know the government has no interest in hearing their concerns or taking them seriously.

What we do not know about this bill is what land is captured in the remit of stadiums. Will infrastructure have to follow neighbourhood plans or engage properly with community consultation, or will planning for new infrastructure on stadium lands be dealt with like it is for priority development areas or ministerial infrastructure designations that are gaping planning loopholes, tailored to allow private

developers to sidestep local planning rules and genuine engagement? What constitutes social benefit? This bill does not outline what criteria is regarded as social benefit, only that it will be determined in the future.

Here is a list of things that this government thinks are in the government's interest: handing over 10 per cent of the Brisbane CBD to a mega casino which has since been deemed unfit to hold a casino licence; handing over \$40 million to a greyhound racing track that will require the clearing of koala habitat to be built, likely killing greyhounds and koalas; threatening a state school and a major park to demolish and rebuild the Gabba stadium at a potential cost of over \$2 billion—

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

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Bush): Member, I was listening. I was about to ask you to explain the relevance of this particular as it relates to this bill.

Dr MacMAHON: The relevance is what constitutes community interest which is what this bill is meant to engage with. These are things that are considered to be in the community interest—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member, I take a differing view on that. I will ask you to come back to the substance of the bill.

Dr MacMAHON: To be clear, this government pursues things that are in commercial interest which are not in community interest. The explanatory notes and the committee report plainly entertain commercialising public space and facilities. This bill could facilitate things like turning the green space in front of the Gabba into a McDonald's, turning the public land around the Gabba into shop frontage, or contracting fast food joints to run the hot food inside the stadium. To be clear, this is not a bill about sports, this is not a bill about encouraging more people to engage in sports or to get kids into sports; it is about the commercialisation of public land and public facilities.

In this debate today we have heard a lot of individual MPs talking about their experiences at stadiums. Let me tell you a bit about my community's experience with the Gabba stadium. East Brisbane State School has shared a block with the Gabba for over 120 years. The Gabba has steadily encroached on school grounds. The school lost a classroom, playground and, ironically, cricket nets to the Gabba expansion 20 years ago. Despite promises to be able to regularly use the Gabba grounds—it makes a lot of sense that kids can use the beautiful green space right next door—the school struggles to get access to the grounds, and now the proposed Gabba expansion threatens to wipe the school off the map.

The concern from the community is not just parroting Greens policy. This community has been mobilising. They have run a petition. They have been asking for meetings. They have been writing letters. They have been talking to their neighbours. Raymond Park, a 100-year-old park just down the road, is earmarked for a warm-up track. It seems the government planner has said, 'Golly, gee, we need a warm-up track next to this athletics track. There's a bit of green space,' without checking if a warm-up track will fit, without any conversation with community and with no concern for the fact it will wipe out homes, a community garden, a soccer club, a dog park and a playground. This community have also been mobilising, launching a petition, running events and saying to the government, 'Hands off our park.'

I truly wish that this community could feel excited about the Olympic Games. The kids at East Brisbane State School should feel excited about going to the opening ceremony in 10 years time. Gabba residents should feel confident that they will not be priced out of the neighbourhood and they will be around to enjoy the games, to volunteer and to soak up the atmosphere. How can we feel excited when on the chopping block is a state school, a major park and housing affordability? How can we feel excited when there has been no consultation and there is the threat of losing a school, driving up house prices in a neighbourhood that already has rising levels of rental stress and mortgage stress? Is it any wonder that this community and neighbouring communities are angry? They are questioning the multibillion dollar price tag. This event is budgeted at \$5 billion, but history tells us this will balloon way beyond that. Olympics run over budget on an average of 170 per cent, and it will be everyday Queenslanders footing the bill.


Last week over 200 parents, students and community members rallied outside East Brisbane State School. I want to table some of the photos from this rally.

Tabled paper: Bundle of photographs depicting rally for East Brisbane State School and Raymond Park, Wellington Road on 20 October 2022 [1754].

They show the faces of the kids who do not know where they are going to be going to school in a few years time. They do not know where they will be playing with their friends in a few year times. They do not know where their siblings will be going to school. I wanted to share some of the placards

that East Brisbane State School kids painted for the rally. These are the voices of Queensland youth. They include, 'I love my school.' 'Hands off my school.' 'Protect our heritage', 'Education first', 'Where are we going to go?', 'We need schools, no Olympics', 'Choose schools', 'Don't eat our park', 'Little people count too', 'Spend \$2 billion on the books we need', 'Hands off East Brisbane State School', 'Don't demolish our community', 'Don't demolish our education', 'Don't let the Olympics opening ceremony be our closing ceremony'. These are the voices of Queensland youth who are concerned that a two-week event is going to wipe out their school.

Honourable members should not be naive. This is not 10 years away. The plans to demolish the school at the Gabba are earmarked to happen after the 2025 Ashes. A school takes about two years to build. If we are going to build a new school, where is the land? Where is the investment? Where is the education minister? The Greens will be opposing this bill because this is a pathway for the commercialisation of public land.

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (4.22 pm): It seems like the member for South Brisbane completely missed the point of the speech I made yesterday. This is not an investment for two weeks; this is an investment for the next 40 to 60 years. Perhaps if the member is so concerned about housing affordability she and her mate Jon Sri would stop holding placards every time someone tries to build apartments in the area. If we want to deal with housing affordability we have to deal with housing supply. If every time we try to do that someone comes along and tries to shut that down then that will have an impact on housing affordability.

It is really interesting to talk about what we could invest our money in and the impacts on community. When the South East Freeway, the Clem 7 tunnel and the Veloway were built—and it is still being built—whenever we have these major infrastructure projects, there is a decision by government about where to allocate and where to spend money. Inevitably, there is an impact on the community. However, there is also a great social benefit for the broader community. When we are serious about being in government, we have to actually make those tough decisions and look at those broader social benefits that accrue to society.

The member wants to talk about housing and health care. When we look at my area, we see that two new sets of social housing opened in the last two to three years. In the member's area a year to 18 months ago, the Brisbane Housing Company opened 70 or 80 units and they have just announced another one in Stones Corner, all thanks to the Palaszczuk government. In health care there are 250 new beds at the PA Hospital. In the area of public transport, there is Cross River Rail. What is that—a \$9 billion project? Then there is the Veloway.

Mr Minnikin: No, \$5.4 billion.

Mr KELLY: \$5 billion—whatever it is. In the area of schools we have built infrastructure at different schools in my electorate. In terms of jobs we are investing in Skilling Queenslanders for Work.

If the member wants to talk about investment, I say we can do all these things and actually invest in the Olympic and Paralympic Games, which will be beneficial to the entire community. No-one is denying that is going to have impacts on our community. Certainly some of these major stadiums have impacts on my community. If honourable members go and talk to the people who run businesses around the Coorparoo train station they will say that every time there is a game at the Gabba there is a significant impact on their business. We know there are impacts on those businesses, but we also have to look at the massive benefits that accrue to our community broadly from having the capacity to run these things.

I do want to respond to some of the things said by the member for Everton and other members of the LNP. I love being lectured to about infrastructure by the LNP—and I will be lectured to about infrastructure by the LNP—because it gives me a chance to talk about their 'proud' history when in government when it comes to infrastructure. Let's see. In my electorate there was negative one hall. They promised one, they took it away and they moved it over to then premier Campbell Newman's electorate. We have one hall that was promised in the entire electorate and that was shut down. I can say that this government has built two halls at that school, Cavendish Road State High School. It was great to see Dick Johnson, a former Cavendish Road student here today. What else did they build? There was not much that I could see, but we did get one big building here in town.


Mr Hinchliffe: They cut the ribbons on a few things.

Mr KELLY: They did cut ribbons on a few things. We hear members opposite going on about Labor and infrastructure, but there is so much going on just in my little electorate now in terms of infrastructure. I know if we expand that across the entire state the list would go on and on.

I love to hear the member for Coomera yelling at the top of his voice about infrastructure. I pose the question: did the member actually do any yelling when he was in government? When he was a member of the caucus in the Newman government, did he ever do any yelling about his M1, his schools, his police stations and his hospitals? No, I do not think any yelling happened there. Was there any congratulations for the schools we have built and are building in that area or for the hospitals or the police stations we are building or the work we are doing on the M1? I do not think so. There was just lots of yelling.

As the minister said, this bill is setting up another important step towards the Olympics and the Paralympics, but it is also about managing all of those venues not just for sporting events but for cultural events as well. It certainly streamlines these facilities and makes them more agile. The fact that we can utilise some of this land and the facilities for commercial activities should not be something we shy away from. I see all the time in my electorate community organisations utilising public infrastructure or public land to engage in commercial activities that raise money which helps them continue to engage in sport, music and cultural activities. I do not see that as necessarily a major issue.

With those few words, I say this bill is achieving what it set out to do. It is streamlining the processes that we need to run these stadiums. That will be good for Queensland and it will be great for the Olympics and the Paralympics.

 **Mr MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (4.28 pm): I rise to address the Major Sports Facilities Amendment Bill. I note at the outset the LNP will not be opposing this bill, which is largely administrative in nature. However, I would like to make a couple of points with respect to Olympic infrastructure and the priorities of this government.

What we have seen since the Olympics were announced with much fanfare is complete inaction on any Olympic infrastructure and any of the supporting transport infrastructure with the exception of Cross River Rail. I will give the government that. They are building that Cross River Rail at massive cost—\$9 billion we have just heard. However, on infrastructure like rail to the Sunshine Coast there has been zero from this government and we saw \$1.6 billion cut by the federal government last night. That is the kind of transport infrastructure which will be critical to delivering the Olympic Games in a successful and seamless manner.

There is no plan for a convention or an exhibition centre on the Sunshine Coast, the kind of facility which the Sunshine Coast deserves and for which it has been calling out for years. It is the kind of facility that major centres right across Queensland already have. There is the Cairns Convention Centre. Townsville just got a brand new stadium. The Sunshine Coast, a community of a far larger population, does not have a convention centre. This government should be giving serious consideration to committing funding to get work started so it can be utilised for initiatives like the Olympic Games in 2032.

We have seen the glacial pace at which this government has done everything relating to the Olympics and with respect to major sporting infrastructure across the state. We have seen cost blowouts on the Gabba, and a lack of clarity around what it is going to cost. We have heard from the member for South Brisbane about the impact on her constituents. My question is: what will the impact be of the expenditure on the Gabba for the rest of Queensland? What will constituents in my electorate on the Sunshine Coast do without because of money spent on the Gabba? Local projects on the Sunshine Coast like the Maroochydore Cricket Club's lighting proposal, which has been assessed by Queensland Cricket to be the third highest priority in the state, go unfunded. They go unfunded because there is no funding for local sporting clubs that do support significant sporting events. The Big Bash plays at the same field that the Maroochydore Cricket Club want \$600,000 to provide lighting for and yet there is no single funding line from this government to fund that infrastructure.

Mr Boothman: It is a breeding ground for the next generation.

Mr MICKELBERG: I take the interjection from the member for Theodore. It is a breeding ground for the very generation that will be competing in 2032. I use the example of the Sunshine Coast Wanderers Football Club in Buderim. I have recently written to the minister about this—I will cut him some slack because I only wrote recently; he has not had a chance to respond yet. That soccer club has approached me because they simply do not have the funds to be able to maintain their fields which have been considerably impacted as a consequence of the wet weather. There is no funding. Queensland Sport and Recreation tell me there is no funding line to support clubs like the Buderim Wanderers Football Club, and that is simply not good enough.

We are talking about \$60,000 odd for a sporting club that supports 1,200 people across the Sunshine Coast. It is in the National Soccer League and is a pathway to elite sport from under 6s right through. For the government not to have any funding line to support the maintenance of those sorts of facilities—

Government members interjected.

Mr MICKELBERG: I hear the interjections from those opposite who say it is a council responsibility, but that is simply another example of trying to blame others, of shifting responsibility to other levels of government. We have seen the federal government cut, cut, cut in last night's budget, but it does not stop those opposite claiming credit when they want to announce a project.

Mr Nicholls interjected.

Mr MICKELBERG: I take the interjection from the member for Clayfield. We saw plenty of sporting projects funded in the member for Springwood's electorate when he was the minister for sport. Plenty of projects were pork-barrelled in the member for Springwood's electorate when he was the minister. This was at the expense of every other electorate in the state. It talks to a failure to prioritise the interests of all Queenslanders by this state government. I will give credit where it is due. The government did fund the expansion of the Sunshine Coast Stadium in my electorate in the last term. I do not know if it was because the then treasurer and deputy premier was the patron of the club—there was much fanfare when she opened it. Nonetheless, that is the one piece of sporting infrastructure that this government has funded and delivered in my electorate. Queenslanders deserve better, to be frank.

If I look at the Sunshine Coast Hockey Association, it was the former LNP federal government that bailed them out so that they could put in a new synthetic pitch, which is used by the Hockeyroos. The pitch is used by sporting teams who come to the Sunshine Coast and who will use those sorts of facilities in advance of the Olympics in 2032, but this state government ignore them. This state government ignore those community sporting clubs, which are the pathways for our elite sportsmen. They ignore them because they like the glitz and glamour of the red carpet—the big events—and it is Queenslanders who lose out.

I implore those opposite to think about local communities. There is more to Queensland than big events, red carpets and glitz and glamour. Queenslanders deserve sporting pathways and facilities in our local communities, and the Sunshine Coast quite simply is not getting its fair share right now.



Ms PEASE (Lytton—ALP) (4.34 pm): I am fortunate in my electorate that this Queensland government supports all sports, as it supports all sports across the state. Whether it be Townsville where they have done a huge amount of work on the hockey fields, the Sunshine Coast where they have done work on the hockey fields, at Kedron where they have done work on the hockey fields—

An honourable member interjected.

Ms PEASE: Absolutely they have. At Southport on the Gold Coast they have done a lot of work on the hockey fields. Our government has supported all sports—hockey being one of them—and continues to do so.

How delightful it is that in my area my Aussie Rules club has received a significant amount of money. Our local football club, Wynnum Wolves, has received significant funding. Wynnum Manly cricket has just received some funding. It is terribly embarrassing to sit here day in, day out listening to the naysayers on that side of the chamber. All they do is criticise, criticise, criticise. I do not know why they live in Queensland because the way they go on you would think that it is a terrible place to live in—there is nothing good about it, there is nothing nice about it; they just bring it down every step of the way.


I am proud to be a member of this government which has done so much in this state. Sport is only one of the areas, and that is what we happen to be talking about today. We are talking about the Major Sports Facilities Amendment Bill 2022. If those opposite want me to talk about all of the great things we have done in Queensland since we have been in government, I am happy to go on, but I want to talk about sports facilities. We are here to pass the sports facilities bill. It is a priority to get this bill passed so we can move on with the work that we are doing in the Olympic Games space.

The Major Sports Facilities Amendment Bill was introduced in 2022 and referred to the Economics and Governance Committee. This bill is the result of the report of a task force that was developed in 2018 to examine the operating and pricing models for major sports events for each of the venues within Stadiums Queensland. The bill is in response to the task force report and seeks to amend the Major Sports Facilities Act 2001 to enable Stadiums Queensland to diversify the use of the land at venues to provide both commercial and community benefit. The Greens have asked for social benefits, and that is what this bill will achieve.

We have heard from members here today about the wonderful, lovely experiences that they have had at stadiums. They are part of the fabric of our society; they are important to all of us. We have all been to stadiums, we have done different things at them and we have different memories of them. The member for Everton was talking about his experiences at Lang Park, sitting at the outer. I had similar experiences—they were great times with my mum and dad. My dad particularly loved the footy. He was a great Rugby League player himself and we spent a lot of time there. I have the fondest memories of Lang Park. I was fortunate to be at the first State of Origin match and I also happened to be at the last match between Queensland and New South Wales before we started State of Origin. I have tremendous memories.

I have great memories of Boondall. For my sins, I admit publicly—do not hold it against me—that I saw *Starlight Express*, the one on rollerskates. Do not judge me: my husband bought me tickets and thought it was a great thing. I also saw *Riverdance* there. I saw the magnificent Hugh Jackman in *Boy from Oz*. I have also enjoyed many games of cricket at the Gabba. I saw Tina Turner at the Sleeman Sports Complex. Was it *Simply the Best* or *Return to Thunderdome*? I am not sure which one it was, but I have some tremendous memories of that. I have lovely memories of the social capital benefits of Chandler. I spent many hours in the lovely parks around Chandler with my girlfriend, who has sadly passed away. The fondest memories I have are of Beth and I with our kids enjoying the duck ponds and the nature walks around Chandler. I enjoyed the Commonwealth Games there. This is a great opportunity for us to expand on that.

My kids learnt to swim with Aquatic Achievers, which is located at the Chandler sporting complex. Expanding on that opportunity is great. My daughter, who was an elite hockey player, used to go to a physio and a podiatrist that operated out of the Sleeman Sports Centre. So I have seen the benefits of having combined uses of the facilities and commercialising those facilities. That is why it is important that we create the opportunity for Stadiums Queensland to have agility, to be progressive and to look at alternative ways to make use of those facilities. It is important that this bill is passed today. I am delighted to hear that, for a change, the LNP have decided to support this bill. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (4.39 pm): I, too, rise to address the Major Sports Facilities Amendment Bill 2022. I do so, as just about every member in this chamber would well know, as an avid sports nut. I know that even the Minister for Sport himself knows how passionate I am about not only all sports that are played and represented in my electorate but every sport in general. I could happily sit and watch two cockroaches chase each other up the wall and probably enjoy that as much as many other activities. I am also very much a regular at a lot of Stadiums Queensland facilities and have even had the privilege of playing on the hallowed turf that is Lang Park. A number of us have had that opportunity as part of our touch football charity game.

Ms Pease interjected.

Mr POWELL: No, the member for Lytton did not have a head clash with me at that field; I think it was at Souths that we had that head knock. I still have the photo to prove it. I am not sure which of us came off worse. All I do know is that Country continue to flog City when it comes to touch footy! I also had an opportunity to play a fundraising football game—the real game of football, soccer—on the field there with a number of CEOs, raising money for an Indigenous organisation. It will long live in my memory due to a knee injury. I was playing goalkeeper and Craig Moore came on in the second half. We were actually holding our own, if I recall correctly. I will never forget the look on his face as I came out a bit to meet him. He just sort of smiled at me and then proceeded to lob and put a goal in behind me. You have to admit: getting scored on by Craig Moore is—

A government member interjected.

Mr POWELL: Embarrassing? No, no, no. I will take it; it is quite an honour.

There are a number of aspects of this bill that I want to speak on. One is around the commercial outcomes for major sports facilities. The interim report of the task force mentioned an opportunity that Metricon Stadium, in their land parcel, had tried to pursue around an early learning centre. The task force subsequently found that there may be development opportunities at Stadiums Queensland venues that could potentially be utilised to generate additional sources of revenue from operations that are compatible with SQ business. I want to relate an example of where I have seen this in practice outside of SQ facilities, because I think it will benefit our Stadiums Queensland stadiums, parks and facilities. It is at what used to be called Dolphin Stadium—I believe it is now Moreton Daily Stadium—at Redcliffe. Yes, they have a leagues club and, yes, they have the various things that go with that, including poker machines, but they also have a shopping centre with a major brand as the major tenant.

That generates ongoing revenue for the Dolphins leagues club. That has allowed them to make a very successful pitch for an NRL team. My biggest disappointment is that I was looking forward to becoming a Moreton Bay Dolphins fan. Hopefully the NRL will yet see wisdom in giving the team a locational name rather than just 'the Dolphins'. I was even offering, as I understand the mayor of Moreton Bay Regional Council was offering, to give up my Parramatta Eels membership and truly sign on as a Moreton Bay Dolphins fan if that was the case. Sadly, it has not been, so I may have to continue to have split allegiances.


Coming back to the stadium, extra revenue is brought in from those commercial operations. It also means that community sporting groups in my location can access that huge stadium and the ancillary fields at a reasonable cost. A number of my sporting teams have been down there and participated at activities at that centre, as have my own kids. The state titles and national titles for the Churches Soccer Association have been held at those facilities. I know that we have been able to get them at a reasonable rate because the cost has been offset by the revenue that the commercial operations have generated. Potentially, some of our major sporting teams that struggle to fill the entirety of SQ facilities, particularly Lang Park, may be able to continue to play at places like Lang Park at a reduced rate. That may mean they will be able to offer cheaper tickets. That will mean that more fans and kids will be able to attend and more kids will be able to see their heroes and get enthusiastic about sport. What better time than now, in the lead-up to the 2032 Olympics here in South-East Queensland?

That is the other aspect of the bill that I want to note. This is making SQ become Olympics and Paralympics ready. I think that is very important. In fact, I think the whole state needs to get Olympics and Paralympics ready. I heard my colleague the member for Buderim talking about some of the infrastructure needs we have on the Sunshine Coast and in the Moreton Bay area as part of the Olympics preparation. We need a stadium. We need upgrades to some of the secondary level hockey, soccer, cricket, AFL, netball and basketball facilities. What we particularly need to see is lighting and female-friendly change rooms at a lot of those facilities. In the same way that SQ is getting Olympics and Paralympics ready, we need to be getting our community sporting groups ready.

I acknowledge that the minister has met with one of my groups. We have an unusual situation whereby it is not a council run operation—it is not even on a council piece of land; it is a state government piece of land. It is a community run trust that hosts one of our best round-ball football teams, desperately in need of lights. I acknowledge that the minister has met with them and is looking at that. We need to see that not only at the Beerwah Glasshouse United Football Club but also at the Maleny Rangers, at the Palmwoods Warriors and at Wamuran and Woodford with netball clubs like the Woodford Warriors Netball Club. That needs to be occurring right across the region as we get ready for the Olympics.

We also need to make sure we have the infrastructure we need to move people around as they come to the Olympics in 2032. I echo some of the concerns raised by my colleagues during question time that in the last federal budget we have not seen allocations of funding, in the short term at least, for the heavy rail into Maroochydore. It is desperately needed. We also need to see a commitment that the Albanese federal government will sign up to what the Morrison federal government did in terms of their contributions to the costs required to host the Olympic Games. All of that is vital if we are to host what I have no doubt will be the best Olympic Games to date. Preparing SQ for the Olympics is one thing; preparing the state and making sure we have the facilities to not only wow the athletes who come from around the world but also leave a legacy that our community sporting groups and our top-tier teams from across the sporting spectrum can participate in is another.

With those few words, I acknowledge that the LNP will be supporting this bill. As I said, there are a number of sensible opportunities and amendments in here. I do hope that we will see more sports facilities with better access for our local kids and that our major sports facilities operated by Stadiums Queensland will continue to be open and available to as many people as possible and, as I said, with the commercial outcomes that this bill might present, maybe at a cheaper rate for all involved.


 **Mr RUSSO** (Toohey—ALP) (4.48 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Major Sports Facilities Amendment Bill. The Major Sports Facilities Amendment Bill was introduced into the Legislative Assembly and referred to the Economics and Governance Committee on 17 August. The objects of the bill are to implement all outstanding Stadium Taskforce recommendations arising from its interim and final reports that require legislative amendments to the Major Sports Facilities Act; improve the governance, commercial agility and performance of Stadiums Queensland; and meet public and government expectations of the management of a significant portfolio of publicly owned assets. The committee in its report No. 33, which was tabled in the Assembly on 7 October 2022, has recommended to the Assembly that the bill be passed.

Stadiums Queensland is the authority responsible for managing, operating, using, developing and promoting facilities in Queensland. These facilities are used for the staging of national and international sports, recreation, entertainment or special events. Stadiums Queensland has a well-deserved reputation for providing world-class experiences for patrons, hirers, participants and visitors to the facilities it manages.

In 2018 the then minister established the Stadium Taskforce to review Stadiums Queensland and, if passed, the Major Sports Facilities Amendment Bill will implement outstanding task force recommendations requiring legislative amendments. This will enable developmental opportunities at Stadiums Queensland venues to generate additional sources of revenue for Stadiums Queensland or its leaseholders and provide broader benefits to the community.

The task force presented its final report in November 2018 to government, with the report containing 36 recommendations. There were an additional 17 recommendations included in the interim report. The final report identified that the overall governance and accountability arrangements under the Major Sports Facilities Act were working well. However, there were proposed legislative amendments to contemporise governance arrangements to ensure public and government expectations continued to be met.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Bush): 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. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Tourism, Innovation and Sport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics and Paralympics Sport and Engagement) (4.50 pm), in reply: I want to thank all members for their contributions to the debate today and again thank the Economics and Governance Committee for its consideration of the bill. This afternoon's debate marks a step forward on that green and gold runway towards the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games and I want to thank members for their candour, their insights and their feedback—even if it was, in the member for Everton's case, a trip down memory lane and a personal reflection on his NRL refereeing career. However, I am going to try to outdo that. I am going to make mention of every one of the assets and what connection it has to me where I have had the opportunity to experience great things at each one of those Stadiums Queensland assets.

At Brisbane Stadium, otherwise known as Lang Park and Suncorp Stadium, I was there at the first State of Origin game in 1980 watching my uncle play, and I had seen him play at a few different matches there over the years in interstate games. As a junior basketballer I was at the Lang Park PCYC, which is now part of the fabric of the stadium and a great example of the way that community use is used as delivered through these stadia. I had some great fun as a Lang Park Lion there. I also saw the Brisbane Strikers in 1997 at the NFL grand final, and I thought that that is something that the member for Bundamba would love to hear. At the Brisbane Cricket Ground—the famous Gabba—some of my first opportunities to get on the field were at Sam Trimble's cricket school. I was one of those kids who got a chance to go out on the field early on a Saturday morning and try my best and learn from some of the great Queensland players who were there.

An honourable member: How good were you?

Mr HINCHLIFFE: Not very. I also remember sitting on the dog track for some of the big games as well in those days back at the old Gabba—so many tests, so many great experiences, so many Shield games, including tour matches as well, which are some highlights. More recently I was very excited to be at the Gabba to see the AFLW Brisbane Lions team winning their qualifying final on their way to the historic premiership in 2021.

At the North Queensland Stadium, or the Queensland Country Bank Stadium, and Robina Stadium, Cbus, I had the opportunity to be there for those historic State of Origin matches in 2021. It was an extraordinary experience and a great thing to see. At the Queensland Tennis Centre on Pat Rafter Arena there have been some extraordinarily good Brisbane International contests that I have had an opportunity to see and enjoy. In particular, I had a great occasion to go along with my mum, who loves her tennis. At 82 she still plays on a regular basis. It was great to enjoy some high-level international tennis with her there.

At Carrara stadium, or Metricon, I had the opportunity, like many people have mentioned here in this chamber, to be at the 2018 Commonwealth Games. I had the chance to enjoy the opening and closing ceremonies and a couple of sessions of athletics. That facility has come a long way from when my brothers played club cricket there when it was a much less developed facility. Importantly, there is QSAC. The Queensland state athletics centre is an iconic facility. QEII Stadium, as it is known by so

many people, was the site of the 1982 Commonwealth Games and I was a little fellow who got the chance to see Raelene Boyle win her gold medal. A little later on in the eighties I got the chance to compete in the 5,000-metre race walk at the Queensland schools athletic championships. In 1986 I saw my first big concert—Dire Straits.

Mr Whiting: I was there too!

Mr HINCHLIFFE: I take that interjection from the member for Bancroft. Overall, some of my best memories about QEII Stadium and Lang Park—or Suncorp Stadium—is seeing my Dragons beating the Broncos at both venues. I also note that QSAC has the Queensland State Netball Centre, Nissan Arena, where I have had an opportunity to see great performances by my nieces playing for the Queensland Firebirds at the time and by some young men whom I got to know through local community basketball playing for the Brisbane Bullets and their opponents. The Brisbane Entertainment Centre, which is a bit closer to home for me, takes me back to 1987 seeing the Bullets winning the NBL championship at Boondall but also being at the sports centre playing, coaching and watching my children and their friends and playing and coaching with the Northside Wizards over almost 20 years.

I have to note that there were some members who addressed some issues that were relevant to the bill, with these amendments preparing Stadiums Queensland to host the greatest show on earth. We will ready Stadiums Queensland and its venues for the 10-year green and gold runway to major events for the 2032 games and beyond. In fact, this next coming weekend we will see the Gabba hosting the 2022 ICC Men's T20 World Cup—four Super 12 matches played over three days from 30 October through to 1 November. I would encourage people to get out there and support that. Next year on that green and gold runway—we have heard others mentioning this—we are hosting eight matches during the FIFA Women's World Cup in 2023 at Suncorp Stadium. It is the world's largest female sporting event. Hosting FIFA Women's World Cup in 2023 will generate significant benefits for Queensland, including economic benefits in excess of \$30.5 million, showcasing Queensland's major events capacity and capability ahead of the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games and increased participation in sport by women and girls.

There is more on that green and gold runway over the next 10 years. There is the Men's Rugby World Cup in 2027, the Women's Rugby World Cup in 2029 and a huge bright ray of opportunities across the rest of the Stadiums Queensland portfolio in order to support that green and gold runway. The amendments in this bill increase Stadiums Queensland's ability to operate in an effective, contemporary, commercially agile and responsive manner to better achieve government objectives for the active industry, for professional sports and for major events.

I want to respond to a couple of queries about reducing the number of Stadiums Queensland board meetings per year. Stadiums Queensland confirms that the proposed reduction in the number of meetings is not anticipated to impact any administrative or operational arrangements; it is all about making sure that it is consistent with what we see in other statutory bodies and it is suitable for the business. Nine meetings per calendar year will only be a minimum and additional meetings can be scheduled when required. Stadiums Queensland also has a number of board subcommittees of course, including the Strategy and Planning Committee, the Remuneration Committee and the audit, risk and compliance committees. I am confident that we are on the right track there.

In response to members' comments about the timeliness of delivering on the Stadium Taskforce recommendations, the Stadium Taskforce report provided a total of 53 recommendations which involved administrative and legislative changes and capital works, all of which required engagement with a range of stakeholders including QPS, DTMR and of course Stadiums Queensland. All of those task force recommendations were considered thoroughly and supported or supported in principle in 2019. Most of those recommendations have been implemented and, as mentioned, the final set of outstanding things are currently being delivered.

In response to some issues raised around the Gabba, as part of signing the Olympic and host contract the Queensland government publicly committed to the redevelopment of the Gabba to a 50,000-seat stadium, but the key that people have to understand is that it is not just about those two weeks; it is about the whole life of that facility. It is not just about an extra number of seats taking it up to 50,000; it is about the shape to fit an athletics track in it. You cannot do that at the Gabba as it is currently and people are getting confused about this and wasting a lot of people's time. The bill is all about outcomes of extensive collaboration between the Queensland government and Stadiums Queensland regarding the scope and application of these recommendations, particularly those requiring legislative amendments, and that is what we have here before us.

Finally, I want to respond to some comments that were made about community facilities. We are doing a great job on community facilities. We will continue to work on community facilities in cooperation with those communities to make sure that they are delivered. That is part of what Stadiums Queensland can do with some of the community aspects of its facilities, but we know that community facilities are right across the board and do so much more.

I acknowledge the comments from the member for Buderim that the state had made no contribution to the hockey facilities in his electorate. I table some photographs of myself attending the facility when there was an acknowledgement of the state funding to make it a possibility.

Tabled paper: Bundle of photos depicting the Minister for Tourism, Innovation and Sport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics and Paralympics Sport and Engagement, Hon. Stirling Hinchliffe, at sports facilities [\[1755\]](#).

Mr Mickelberg interjected.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: No, state funding.

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

Mr HINCHLIFFE: I would like to take this opportunity to thank officers from Stadiums Queensland and the Department of Tourism, Innovation and Sport for their great work in the preparation of this bill and I commend the bill to the House.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Debate, on motion of Mr Hinchliffe, adjourned.

MOTION

Rockhampton Ring Road



Mr MINNIKIN (Chatsworth—LNP) (5.00 pm): I move—

That this House notes the importance of delivering the Rockhampton Ring Road as planned and the failure of the members for Rockhampton and Keppel in advocating for their communities.

It gives me great pleasure to speak to the motion in relation to the Rockhampton Ring Road calling out the failures of the members for Rockhampton and Keppel in advocating for their local communities. I asked the members on my side how many years did they think the member for Miller has been the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. Let us talk about main roads. Let us park public transport because that is a train wreck in itself. We only found out literally 15 minutes ago that apparently, according to the member for Greenslopes, it is now \$9 billion. We might come back to that a bit later on. Has the minister been the main roads minister for five years? No, a bit more. Six? More. He has been the main roads minister for seven years.

Mr BAILEY: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I know this is a broad debate, but the member is more than a minute in and he has not even addressed the motion yet. Can he actually address his own motion? That might be helpful for the chamber.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): There is no point of order.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I warn the member for Scenic Rim. I was on my feet. I had called the House to order. One member was overly exuberant and calmed down, but you continued so I warn you. I issue a general warning that when I am taking advice or when I am considering points of order that will be done in silence or I will be warning people.

Mr MINNIKIN: Last time I checked, this ultimately came under the remit of the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. That is the connection. I might point that out to the member for Miller in case he is a little confused. It has been seven years and in that time we have had a litany of excuses from the member for Miller as the main roads minister. I will come to the member for Rockhampton and the member for Keppel, but let us continue talking about the minister in charge of this project. This is a minister who is a minister in charge of his own call centre: press 1 to blame the previous LNP administration; press 2 to blame the previous Morrison government; press 3 to blame the war in the Ukraine; or press 4 to hear these choices again.

The reality is that under this minister's watch this project is another Minister Bailey budget blowout of, this time, \$700 million. No doubt when he gets on his feet to give his contribution he will talk about excuse No. 2 in his own call centre—blame the previous Morrison government—and he will talk about rampant inflation. Let us talk about inflation. I am going to use something that might be a little bit beyond the member for Miller's comprehension. It is the Laspeyres Price Index, the international index for measuring inflation.

Let us look over the last few years. In 2018 there was a 1.91 per cent inflation rate; in 2019 it was 1.61 per cent; in 2020 it was 0.85 per cent; in 2021 it was 2.86 per cent and, with the lag of COVID, yes, 7¼ per cent. If members want to know why this has been an 'absolute nothing happening' project—and I will come back to these two local members in the last bit of my contribution—let us talk about the fact that the 27 to 28 per cent increase is because of best practice industry principles. We have the situation of a cosy relationship between the member for Miller, the transport and main roads minister, and the people who actually put him in his seat, the CFMMEU. He is completely beholden to them.

Let us have a look at what some of his colleagues have said locally. The member for Keppel said, 'Our region needs major projects like the Rockhampton Ring Road to keep people employed as our economy recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic.' That is not a bad start, but what about the member for Rockhampton? He said, 'Being a regional community, we need to invest in delivering infrastructure and services, so that families get access to quality education, health and transport services.' When he was responding only 48 hours ago to what has transpired—as in, 'bing bong' nothing—there was a one-word response from the member for Rockhampton: disappointing. That is very disappointing.

What is more disappointing is the fact that we have had two different consortia that have spent—I do not know what the figure would be but coming from the private sector it would not have been cheap tendering for two packages of work, north and south. For their efforts they have a delayed project yet again under probably this state's most incompetent transport minister.



Hon. MC BAILEY (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (5.06 pm): I move—

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

'and other transport infrastructure projects across Queensland as part of the Palaszczuk government's record \$29.7 billion Queensland transport and road investment plan and notes the federal Albanese government's budget which will deliver vital funding for Queensland including but not limited to \$2.1 billion in new transport infrastructure; and

notes the strong advocacy over many years of the members for Rockhampton and Keppel and all government members in their continued endeavours to stand up for Queensland's fair share of funding from the Commonwealth.'

Following the member for Chatsworth is like taking candy from a baby. His own side do not even back up his speech. When he tries comedy there is deathly silence because they are starting to see how incompetent and ineffective he is. The member was the assistant minister for public transport who cut Cross River Rail, who sent NGRs to be made overseas, who had new trains that were not disability compliant and who saw our train driver numbers cut by 48 drivers over three years. He has this level of incompetence and they make him the shadow minister for transport and main roads. Good luck. Let us hope he stays there for a while—at least until he loses his seat at the next election.

I am going to spend most of the time talking about the motion rather than just railing against the member for Chatsworth. The Palaszczuk government is committed to the project which is 80 per cent federally funded. Recently I joined the members for Rockhampton and Keppel in the northern suburbs to open the massive \$194 million upgrade of the Bruce Highway. The members for Rockhampton and Keppel have been beating down my door for seven and a half years to get projects funded and delivered. They did not cut like those opposite who spent three years just guarding the place.

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

Mr BAILEY: You ran from Townsville, mate. We know your record.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Order! Through the chair.

Mr BAILEY: In the last financial year the Palaszczuk Labor government delivered \$411 million worth of transport and road infrastructure in the Fitzroy region. That was in one financial year. How does that compare to the last time the state LNP were in office? They spent less than \$400 million across the whole four years of the forward estimates. In one year we spent more than they would have in four years. That is our record.


The Rockhampton Northern Access Upgrade supported more than 250 local jobs. The member for Rockhampton drove the duplication of the Capricorn Highway, worth \$75 million and 187 local jobs. The Lawrie Street duplication, with another 56 jobs, is going well and the member for Rockhampton

delivered that. The member for Keppel is delivering the upgrades on the Yeppoon to Rockhampton road, which was neglected by those opposite when they were in power. Our record is very strong. We are one month away from completing the third package of works in a \$33 million Bruce Highway upgrade project from Neilsen Avenue to Plentiful Creek, supporting an average of 50 jobs. These members are delivering on roads in their local areas.

The federal budget confirmed more than \$250 million worth of Bruce Highway upgrades around Rockhampton and south of Rockhampton to Mount Larcom and Gladstone, plus \$250 million in new funding for the Bruce Highway between Rockhampton and Gladstone. There is no shortage of road projects in that region because of the hard work of our members for Rockhampton and Keppel. We do not cut, we build. We build infrastructure. That is what we do. We know that, whatever they say, when they get in power they cut, cut, cut. Whenever they get their hands on the Treasury it becomes like one of the horror *Game of Thrones* episodes. We all know what happens there and it is not a pretty sight.

We all know what the problem is here: the federal LNP government left us with the worst inflation in a generation, which has caused a huge increase in costs. It is a decision of the federal government. We are disappointed that it has had to be deferred, but we will keep investing in roads and we will keep backing Central Queensland. They can pretend all they like but we know that they are obsessed with the axe.

(Time expired)

 **Mr LISTER** (Southern Downs—LNP) (5.11 pm): I am so delighted that the transport minister wanted to amend this motion because it gives me free range to talk about the funding that the Albanese government is not giving us in Queensland. Let us talk about Emu Swamp Dam. We need that project. What happened to the funding? It is gone! Cut! It is a cut from Labor and a cut to the people of my electorate. It is a cut to future prosperity, jobs and food security for the people I represent, for all of Australia and for our overseas customers who rely on the food that we grow.

I think about the poor people of Rockhampton and Keppel who are being denied their ring-road, and no doubt it will take a lot longer than the worst predictions even we can come up with, but we have been waiting for Emu Swamp Dam for years. Year after year we hear Labor promise that they will support us on Emu Swamp Dam. I have heard the minister say that it is all going to be good and I have heard the feds say that they will support it as well. However, when they get in and deliver their first budget they cut it. They cut Emu Swamp Dam. Emu Swamp Dam is going to bring 700 extra jobs and produce \$60 million worth of extra food at the farm gate for us and food security for our overseas customers. Emu Swamp Dam is going to give water security to the town of Stanthorpe. These guys opposite had to spend \$10 million carting water to Stanthorpe when they could have had Emu Swamp Dam built by now.

We talk about cuts. Why didn't they cut the quarantine facility? Why didn't they stop when they could see that they were going to be giving \$230 million to the Wagners for a facility that they still own? We have a Labor government that is not just cutting Emu Swamp Dam; what about Urannah Dam and Hells Gates Dam? What happened to the Labor Party of old? What happened to the Labor Party of generations ago that was proud to build water projects and proud to invest in the future, to provide jobs and security for people in country Australia? It has gone! It has disappeared like a you-know-what in the wind and the reason is that they are beholden to the Greens. They know they cannot build dams in Lister's electorate or in other places because a frog might get drowned. We know that they are beholden to Greens preferences in seats like the minister's and seats like McConnel. We know that they are terrified. That is what has happened. The Labor Party is a rump that has forgotten where it came from. I give credit to my honourable friend the member for Moggill who said that the Tree of Knowledge was not poisoned, it died of shame. He put that so well.

My community needs Emu Swamp Dam and this Labor government should be on the blower to their Labor mates in Canberra, asking for the funds. They should be asking what has happened because the previous coalition delivered \$126 million to the project, which will provide jobs and security for the people I represent. Where is Minister Butcher on this? Has he been on the phone? What about Minister Furner, the great powerbroker? He calls himself the farmers' friend. I say that he is a foolish, feckless foe of the farmer and the friend of the fire ant. We need that dam so where are those ministers? Are they at the cabinet table asking, 'What about the people of Southern Downs?' They have forgotten us. They have forgotten the bush. They have turned their back on the bush.

We are not going to cop it any longer. My electorate is up in arms over the cancellation of the funding for Emu Swamp Dam and Labor will pay a price for that at the ballot box. In the intervening years between now and the election, I will do everything I can to remind Labor of their shabby broken

election promise given by Labor candidates in Maranoa and my electorate of Southern Downs who said that they supported Emu Swamp Dam. I have heard it from the minister and I have heard it from the government. The Labor Party are laughing at me and the people in my electorate. They are saying, 'They believed us for so long!' We were too gentlemanly and too polite. We kept taking their assurances, but all along the government planned to cut the project. Now we hear about the water pipeline that the Premier has announced unilaterally. She is desperate to impose it on the Southern Downs Regional Council—

Mrs Frecklington: 2020 it was supposed to be built.

Mr LISTER: I take that interjection from the member for Nanango. Yes, it was supposed to be built in 2020. I will say this right now: water pumped from someone else's scarce supply is not the same thing as having new water on the Granite Belt for irrigators who need it to produce our food and for water security for the town of Stanthorpe, which had to have water carted to it from Warwick for 14 months. The cutting of the Emu Swamp Dam is symbolic of the rot that has set in in the Labor Party. They no longer believe in anything except for big business, big unions and big government.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Order! The House will come to order. Member for Miller, you will cease your quarrelling across the chamber. I will be warning people if they continue to quarrel across the chamber.



Mr SAUNDERS (Maryborough—ALP) (5.16 pm): I am a bit confused. I thought we were talking about the Rocky ring-road but now we are talking about water. You can see why the people of Queensland are confused about the opposition. We started talking about a ring-road and the next minute I am swimming in a dam. I do not where I am. I rise to support the amended motion moved by the minister. Let us all calm down. I am going to have to take my suit coat off as it is a bit wet from being in the dam. We are talking about roads. We are talking about the Rockhampton Ring Road. We know that the cost of living is going through the roof and who caused it. It was the Morrison LNP government. How many hats did the former disgraced prime minister have? He wore five or six hats but he could not see this inflation coming!

We heard the member for Chatsworth talk about the blowouts in projects. I will talk to him about the blowouts in New South Wales. Let us have a look at that. The Metro City and Southwest rail line has blown out by \$6 billion. I will repeat that because their hearing has gone a bit: \$6 billion. The cost of the M6 motorway project has increased by \$400 million. That is what we are talking about. We are talking about costs. The Rocky ring-road has blown out by about \$700 million. Not only have the costs blown out; we have labour shortages but, of course, they do not worry about that. They want slave camps. They want people working for a dollar an hour. They will bring people here to work for a bowl of rice and a bloody bed overnight—I withdraw. That is what they will do. We have a labour shortage. This project has been deferred, which is sensible by the Albanese government. Let us look at some of the projects in Central Queensland.

We know that there is a shortage of workers. We know that there is a supply chain problem. This project has been deferred. I have travelled to Rockhampton and Yeppoon to meet with the members for Keppel and Rockhampton. There are no two stronger advocates in this House for their communities. They are very strong advocates. I have walked on the Rockhampton to Yeppoon road with the member for Keppel. We have looked at the intersections and at the upgrades needed on that road. The member for Keppel drives that road every day. I have been with the member for Rockhampton to Lawrie Street and out to Parkhurst to look at all the upgrades on the Bruce Highway. This is a man who has fought so hard for his community since being elected. I am proud to be on this side of the House with two local members who have worked very hard for their communities and put their communities first at all times. They make representations all the time to me and the minister about road projects.

Can members imagine what would have happened if members opposite—and I have been ignoring them because, as is the case for the rest of Queensland, they are irrelevant—with all of their cutting, sacking and selling had stayed in power? With the rain events, can members imagine what would have happened? We would not have any workers to—

Mr Harper interjected.

Mr SAUNDERS: I take that interjection from the member for Thuringowa. They have not delivered. They did not deliver anything when they were in power—zero. All they did was cut, sack and sell.

With the rain events we have had around Queensland, I have travelled a lot of roads, particularly in Central Queensland, with the hardworking members for Keppel and Rockhampton. With the staff the LNP sacked from TMR, we could not get roads fixed because there would not be any staff. We would be relying on contractors who could not get staff. We are lucky that this government has delivered in spades for regional Queensland. Perhaps members opposite should get their leader out of Brisbane and go and talk to people in regional Queensland about the record spend this government is delivering in regional Queensland.

Mr NICHOLLS: I rise to a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. I clearly heard the member for Maryborough in his contribution refer to people being prepared to come here and work for a bowl of rice. I ask whether you rule that that type of language with its implications and imputations is unparliamentary language?

Mr SAUNDERS: I withdraw, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Before I take advice in relation to that matter, there was another use of unparliamentary language which the member attempted to withdraw but used the wrong language. I ask you to withdraw.


Mr SAUNDERS: I withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I note your second withdrawal. On the first matter, yes, that was unparliamentary.

Mr SAUNDERS: I withdraw.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Before I call the next speaker, I point out that during the member for Southern Downs's contribution we did not have a copy of the motion. If we had had a copy of the motion, we would have ruled that the member's speech was not relevant to the motion. I will provide general guidance to all members that the motion is specifically about road and transport infrastructure and that the amendment is also around the same thing. It is not a general infrastructure debate; it is about road and transport infrastructure.

 **Mr HEAD** (Callide—LNP) (5.23 pm): I rise to support the motion as moved by the member for Chatsworth, the shadow minister for transport and main roads. The member for Chatsworth knows how critical infrastructure is in the regions and how important road upgrades, such as the Rockhampton Ring Road, are to the people of rural and regional Queensland. The delivery of this project is absolutely essential for our state—for our truckies and for all our tourists who want to drive up the Bruce Highway or, should I say, Queensland's longest goat track. For those who do not quite follow me, the track starts north of Gympie and goes all the way through to Cairns.

I wish I could say it was our only goat track, but it is one of many thanks to the maintenance backlogs under the Palaszczuk Labor government. The member for Chatsworth has even had the pleasure of touring my electorate in a semitrailer with the former member for Callide. Has the Minister for Transport and Main Roads toured Callide in a heavy vehicle? No, he has not. Have the members for Keppel or Rockhampton spent much time in a heavy vehicle? Given their completely weak advocacy on this issue, I suggest not.

The frustration from many truckies as they drive through Rockhampton on the Bruce Highway is extreme. At the wrong time of day, trucks caught in traffic can be held up for more than half an hour, ultimately leading to higher prices of goods for all Queenslanders. That is one of many reasons the Rockhampton Ring Road project absolutely, fundamentally needs to be delivered—not next year, not next term, not next decade but today.

Without trucks, Australia stops. The member for Chatsworth understands that. That is why he moved this motion today, which I absolutely support. There is not one product at the local supermarket that ends up there without a truckie. Believe it or not, there are not many products that end up there without the farmers of rural and regional Queensland.

Roads across Queensland, including many in Callide such as the Bruce Highway, Leichhardt Highway, Chinchilla-Wondai Road and Gayndah-Mount Perry Road, are completely inadequate for the vehicles and people that use them. I will continue to advocate for the people of my electorate every day I am the member for Callide because I want every single individual who lives there to have the best life they can. In contrast, the members for Keppel and Rockhampton remain as steadfast as a wet lettuce leaf in their advocacy for their communities.

The Rockhampton Ring Road is one of many projects that are long overdue. It is appalling that the local Labor members failed completely to lobby the Albanese Labor government on the delivery of this project. Anthony Albanese released a media statement in January 2019 claiming that the Rockhampton Ring Road was a certainty under Labor. The only certainties under a Labor government are broken promises, higher taxes and the complete and utter neglect of rural and regional Queensland. The fact that there is not one maternity ward in the entire electorate of Callide is case in point.

When a baby was born on the side of the Bruce Highway near his electorate, the member for Rockhampton did not say a peep. The members for Keppel and Rockhampton continue to fail their communities by refusing to stand up to their health minister. They fail to mention the fact that Gladstone and Biloela mothers put further strain on their own hospital because maternity wards remain on bypass thanks to the Palaszczuk Labor government.

Mr HARPER: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance. The member is straying completely from the motion.


Mr POWELL: I rise to a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. The original motion clearly refers to the advocacy of the members for Keppel and Rockhampton on behalf of their communities and that is what the member for Callide is referring to.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): I will allow it.

Mr HEAD: I can only imagine the stress on the healthcare workers at Rockhampton having to cope with the workload of not only their own patients but those from two other hospitals as well.

I have been trying to understand how Labor members, who apparently cared so much about this project, have all of a sudden stopped fighting for it. Last night, as I was eating a nice juicy T-bone steak for dinner, it struck me: Rockhampton is the beef capital of Australia, and we all know how much the Labor Party hates the beef producers of Queensland.

Clearly, they could not find the courage to support a project that ultimately supports the farmers and graziers of Queensland—the people who work from sun-up to sundown to provide the food on their plates. That is why they cut Building Better Regions, Urannah, Hells Gate and Emu Swamp Dam. Billions of dollars were stripped out of rural and regional Queensland with nothing but support offered by regional Labor members. I absolutely support this motion moved by the member for Chatsworth.

 **Ms LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (5.29 pm): I am still a bit perplexed about that contribution from the member for Callide. May I correct the record? It was probably only a couple of months ago that I was sitting in the driver's seat of a heavy vehicle—the type of heavy vehicle that the member for Callide would run a million miles away from because it was a council recycling truck. I was very pleased to talk to the council operators of the Rockhampton Regional Council recycling truck, who do a fantastic job. I was with the Minister for Environment talking about our food and organic waste trial and how well it is going in Rockhampton, so I would like to correct the record, member for Callide.

I rise to speak against the opposition's motion and in support of the government's amended motion. Let me be clear: the Rockhampton Ring Road will go ahead. The funding amount remains the same as in the previous budget. Only the timetable has changed. Both the federal and state governments remain committed to the project and will look to bring funding forward if possible. Like everyone, I have been disappointed by the federal government's decision to delay the Rockhampton Ring Road. This is a critical infrastructure project for Central Queensland, but the tenders are coming in at nearly double what they were 12 to 18 months ago, an increase of more than 70 per cent. The Palaszczuk government remains committed to deliver the \$200 million in funding allocated for this project. Since the announcement, the member for Rockhampton and I have voiced our disappointment with the federal government.

Mr Minnikin: Oh, yeah!

Ms LAUGA: We have. We actually pick up the phone to our federal—

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

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, members!

Ms LAUGA: You just—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Comments will come through the chair.


Ms LAUGA: Those opposite just need to wait and see. We will always put Central Queensland first and we will not stop fighting for our fair share. The member for Rockhampton and I will absolutely be fighting to have this project brought forward.

Unlike those opposite and the federal LNP, Labor is transparent about infrastructure projects and we deliver. There is none of this pork-barrelling that the LNP is renowned for, like the \$300 million Building Better Regions Fund where nearly 90 per cent of the funding was spent in coalition and marginal seats. They are very quiet now. This is just one in a long line of rorts from the Morrison-Joyce government. There were sports rorts, car park rorts, safer communities rorts and then the Building Better Regions rorts. When asked about the Australian National Audit Office's findings then deputy prime minister Barnaby Joyce said, 'I don't care.'

The numbers do not lie. Barnaby Joyce, Scott Morrison and the LNP clearly prioritised their own seats over worthy projects in other parts of the country, including the very worthy new community centre at Woorabinda. We know that former LNP ministers made decisions on the basis of 'choose your own adventure' criteria that were not fully explained to those applying for grants, nor did they keep proper records of decisions. The only thing that Scott Morrison, Barnaby Joyce, Michelle Landry and Matt Canavan cared about when they were in government was diverting funds for their own electoral purposes, such as the \$660 million worth of taxpayer funds which were spent on 47 car park projects in marginal or LNP seats.

The LNP could not care less about building a better Australia or developing all regions. Unlike the LNP, we do not have colour-coded spreadsheets with marginal LNP electorates prioritised for funding. We have open and transparent tender processes and open and transparent grant funding. Not only do we undertake business cases for infrastructure projects; we publish them. Those opposite must surely remember the Audit Office's scathing report into Campbell Newman 'Tower of Power'.

I am very pleased there is an extra \$250 million in new funding in the budget for upgrades to the Bruce Highway around Rocky and commitments to other Bruce Highway projects in Central Queensland, all of which provide a strong pipeline of work for our local contractors. I am proud to report that the fully funded \$80 million Rockhampton-Yeppoon Road upgrade continues to steam ahead, with construction due to commence early next year. I understand that around 90 jobs will be supported through this project; the same with the \$19 million upgrade of the Emu Park to Rockhampton Road, which is on track to start construction at the end of this year. This project, which I personally fought for and am proud to be delivering, includes two overtaking lanes, road widening to include wide centre line treatment, pavement works and safety improvements. I commend the amended motion to the House.

 **Mr MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (5.34 pm): The Rockhampton region is not a priority for this Palaszczuk Labor government. Mr Deputy Speaker, you would expect me, as an opposition MP, to say that, but the residents of Rockhampton and the Capricorn Coast might be surprised to hear that the member for Keppel agrees with that sentiment. The member for Keppel agrees that the Rockhampton region is not a priority for any government—not a priority for the Albanese Labor federal government, not a priority for the Palaszczuk Labor state government. The member for Keppel agrees that Labor simply does not care about voters in Rockhampton or Keppel. The member for Keppel may not like the fact that I have raised this, but I table the member for Keppel's own Facebook comments as evidence to support the assertion I have just made.

Tabled paper: Extract, dated 26 October 2022, from the Facebook page of the member for Keppel, Ms Brittany Lauga MP, regarding the Rockhampton Ring Road [\[1756\]](#).

The member for Keppel says that she is 'shocked and disappointed' by the decision not to build the Rockhampton Ring Road.

Mr Minnikin: They're always disappointed!

Mr MICKELBERG: They are always disappointed; I take that interjection. She is shocked and disappointed, but she cites the fact that costs have increased 70 per cent over the last 12 to 18 months, and that is their excuse why Labor is not honouring their commitment. That is the excuse why Labor has abandoned their promise. Despite this, the member for Keppel acknowledges that, by delaying construction of this critical project, building it in the future will only cost more. The member for Keppel acknowledges this in her own words. Despite the project being shovel-ready and two tenderers being short-listed, Labor has chosen to break a promise to the people of Rockhampton and Central Queensland and to not build the Rockhampton Ring Road—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Members will stop with the hand gestures.

Mr MICKELBERG:—a project that the member for Keppel said was needed 'to keep people employed as the economy recovers'. What advocacy have we seen from the member for Keppel to ensure the Rockhampton Ring Road actually gets built?

Mr Minnikin: Not much!

Mr MICKELBERG: The answer—I will take the interjection from the member for Chatsworth—is not much. A bit of talk, the odd Facebook post, but no results. For Keppel residents hanging out for action on Great Keppel Island—nothing! On delivering improved services at Yeppoon Hospital—nothing! On actually fixing and starting work on the Rockhampton-Yeppoon Road—nothing! Tackling the youth crime epidemic affecting her own electorate—nothing! It is a familiar refrain. There is lip-service, but no action. Who is it that pays for the failures of the Labor members for Keppel and Rockhampton to deliver for their communities? Time and time again it is the people of Rockhampton and the Capricorn Coast who miss out because the members for Keppel and Rockhampton are either unwilling or unable to fight for their communities.

I have personally met with Rockhampton businesses that justifiably saw the Rockhampton Ring Road project as an opportunity to deliver a lasting legacy of better jobs and a sustainable industry that would remain long after the sugar hit of that project funding ends—local organisations like Apprentices and Trainees Queensland, based in the member for Rockhampton's electorate, which developed a pilot program to increase the capacity of Rockhampton precast concrete manufacturers and to better equip them to benefit from major projects like the Rockhampton Ring Road. It is the kind of work that a government genuinely committed to regional Queensland would be doing themselves. Given they are not, the very least these Labor members should be doing is fighting for the local jobs and local industries that the Rockhampton Ring Road would deliver.

Where has the member for Keppel been in fighting for her constituents, who are going to pay \$250 more in rates if the suburbs of Glenlee, Glendale and Rockyview are removed from Livingstone Shire Council just to appease Labor mates in Rockhampton? If the people of Yeppoon, Emu Park and the rest of the Keppel electorate need any more proof that the Labor member for Keppel puts her interests and the interests of her Labor bosses ahead of theirs, then her silence on the Livingstone shire boundary change should be evidence enough. Mr Deputy Speaker, 95 per cent of Livingstone shire residents objected to that proposal and 45 per cent of residents responded—


Ms LAUGA: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order with respect to relevance, I think there was a ruling previously about road transport infrastructure and its relevance to this debate.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The point of order will be heard in silence. The member is referring to the part of the original motion that relates to advocating.

Mr MICKELBERG: The member for Keppel has gone missing in action. We heard the politics and the blame game, but it has fallen to the mayor, Andy Ireland, and the councillors from Livingstone shire to stand alongside the LNP and fight for her community. They have had to stand alongside the LNP and fight for her community because she will not do so. Rather than stand in solidarity with her community, the member for Keppel stands alongside the Labor members and the Labor ministers who are Brisbane based and Brisbane focused and do not care about regional Queensland.

(Time expired)

 **Mr O'ROURKE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (5.40 pm): It may come as no surprise that I support the motion as amended by the minister. Can I set the record straight about the Rockhampton Ring Road? Like many in my community, I am disappointed by the federal government's decision to push back funding for the Rockhampton Ring Road due to the rapid rise in costs, worker shortages and our inflation problem. What is even more disappointing, but not surprising, is the way the opposition and the member for Capricornia have sought to spread unnecessary fear and misinformation about what is happening. They are trying to create false impressions that this project is not going ahead. This is simply false, and here are the facts.

The Palaszczuk government remains committed to the Rockhampton Ring Road, which remains in both the federal and state budgets. Across Queensland and throughout Australia, there are three things that are impacting upon construction costs—from the cost of renovating a home to the cost of building a highway: labour shortages are putting pressure on both the costs and schedule; costs of inputs, including energy, asphalt and steel have risen; and supply disruptions are putting pressure on schedules which in turn puts pressure on the cost.

Record employment levels in our region mean that the Rockhampton Ring Road workforce would be largely fly-in fly-out. Fly-in fly-out workforces in turn add substantial accommodation costs to the project and would only further inflame the housing constraints in our community. These factors have contributed to a reported \$700 million cost increase before contracts are signed. You simply cannot pull out \$700 million at the drop of a hat, especially when the—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr BAILEY: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I cannot hear the speaker at all. There is so much noise in the chamber.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Order! Member for Nanango, you are warned. I gave an earlier ruling about hearing points of order in silence and you have continued to interject. The chamber was raucous and I was attempting to bring it to order. I would also like to provide a general warning to members that we will not be tolerating frivolous points of order this evening.

Mr O'ROURKE: You simply cannot pull out \$700 million at the drop of a hat, especially when the Albanese government has inherited an LNP debt of \$1 trillion. The federal Treasurer, Jim Chalmers, is trying to reduce inflammatory pressures on the market. That is the challenge of trying to govern responsibly—something that the member for Chatsworth does not have firsthand experience in.

The time frame is what I disagree with the federal government on. Under the budget, funding now comes in four years and I will advocate to see funding brought forward. The Treasurer, Jim Chalmers, last night indicated that the economy is expected to slow within the next two years while inflation is expected to drop off by then, so I believe we should be looking at bringing funding forward. I think it is also important that we use this delay to develop a stronger housing plan around this project—to look at ways to limit the negative impacts on our market and perhaps even add to our permanent housing supply. Of course these issues were not an issue when those opposite were in government—when unemployment surged to 7.1 per cent under the LNP and the economy collapsed to 0.7 per cent.

Mr Crisafulli interjected.


Mr Bailey interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Pause the clock. Member for Broadwater and Member for Miller, you are both warned. You continued to quarrel across the chamber. I have given previous rulings in relation to that.

Mr O'ROURKE: Among the 14,000 public servants they sacked were 700 RoadTek workers, 2,800 TMR workers and many Queensland Rail staff. Cut, sack and sell—that is who they are. I have been working hard with the member for Keppel to deliver for Central Queensland. This year's QTRIP secures: \$80 million to improve the Rockhampton-Yeppoon Road, which is jointly funded by the federal government; \$110 million in funding for the Capricorn Highway; and \$90 million for Bruce Highway improvements. I am so proud of our \$44 million Lawrie Street improvements in Gracemere. I am incredibly proud of the work we have been doing with Minister Bailey to revitalise the Rockhampton railyards, which I will have more to say about in the coming weeks. Talking about water infrastructure, Rookwood Weir was delivered in my first term, with \$376 million—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member for Rockhampton, I will bring you back to the motion.

Mr O'ROURKE: I am proud of what the Palaszczuk government has delivered. The member for Keppel and I work closely together for the betterment of our regions.

 **Mr MILLAR** (Gregory—LNP) (5.45 pm): Let me start by supporting the member for Chatsworth's motion. Also, let me quote *Courier-Mail* journalist Michael Madigan, who I think summed up the Labor Party perfectly today in the article titled 'Federal Budget 2022: Labor turns its back on regional Queensland'. I table the article.

Tabled paper: Article from the *Courier-Mail*, dated 26 October 2022, titled 'Federal Budget 2022: Labor turns its back on regional Queensland' [\[1757\]](#).

He said—

Regional Queensland may have given birth to the Australian Labor Party under a tree in Barcaldine, but in recent years it's been gazing at its progeny with a baleful eye, wondering how a child could allow itself to stray so far from home.

Yesterday's budget cuts for regional Queensland represented a good, hard kick in the stomach to hundreds of thousands of families across this state.

...

The ALP is billions of light years removed from those striking shearers who gathered under the Tree of Knowledge in Barcaldine ...

Labor may maintain a sentimental, romantic attachment to its Book of Genesis, but it is, in truth, a ... metropolitan party with an identity now firmly entrenched in a tertiary-educated middle class and a national vision largely removed from agriculture and mining, even if it will eagerly accept financial lifelines from both by way of increasing tax receipts.

That has summed up the Labor Party perfectly. The Tree of Knowledge is in my electorate of Gregory. I am very proud to have this important part of Australian history in my electorate, but when I pass this iconic monument, which is preserved so wonderfully by the Barcaldine shire council, I always wonder what those 13 shearers—

Mr BAILEY: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. As fascinating as this treatise is about Barcaldine, this is actually about the Rockhampton Ring Road. I ask the member to come back to the motion.

Mr Boothman interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Order! Member for Theodore, I have made my views very clear tonight on taking points of order in silence. I warn you. Member for Gregory, I have been giving you some latitude because I know your style, but I ask you to come back to the substance of the motion.

Mr MILLAR: Mr Deputy Speaker, I am coming back to the motion. What I am trying to explain to parliament is that the party formed in outback Queensland is now so against the very place it came from. I wonder what those shearers would be thinking about this party of today. They would be rolling in their graves. I wonder what party leaders like Ben Chifley would think of the party today. They would probably walk away from the party. Does the modern Labor Party really hold the values of those shearers? No, not at the moment. They do not stick up for regional Queensland. I think of what Pat Ogden, a Labor luminary in regional Queensland in the seat of Gregory who sadly passed away recently, would think. Sure, Pat never put a No. 1 next to my name, and I understand that, but we both had enormous respect for each other knowing we were both fighting for our patch.

Mr BAILEY: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. This has gone so far off topic. We are now talking about a deceased life member of the Labor Party when the motion is clearly about the Rockhampton Ring Road and the federal budget. The member should be speaking to the motion.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The original motion refers, as I provided guidance before, to advocating for their communities. The member is broadly talking about advocating for communities using some stories to try to illustrate that. I do ask the member to come back more directly to the motion.

Mr MILLAR: The creation of the Rockhampton Ring Road is intended to improve road safety and improve freight efficiency, flood resilience and job opportunities, but the Labor Party do not want that for the Rockhampton community. The ring-road will link the Bruce Highway through Rockhampton, extending it from the Capricorn Highway at Nelson Street to the Rockhampton-Yeppoon Road/Bruce Highway intersection and will include a new crossing at the Fitzroy River at Pink Lily. The project is currently costed at over a billion dollars—the federal government providing \$852 million; the Queensland government \$213 million—and the design started in 2020, with the tender process started in November 2021. It was supposed to be due later this year, but right now it has stopped. The people of Rockhampton, the people of Central Queensland, have been duded by the federal Labor Party and now the Queensland Labor Party.

Rockhampton plays a significant role in our economic prosperity right across this state. You only have to look at the saleyards at Gracemere. You only have to look at Beef Australia. Rockhampton is one of the major contributors to Western Queensland for its services, yet the Labor Party do not want to put a road there. Where are the members for Rockhampton and Keppel coming out and saying, 'We want this road. We need this road'?

When the new Prime Minister was the opposition leader, he said, 'It is time for the coalition to back the Rockhampton Ring Road and deliver funding as soon as possible rather than taking the usual position of promising money, but pushing its delivery into the never-never.' That is what the Prime Minister has just done, pushed it into the never-never, like they have done with our beef roads. They have pushed our beef roads into the never-never. I call on the member for Rockhampton, the member for Keppel and the Labor Party to get this ring-road back on the agenda now.



Hon. GJ BUTCHER (Gladstone—ALP) (Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water) (5.52 pm): I rise tonight to speak to the amended motion by the minister. I will stand here every day of the week that I am in parliament and support the member for Keppel and the member for Rockhampton because they are the true champions of Central Queensland. Along with me, they are supporting Central Queensland, the real Central Queensland, delivering for our electorates.

I want to have a little bit of a chat about some of the matters we have heard here tonight. One of the speakers went on for five minutes about absolutely nothing to do with the Rockhampton Ring Road and got away it. I will touch on it just a little. The project the member for Southern Downs talked about is the Emu Swamp Dam. The LNP want to have a go at the Labor Party about projects that have been

delayed or have cost blowouts. Let's have a talk about the Emu Swamp Dam. Let's see where that project is right now. That project is on a hold. That has been done by the proponents of Emu Swamp Dam, not the Queensland government.

Let's have another look at the project and tell a little bit of a story here to the members who are sitting here today. When this project first started, it was announced by the proponents through the detailed business case draft that that project would cost \$84 million to complete. Guess what the latest figures are? It is heading north of \$240 million for the same project. That proposal is now that deep in by the local proponent who had the detailed business case done by the local Chamber of Commerce and now it is heading way north of \$240 million.

Mr Lister interjected.

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


Mr BUTCHER: They have a hide coming in here and spending five minutes of their time not talking about a great project for Rockhampton and the ring-road that is going around Rockhampton, but coming in here and talking about projects that they know they had blowouts when they were in government and it continues to blow out as we talk.

The member for Keppel and the member for Rockhampton are always advocating for their electorates to ministers in our cabinet. To let you know of a few, the member for Keppel can be proud of the work she does in her electorate. Some \$14.3 million was committed to a 42-bed detox centre in her electorate for rehabilitation in Rockhampton and her community, and it was all because of her advocacy. As we have heard tonight, there has been an \$80 million road upgrade to the Rockhampton-Yeppoon Road. We know in Central Queensland how important that upgrade was for the safety of road users because there have been many deaths on that road. It is only because of the member for Keppel's advocacy that that road was delivered.

The member for Rockhampton has been relentless in chasing the Rookwood Weir project moving forward for the benefit of the Rockhampton electorate into the future. He has been instrumental in getting the proposals coming forward for the new water. Then we move onto the second piece of great advocacy work he has done in water—the Mount Morgan pipeline. It is not even in his electorate and he is still supporting it from his electorate of Gracemere to get water to his neighbours up in Mount Morgan. I was there on the day we made the announcement with the mayor of Rockhampton, Tony Williams, and he said that the pipeline that the Queensland Labor government has delivered is a game changer for communities in regional Queensland. That is the work that these two members are doing for their communities in Central Queensland.

Turning to last night's budget, the Labor government is committing \$2.1 billion to new roads and transport infrastructure investment in Queensland. \$866 million of that is in roads along the Bruce Highway—\$400 million for the Inland Freight Route that I know all the National Party members over there just love, and \$400 million for the beef corridors to support the Rockhampton beef industry that we know is so strong, as well as the Kuranda Range road upgrade. If you want to talk about road projects, there are some bloody good ones that are being supported by this minister, and this is great news for the whole of Queensland.

How things have changed after Queensland has been duded by the former LNP federal government that never backed Queensland and never had the support from the LNP here in Queensland. It is certainly great now to have a federal Labor government that is not only listening to our ministers here and supporting our ministers in the work they are doing but also communicating and talking to our local members, like the member for Keppel and the member for Rockhampton, to make sure that we make Central Queensland one of the best places on earth and the best place here in Queensland.

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (5.57 pm): I absolutely support the motion moved by the member for Chatsworth because it highlights that the members for Keppel and Rockhampton say one thing in regional Queensland and another thing in Brisbane and South-East Queensland. They are too afraid to stand up to the Labor Party machine in Brisbane and say no. All they can do is little words, 'I am disappointed,' and then they wait for the, 'What is going to happen to me?' That is the best they can offer their electorate: 'I am disappointed.' They should be more than disappointed. They should take a page out of the Premier's playbook. They should be outraged! They should be angry! They should be eyeballing the Minister for Transport and Main Roads! They should be furious! But, no, they are disappointed. That is the best they can do. The courage of their conviction is they are disappointed. They are not even cranky, angry, outraged; they are just disappointed. They should be all of that!

Then we have the Minister for Transport and Main Roads whingeing at the start that the member for Chatsworth was talking about other projects, and then he proceeded to move a very broad amendment which talks about all projects. Then we had the member for Maryborough stand up and say he is confused, and then he said, 'I am wondering where I am.' We are debating how the Labor Party, in particular the members for Keppel and Rockhampton, have let down their community. That is what we are doing right now, member for Maryborough, just to fix up your confusion.

Then the member for Keppel stood up. To beat the member for Maryborough, who is confused, she said, 'I'm perplexed.' What is perplexing about the members for Keppel and Rocky not representing their communities? There is nothing confusing or perplexing about it. It is just a lack of representation in this parliament that those communities have because their members are essentially advocating for Brisbane priorities, not regional Queensland priorities.

Then the member for Rockhampton stood up, and I had to write down what he said because it was like a fleeting moment: it came and went and I forgot he spoke. He said it may come as a surprise that he is supporting the amendment moved by the transport and main roads minister. It is not really a surprise; I would expect a Labor backbencher to do that for the minister. Then the minister, the member for Gladstone, stood up, and he said, 'A member spoke in this House for five minutes not about the ring-road.' I put to you, Mr Deputy Speaker, that was every Labor member because the original motion was about the Rockhampton Ring Road and most of them forgot to mention it. In fact, the transport and main roads minister, who was banging on about other members being off subject, mentioned the Rockhampton Ring Road in the last 10 seconds of his contribution. We know as well as the members for Rockhampton and Keppel that the Minister for Transport and Main Roads has failed regional Queensland. He has failed South-East Queensland. He has—

Mr BAILEY: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I find the comments from the member personally offensive and I ask that they be withdrawn.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): The member has found that comment personally offensive and has asked that it be withdrawn. Will you withdraw?

Mr BLEIJIE: I withdraw. Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. You have ruled on frivolous points of order. The word that I understand I used was not unparliamentary. The minister is attempting to interrupt speeches again. You have already ruled on frivolous points of order and I would ask if that again is a frivolous point of order.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will take some advice. Resume your seat, and I will take the advice in silence. There is no point of order. You referred directly to a member. They found that offensive. They have asked you to withdraw. You have acknowledged that and withdrawn.

Mr BLEIJIE: Let me refer to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads as the CCC did. He is a very foolish minister, a very foolish member of parliament. What a fool he is. That is the reality we have in Queensland. We have a Labor government—

Mr BAILEY: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I find that personally offensive and I ask he withdraw it.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I would ask you to take a seat while I take some advice. Member for Kawana, the language you used is unparliamentary and the member has found it offensive. I ask you to withdraw.

Mr BLEIJIE: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. The record of the Labor Party in Queensland—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member, I would ask you to withdraw.

Mr BLEIJIE: I thought I said 'withdraw'. I withdraw. The record of the Labor Party will stand. This government includes the members for Keppel and Rockhampton, who just said they are disappointed in the ring-road being blown out. They should be more than disappointed because it is a \$700 million blowout. At some point we would expect TMR officials to say when they put a project to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads with his history of budget blowouts, 'For goodness sake, you have to double it, triple it, quadruple it.' Anything this Minister for Transport touches doubles, triples—whatever it is. It blows out. There is a huge budget blowout in so many areas.

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

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member has taken personal offence. I would ask you to withdraw.


Mr POWELL: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The comments were referring to the department, not the minister in any way, shape or form.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I will hear the point of order and deal with it in silence. I do not need the assistance of all and sundry. There is no point of order. The member was referring to the department by reference to the minister. The minister has asked that you withdraw. I ask that you withdraw.

Mr BLEIJIE: I withdraw. The record shows there are so many projects in Queensland, like Cross River Rail and others right around Queensland, that have blown out under the TMR minister, Bailey. That is the record. The members for Rockhampton and Keppel should be absolutely ashamed, as the Minister for Transport should be ashamed, that accountability is dead in Queensland. He does not want to be held accountable to this parliament and he should be.

(Time expired)

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumbidgee—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics Infrastructure) (6.04 pm): Last night's federal budget delivers for Queensland and those opposite are wilfully misrepresenting it. That is because we know they sat idly by and did and said nothing about the sports rosters and the car park rosters of the previous LNP government. They could not be bothered to pick up the phone to the federal health minister and say, 'Queensland isn't getting its fair share of the health budget.' They could not say a word. Under the LNP, people in our regions could not get in to see a GP when they needed one, forcing more pressure on to our public hospitals. Those opposite never said a word about that.

Mr MANDER: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The point of order is on the point of relevance. This has absolutely nothing to do with the amended motion.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): I will take some advice. Resume your seat, please. Deputy Premier, I would ask you to come back to the substance of either the motion or the amendment.

Dr MILES: I will, Mr Deputy Speaker. You cannot turn around 10 years of LNP neglect overnight, but in this budget we can see the Albanese government starting to do that job. This motion is about roads, so let's look at what this budget delivers on roads in Queensland.

There is \$586 million to upgrade the Bruce Highway through Brisbane's outer northern suburbs and in Cairns there is \$210 million for the Kuranda Range road. This budget is good for Queensland, but we will keep fighting for more.

Unlike those opposite, we are not afraid to fight for Queensland regardless of who is in office, including the Rockhampton Ring Road. We will keep fighting for it because that is what fighting for Queensland looks like. It is what those opposite could never do. They were so beholden to their LNP masters, so afraid to upset them that they would never disagree; they would never argue for Queensland. Lucky for Rockhampton, they have some powerful advocates on their side.

The members for Rockhampton and Keppel are champions for Rocky. They know their community and how important this road is and they will fight for it. They secured the \$200 million in funding from the state government. They both have long records of achievement in their communities. They are great representatives, and that is why every election those communities reject the LNP and keep re-electing our members. Thanks to the members for Rockhampton and Keppel, this budget delivers for Central Queensland, including \$200 million—

Mr Bleijie interjected.

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

Dr MILES:—for the Bruce Highway between Rockhampton and Gladstone. The budget invests in new health facilities, which I know is important to the Central Queensland community, thanks to the advocacy of the members for Rockhampton and Keppel. There is even \$6 million for Beef Week, which brings massive crowds to Rockhampton and showcases local projects.

I know, thanks to the advocacy of the members for Rockhampton and Keppel, that the people in Central Queensland want to see us build and maintain things here in Queensland like trains—not in India like those opposite did, but here in Queensland. They want to see us employing people here and training people here. I know from our members in Central Queensland that housing is a big issue, and in this budget the Albanese government steps up to deliver houses across Queensland, including in Central Queensland. That is something the LNP refused to do anything about—in fact, they made it worse—and again those opposite never said a word. They never said a word. They were too afraid to stand up to Scott Morrison.

Undoing a decade of LNP harm is a big task, but Anthony Albanese showed last night that they are up for that job, and Queenslanders are the big winners. It is incredible to see those members opposite finally finding their voices. For all those years they have praised federal budgets that ripped off Queenslanders. The LNP are only loyal to the LNP—not to Queenslanders. They never even said to their boss Morrison, 'Please, sir, can we have some more?' Now that Queensland is getting more, all of a sudden that is bad.

On this side of the House we will never, ever shy away from delivering for Queensland and fighting for Queensland. I know the member for Rockhampton will not stop, the member for Keppel will not stop, because fighting for Queensland is what we do on this side of the House.

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

AYES, 46:

ALP, 46—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Enoch, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, S. King, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Madden, Martin, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, O'Rourke, Palaszcuk, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.

NOES, 30:

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

Pairs: Dick, Leahy; Farmer, Stevens; A. King, Purdie; Scanlon, Camm.

Resolved in the affirmative.

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

AYES, 46:

ALP, 46—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Enoch, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, S. King, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Madden, Martin, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, O'Rourke, Palaszcuk, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.

NOES, 30:

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

Pairs: Dick, Leahy; Farmer, Stevens; A. King, Purdie; Scanlon, Camm.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Motion, as agreed—

That this House notes the importance of delivering the Rockhampton Ring Road and other transport infrastructure projects across Queensland as part of the Palaszcuk government's record \$29.7 billion Queensland transport and road investment plan and notes the federal Albanese government's budget which will deliver vital funding for Queensland including but not limited to \$2.1 billion in new transport infrastructure; and

notes the strong advocacy over many years of the members for Rockhampton and Keppel and all government members in their continued endeavours to stand up for Queensland's fair share of funding from the Commonwealth.

MAJOR SPORTS FACILITIES AMENDMENT BILL

Resumed from p. 3075.

Consideration in Detail

Clauses 1 to 11, as read, agreed to.

Third Reading

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Tourism, Innovation and Sport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics and Paralympics Sport and Engagement) (6.17 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. SJ HINCHLIFFE (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Tourism, Innovation and Sport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics and Paralympics Sport and Engagement) (6.18 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.

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Resumed from 23 June (see p. 1693).

Second Reading



Hon. G GRACE (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (6.18 pm): I move—

That the bill be read a second time.

This bill will complete the Palaszczuk government's commitment to review the Industrial Relations Act 2016 five years after its commencement. It responds to the final report of the five-year review of Queensland's Industrial Relations Act 2016 which made 40 recommendations for the enhancement of the IR Act. I acknowledge and express thanks to the two independent reviewers, Linda Lavarch and John Thompson, for their careful and thorough consideration of the five-year review of the IR Act and its operation.

The Queensland government accepted all of the 40 recommendations in full or in principle, and this bill gives full effect to the 31 recommendations for amending the IR Act, including the introduction of industrial protections for workers subject to sexual harassment, furthering pay equity, strengthening the registered organisations framework, updating minimum employment standards and introducing a jurisdiction to set minimum working conditions for independent courier drivers. The bill makes supporting amendments to the Public Trustee Act 1978, the Associations Incorporation Act 1981 and the Anti-Discrimination Act 1991.

Before turning to the details of the bill, I would first like to thank the Education, Employment and Training Committee for its report on the bill, tabled on 12 August. I also thank those who made submissions to the committee and those who appeared as witnesses as part of the committee's inquiry. I thank the chair, the member for Redlands. The committee made two recommendations: that the bill be passed and that I investigate options for addressing an important issue raised during the committee's inquiry by the Hon. Justice Davis, President of the Industrial Court. I agree with the committee's recommendations and I table the government's response to the committee's report.

Tabled paper: Education, Employment and Training Committee: Report No. 22—Industrial Relations and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022, government response [\[1758\]](#).

During the course of the committee's inquiry, Justice Davis identified examples of unscrupulous agents charging fees to provide representation in the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission and the Industrial Court. Justice Davis stated that in one recent matter before the commission an agent strongly suspected of charging fees simply did not have the skill to advocate for the applicant. The claim lodged by the agent was baseless and came at the time and expense of the parties and the commission. Unfortunately, this has not been an isolated incident.

Justice Davis has also observed the agent provisions being used inappropriately by lawyers, who are usually subject to strict regulatory obligations. In one recent case the commission questioned the lawyer's appointment. The lawyer then claimed that their name had been included erroneously and that the whole thing was an administrative error. This is despite the client most probably being charged for the services provided. This is clear evidence of the circumvention of legal representation requirements under the act. These actions are simply not acceptable and undermine existing regulatory safeguards for workers seeking to protect their industrial relations rights in Queensland.

The conduct of unscrupulous representatives is not a problem unique to Queensland. Recently the Fair Work Commission also identified a current regulatory gap in the Fair Work Act where agents impose themselves on the commission's processes with no responsibility. The Fair Work Commission noted that the agent had 'no skin in the game' and described their actions as 'reckless to the point of deleterious'. It was highlighted that if this representative was a lawyer they would have been rightly at risk of being subject to costs which would conceivably be passed on to the client.

The Queensland Law Society's submission to the committee supports the need to address the concerns raised by Justice Davis and changes that will ensure a fair and balanced industrial relations framework that include necessary consumer protections to support the delivery of social justice for Queenslanders.

The Office of Industrial Relations has investigated options to respond to the committee's recommendation 2, and I will move amendments during consideration in detail to ensure agents are properly representing the interests of Queensland workers and employers. These further amendments will require that agents be granted leave by the commission or court in order to provide additional oversight that agents are not charging fees and are not lawyers circumventing legal representation requirements or obtaining clients through misleading advertising about the nature of the services or skills that can be offered.

Every worker has the right to earn a living without being sexually harassed. The reality for many workers, however, is quite the opposite. The federal Sex Discrimination Commissioner's national *Respect@work* report confirmed what many suspected: that sexual harassment is prevalent across workplaces throughout the nation and there needs to be systemic change to address this scourge. The Palaszczuk government is committed to doing all we can to prevent and address this serious issue, including through ensuring robust industrial protections for workers subject to sexual harassment.

The amendments in the bill send a strong message to all Queensland workers that sexual harassment and sex- or gender-based harassment in the workplace is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. In order to protect and prevent sexual, sex- or gender-based harassment in the workplace, the bill: aligns the definition of 'sexual harassment' to the meanings provided for under the Sex Discrimination Act and the Anti-Discrimination Act 1991; provides for the inclusion of sexual harassment or sex- or gender-based harassment as an industrial matter, enabling the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission to exercise its conciliation and arbitration powers to quickly address and resolve these forms of harassment; and, finally, ensures that sexual harassment or sex- or gender-based harassment is added to the list of behaviours that constitute misconduct an employer may dismiss an employee for without the requisite notice period. These amendments will ensure that the Queensland IR system provides comprehensive and contemporary industrial protections to protect workers subject to sexual, sex- or gender-based harassment in the workplace. I might add: this is a mighty step forward.

This bill makes a number of changes to the Queensland Employment Standards to mirror national employment standards in the Fair Work Act 2009. These changes ensure workers under the Queensland industrial relations jurisdiction have access to equal or superior standards as those in the federal jurisdiction.

The bill removes traditionally gendered divisions of parental care. The government believes that individual parents should decide how to allocate child care responsibility to best fit their family circumstances. During the committee public hearing process, suggestions were made that changes to gendered language would devalue the role of mothers or take away rights and entitlements when it comes to the rights of workers, including those who give birth. This is simply not true. The amendments ensure Queensland families can make their own decisions on parental care and ensure our legislation reflects contemporary family units.

The bill also supports parents or those with responsibility for caring for children returning to work by allowing them to apply to their employer to change their work from a full-time to part-time basis. The bill also provides for flexible parental leave for eligible employees to take up to 30 days of flexible unpaid parental leave. The amendment does not increase the total number of days that may be taken as parental leave but, rather, allows for a portion of those days to be taken flexibly. The leave can be taken in unbroken or broken periods and within the first two years after the child is born, is adopted, began residing with the employee under a surrogacy arrangement or had parentage transferred to the employee under a cultural recognition order.

Importantly, the bill clarifies that the entitlement to unpaid parental leave extends to pregnancies that sadly end in stillbirth. An employee and their spouse are each entitled to this leave. This is an important and significant amendment. It is absolutely essential to provide employees with the time they need to heal from such a devastating experience. The bill also provides employees greater access to parental leave by increasing the age of the child for these purposes from five years to 16 years, including for adoption leave and cultural parental leave.

We have listened to concerns raised that requirements for a doctor's certificate were overly prescriptive under the act. The bill relaxes this requirement so an employee need only provide sufficient evidence of pregnancy or illness to satisfy a reasonable person should the employer require it. The bill

also provides that a certificate from a relevant health practitioner, such as and including a midwife, doctor or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practitioner, is sufficient evidence. These changes are particularly important for rural and regional Queenslanders as they provide greater flexibility so that employees can access services readily available to them in their community.

Lastly, in relation to changes to employment standards, I propose to move amendments during consideration in detail to provide all casual workers with access to paid domestic and family violence leave, ensuring consistency with the recently introduced paid family and domestic violence leave by the Albanese government. I am proud that in 2016 Queensland was the first jurisdiction in Australia to legislate for 10 days of paid family and domestic violence leave. Since this time I have consistently advocated for this critical entitlement to form part of the national workplace relations system. As noted in the second reading speech by the federal Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations, Tony Burke, to the Commonwealth bill, casuals are already dealing with the consequences of being in insecure work and are unable to access other forms of paid leave, making them more vulnerable when they are dealing with the impact of domestic violence. This amendment will ensure that Queensland continues to lead the nation by ensuring access to paid family and domestic violence leave, regardless of employment status.

Queensland has been nation-leading in supporting equal remuneration and gender equality through bargaining. The bill's amendments will ensure that Queensland remains a leader in this area. The IR Act currently requires some wage related information to be given when parties are seeking certification of an agreement. Requiring that detailed wage related information be provided at the outset of bargaining will permit equal remuneration issues to be considered throughout the negotiations rather than at the conclusion when parties are seeking certification and are less likely to return to the bargaining table to examine issues afresh.

For the past decade Queensland's state wage case outcomes have mirrored the federal annual wage review outcome. However, Queensland's industrial relations jurisdiction enjoys several unique features such as Queensland's award reliant workforce is 1.8 per cent compared to 22.5 per cent under the federal awards and the IR Act allows for flow-on provisions from certified agreements into relevant state awards, which means award wages are lifted to the prevailing standards in the relevant collective agreement rather than the prevailing community standard. In the recent state wage case decision handed down by the full bench of the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission, it was observed that there is a potential for state wages case outcomes to 'impede, disincentivise or protract collective bargaining negotiations' where award rates are lifted to an extent that they are commensurate with or exceed the collective bargaining standard and there is a duty to guard against any diminution in collective bargaining. The Palaszczuk government supports fair and reasonable wage increases to the Queensland minimum wage. This government recognises that, for some workers, the state wage case decision may be the only way to secure a wage increase.

The bill makes it explicit that the commission has discretion to consider whether state wage outcomes are to flow on to awards. Particular consideration will be given to awards which benefited from receiving rate increases through other means such as rolling up expired agreement rates and where increasing the award would exceed rates in a prevailing agreement or determination. The bill also clarifies the commission's discretionary powers to apply different outcomes to different classes of employees within an award. This provides clarity which allows the commission to recognise the unique circumstances of Queensland's jurisdiction while ensuring fair standards comparable to the living standards in the community.

Queensland's industrial relations system is predicated on the notion of cooperative industrial relations—that is, a system committed to building fair, safe and productive workplaces and communities; where workers' and employers' rights are protected and advanced; and where workers are provided with financial security through fair and reasonable wages and conditions. The primacy of registered industrial organisations representing both employers and employees has been a central feature of industrial relations systems throughout Australia. The Queensland industrial relations system is no different. Registered organisations play a central role in the IR system and represent both employees and employers. The IR Act sets out the roles and responsibilities for registered organisations which include, but are not limited to: representing and organising under the right to freedom of association convention; being a party to bargaining; and the ability to bring actions and represent members before the QIRC in a wide breadth of matters including industrial disputes, interpretation of agreements and general protections.

Sitting alongside these rights comes responsibility and accountability. The IR Act imposes on registered organisations rigorous reporting requirements to ensure registered organisations are transparent in their dealings, accountable to their members and demonstrate good governance

practices. The holding of open and transparent elections is another key feature which ensures members' views are appropriately represented by their leadership. Like any true democracy, once the votes are counted, we accept the result and move forward. By contrast, an entity that is not defined under the IR Act as a registered organisation is not subject to the same rigorous level of scrutiny or reporting and prudential standards or democratic processes. In recent years we have seen unregistered entities misrepresenting their status to represent the interests of workers and employers before the commission. As a result, confusion has resulted for employees and employers because they do not know who can legitimately represent their industrial interests.

To address these concerns and provide clarity, the bill: provides clear definitions and a consistent approach when referring to industrial organisations with standing to represent their members' interests; provides a civil penalty for misrepresentations by persons or entities purporting to be able to represent employees or employers when they do not have that capability; and introduces collaborative information-sharing arrangements between the Industrial Registrar and the chief executive of the Office of Fair Trading relating to applications for incorporation under the Associations Incorporation Act 1981. Importantly, these amendments maintain freedom of association rights to join or not join an industrial organisation and also provide a pathway for entities to be established and become a registered organisation under the IR Act.

During the committee's public hearing it was suggested that registered organisations should compete for membership like businesses do in the open market. I remind the House that registered employer and employee organisations do not operate for profit. Their role is to represent their members' interests. This bill does not change any of those established practices; it simply provides clarity to identify which organisations can fully represent the industrial interests of its members before the industrial umpire. Nothing in this bill impacts on longstanding requirements for those seeking registration. No rights are being taken away.

Some submissions to the committee also suggested these amendments may be inconsistent with International Labour Organization conventions to which Australia is a party, particularly the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention 1948 No. 87 and the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention 1949 No. 98. The existing 'conveniently belong' rule found in section 608(1)(b)(ii) of the IR Act was also suggested by some to be contrary to these ILO conventions. It was further suggested that these amendments are incompatible with Queensland's Human Rights Act 2019. I will say at the outset that the Palaszczuk government places great importance on upholding Australia's international labour obligations. Giving effect to the ILO conventions is enshrined in the IR Act as a way by which the legislation achieves its main purpose of providing a framework for cooperative industrial relations that is fair and balanced and supports the delivery of high-quality services, economic prosperity and social justice for Queenslanders.

The IR Act, with the current 'conveniently belong' rule and representation rights reserved for registered industrial organisations, is consistent with the ILO conventions as ratified by Australia and consistent with federal legislation on the 'conveniently belong' rule. I did not see it change in 10 years under the LNP. The bill's provisions will not change this. Relevantly, the committee's inquiry report also did not consider that these amendments unreasonably limit human rights and did not note any potential inconsistencies with the ILO conventions; nor did it make recommendations to amend the bill in this regard. Let me tell members that it will be a brave government that ever tries to remove the 'conveniently belong' rule.

It was suggested to the committee that the bill's delineation of entities that do have standing to represent their members before the Industrial Court or commission, being registered organisations and industrial organisations eligible for registration and entities that do not have such standing, constitutes a breach of the ILO conventions. The IR Act currently requires that entities which seek standing to represent members in our industrial courts and tribunals abide by stringent standards of governance and accountability. These standards are necessary to ensure that such entities, which collect fees from their members in exchange for advancing their members' industrial interests and have the right to appear before decision-makers to do so, are fulfilling their obligations to effectively protect their members' interests. The bill does not change this longstanding requirement to meet registration criteria in exchange for standing to represent in industrial matters.

It was contended by some that the 'conveniently belong' rule will stymie an unregistered entity's attempt to seek registration and it was suggested that the rule breaches the ILO conventions and freedom of association. I reiterate that the 'conveniently belong' rule is not being amended and forms part of both the IR Act's and the federal Fair Work Act's foundational frameworks of collaborative

industrial relations which seek to reduce demarcation disputes that impact on work and productivity and other inefficiencies associated with competitive unionism. The rule currently exists and Australia is compliant with the ILO conventions. The bill will not change this.

It was also put to the committee that ILO conventions were breached by the bill, empowering the commission to order that an entity is ineligible for registration and that this limits an individual's right to join or form an association. I wish to reiterate that this bill does not diminish or abolish any individual's right to join or form an association, registered or not. The bill permits the commission to make an ineligibility order where it is satisfied that the applicant entity does not meet the criteria for registration. The bill amends the criteria for registration to require that an entity must not have an officer who has been found to have misrepresented the entity's right to represent its members' industrial interests and must not be subject to, or be under the control or influence of, an entity or individual who is the subject of an ineligibility order.

The aims of the amended criteria are clear: to ensure workers and employers are not misled by an entity which has misrepresented its ability to represent their industrial interests and to confirm that entities which engage in such misrepresentation can be penalised for doing so and will not be recognised as an industrial organisation under the IR Act.

This government has consistently encouraged collaborative workplace relations between employers, employer organisations, workers and unions, and it will continue to do so. The ability of workers to act collectively and belong to industrial organisations is safeguarded under the IR Act's general protections. The ability for new unions to form is given an additional layer of protection by the bill by including discussion of workplace rights and employment conditions for, or on behalf of, an industrial organisation as protected industrial activity.

In the committee process it was suggested that these amendments are targeted at so-called unions which are not registered under the act because they are not politically affiliated to the ALP. These so-called unions also purport to be not aligned with any political party. Both of these propositions are false. Firstly, these changes are predicated on enhancing effective representation of workers and employers in Queensland's IR system and ensuring rogue entities who misrepresent themselves are held to account. Secondly, those who have set up and run these so-called unregistered unions, in fact, have deep and enduring links to the LNP.

An honourable member interjected.

Ms GRACE: I take that interjection. How does anyone know how many members they have? They have no accountability whatsoever. It is notable that since the bill was introduced and throughout the committee process clear support has been provided by legitimate employer and employee groups and the legal profession who recognise the importance and stability of a transparent and accountable industrial relations framework for both employers and workers. This includes the National Retail Association which stated—

We strongly support the right of workers or businesses to join any association they want to join, but we think an association should be required to meet the same standards of accountability and transparency that we are required to meet if they want to call themselves a union.

Ai Group, in its submission to the committee, stated—

Ai Group supports the policy intent of limiting the industrial rights of associations that purport to be unions but are not subject to the onerous duties and reporting requirements of registered organisations.

The Queensland Law Society, in its submission to the committee, stated—

It is incongruous that unregistered organisations can operate and attempt to exercise representational and other rights without the correlative obligations that registered organisations are required to comply with to exercise those same rights. The amendments in the bill ensure that organisations that seek to represent employees and employers are subject to the obligations of transparency and probity that their members, and the public at large, expect if they are to exercise those rights.

The Local Government Association stated—

The LGAQ accepts the distinction between registered organisations that are heavily regulated with self-styled industrial associations and the need for the legislation to ensure those distinctions are recognised.

For an example of the lack of transparency surrounding unregistered associations we only need to look at the transcript from the public hearing of the committee's inquiry into the bill and the structure of the Red Union and its sub-entities, which appear to be run by three people. Reminiscent of the recent former prime minister's comments that he was not sure if he was minister for other portfolios, the Red Union representative made a similar claim: that he was not sure if he was the treasurer or secretary in

the various subsets of the Red Union franchise. This evidences a clear lack of accountability and transparency. Do not take my word for it, read *Hansard*. No real union member would not know who the secretary and treasurer was in that union.

I now turn to provisions in the bill that address precarious and insecure employment in the independent courier driver industry. Independent courier drivers play an important part in our vibrant economy, but these drivers are often in precarious or insecure work. The Palaszczuk government does not believe these business operators should have to forego decent working conditions for us to have a thriving economy. This is not an either-or proposition. The bill gives the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission the power to make determinations in relation to minimum standards and to hear and determine related disputes. These provisions are based on the long-standing model adopted in New South Wales to set minimum entitlements for specified groups within an industry.


The bill also introduces the following provisions: defines the contractual relationship between the principal contractor and independent courier; provides for any person or business that acts as a principal contractor as defined will be within scope, whether or not that is the main activity of their business; provides the commission with the power to set minimum conditions for independent courier drivers in the same manner that the New South Wales Industrial Relations Commission sets minimum entitlements for specified groups within an industry; and creates minimum standards for independent courier drivers and supports a growing industry sector.

The new chapter 10A provisions in the bill attracted comment in several submissions and during the public hearing which I would like to address. First, the bill does not seek to define independent courier drivers as employees, nor does it seek specific application to gig or platform-based businesses. A business and driver are within scope of the new jurisdiction only when they meet the definition of principal contractor and independent courier as prescribed in the bill and the work undertaken is a courier service contract as prescribed in the bill. If that is the case, then chapter 10A may apply subject to a contract determination by the commission. Even then, the business may apply for an exemption under section 406R.

Second, a business can lead by example and apply for a contract determination—especially for those businesses which acknowledge the benefits to their sector if there are minimum standards. By getting on the front foot, a business can tailor a contract determination to meet their needs. In his submission, Professor David Peetz pointed to evidence that the New South Wales regulation contributed to the downward trend in road fatalities involving articulated vehicles. Between 1989 and 2020 New South Wales experienced an average annual decline of five percent compared to two percent for the rest of country—more than double. Let us look at this another way—that is around 205 lives saved: 205 drivers who got to go home to their families and loved ones. These figures do not include the lives of the general public that could be saved who were involved in articulated truck road fatalities.

Finally, I remind the House these amendments may be introduced and passed in the Queensland parliament but will not become operative until the Australian government amends the Independent Contractors Regulation 2016 to specify the provisions as exempt and able to operate. I will continue to work with the Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations, Tony Burke, on this important issue.

The bill's amendments reflect the Palaszczuk government's commitment to a collaborative and appropriately regulated industrial relations system which provides fair and appropriate protections for workers and employers. The bill ensures Queensland's industrial laws are contemporary, responsive to, and keep pace with economic, social and cultural change. I recommend that these amendments be accepted by the House. I thank the committee for its work. Its members did an excellent job. I think the public hearings went extremely well. I look forward to the debate in this House regarding the amendments in this legislation. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (6.48 pm): The amendments contained in this bill with respect to workplace harassment are admirable and we support those amendments, but make no mistake, most of the amendments in this bill are driven by pure politics, an ideological obsession and a hate for competition. Ultimately, this bill is a bill to further entrench the Labor aligned union monopoly in Queensland and take away choices for teachers, nurses and other frontline workers.

The minister spoke about the five-year review. She was adamant to point out that it was an independent five-year review. It just happened that one of the people who reviewed it was a former commissioner and also union official and the second reviewer was Linda Lavarch, a former Labor Party Attorney-General who I understand either worked or was on the Queensland Nurses and Midwives' Union. There is no independence.

The fact that the minister can keep a straight face while trying to convince people that this was an independent review when it was conducted by former union officials and a former Labor attorney-general is not only embarrassing; it is disgraceful. It is simply not true that you can have an independent review if former Labor Party members of parliament are doing the review. It is biased and it benefits the unions they were associated with in previous lives. They did the review, but it is not only that: when the minister announced that she was going to conduct the five-year review into the Industrial Relations Act, she did it under the guise of the sexual harassment amendments. As admirable as those amendments are, they are but a small fraction of this bill. As I said, the rest of the bill is pure ideological politics.

The so-called independent review that the minister speaks about was not advertised and there was nothing on the website. In fact, I went to the Industrial Relations website to find the review. I wrote to the minister and asked, 'Where is this review? What groups have been invited to have a say on the review?' The minister wrote back to me and said that the review has been completed—but without any public submissions and without any public consultation. On the Office of Industrial Relations website there is a whole page dedicated to matters of consultation, but it just so happens that this five-year review is not there. That shows that this was a farce from the start.

Let me be abundantly clear and blunt. What has happened is that the Labor aligned unions are losing members to the Red Union supported NPAQ and TPAQ. They have gone to this minister and the government and said, 'Help and stop it—but not only stop it; we want you to outlaw these other organisations that teachers and nurses are choosing to join.' The Labor aligned union movement, which has a monopoly, has said, 'No, Minister. We are in charge and you will do these amendments.' That is the essence of this bill. That is the foundation of this bill.

Now, rather than just coming in here and moving said amendments, the minister said we will have an independent review. Do you know what, Mr Deputy Speaker? That was because she thought she would get away with it. She thought that nobody would worry about the issues at hand. When we look at the review, there is nothing on the website. I contacted some organisations that the minister described recently as 'rogue entities'. I contacted some of those, as defined by the minister, 'rogue entities'. I said, 'Considering the amendments are directly related to your organisations, which are incorporated under the incorporated legislation, surely Linda Lavarch and the other reviewer contacted you for your views, to get your advice, to ask what you do and to ask how many have left the nurses' and teachers' unions and joined your organisation.' There was not one communication.

An opposition member: Are you joking? Not one?

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection. The so-called independent review, which was designed to outlaw these apparent 'rogue entities', did not even afford them the opportunity of consultation. Minister Grace stood in here and talked about industrial relations and how important this bill is. For goodness sake! I would have a lot more time for the minister if she was up-front and said, 'I'm doing this because the union told me to do it.' That is what has happened.

An opposition member: Just say it!

Mr BLEIJIE: Just say it. Just be up-front. The minister and I have been battlers on this war front for many years. I have been the shadow IR minister and I have been the IR minister. Minister Grace and I have battled these issues for many years across the chamber. However, Minister, I would have more respect if you just came in here and said, 'The union wanted me to do it and I am doing it.' That is what has happened.

Ms Grace interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Lister): Your contribution will come through the chair and, Minister, you will stop quarrelling across the chamber.

Mr BLEIJIE: I turn to the elements of the bill that talk about strengthening protections against sexual harassment. As I said, the minister says that that is the basis of the bill, but it is a tiny element of the bill. With respect to that important issue, all they are doing is making it an objective in the Industrial Relations Act that one will not sexually harass a workplace officer, but there are no punishments. While they can make it an objective in the Industrial Relations Act, which they are doing in this bill, they are making out that it will support workers in this space. However, it will not have the desired effect that they are trying to achieve. If they were serious then they would legislate the offence in other legislation.

The Queensland Human Rights Commission is currently conducting a review into that very issue. Many of the submitters to the committee said, 'Why don't you wait for the Queensland Human Rights Commission to finish their review into the Anti-Discrimination Act so offences can be put in the legislation?' All this does is make it an objective in the Industrial Relations Act. That is all it does. However, it is a serious issue and that is why we support those elements of the bill.

I say to the minister that we cannot possibly support the other provisions of the bill that actually form the heart of the bill. If the minister were serious about having a genuine debate about sexual harassment in the workplace—

Ms Grace: 'Workplace'—that is the operative word.

Mr BLEIJIE: I said that—I suggest that these elements could have been taken out of this legislation and put into a different piece of legislation and then we could have, in a bipartisan way, worked with the minister to achieve the objective that she is trying to achieve. However, they have been put in amongst all the other bad things in the bill. There are many of those and I am going to go through them now.

The bill talks about the effective representation of employees and employers of registered industrial organisations. I will get to that. That is the unions. I will start with the employment standards. This relates to the gig economy and Uber, Menulog, Deliveroo, Uber Eats and all those sorts of things. They have all opposed these provisions.

Ms Grace: It does not affect them either.

Mr BLEIJIE: It does, which is why they have all opposed it, and through the committee report. Do members know what the minister has actually done with respect to this issue? The minister has put workplace standards for the gig economy in this legislation and then retrospectively written to the federal Attorney-General to seek permission to do it because it is a federal responsibility. This Labor government, under Cameron Dick, outsourced the industrial relations provision to the federal government, under Julia Gillard, when Bill Shorten was the industrial relations minister. Now they say they want to take back that provision but they legally cannot. The minister has put this in her bill and then realised that.

The explanatory notes state—

On 24 August 2020, the Minister wrote to the Commonwealth Attorney-General and Minister for Industrial Relations—

Get this, Mr Deputy Speaker—

requesting in-principle agreement to amend the IC Regulation to permit the Queensland Government to introduce legislation setting minimum conditions for independent courier drivers modelled on Chapter 6 ...

It is in this bill but the federal Attorney-General had not approved it. It was in the bill before that.

What is next? What else are they going to drag back from the federal industrial relations system? What they are doing will actually hurt the workers in that economy and I can tell the House why. Let us look at the federal employment standards. I think Menulog were the first to put their workers under a federal award. What happened was that the federal commission changed the award so that a lot of those people cannot legally do split shifts. A university worker who works for Uber Eats, Menulog or whatever, cannot work in the morning and at night-time because the award conditions say you cannot do split shifts. Are those the conditions that this minister—

Ms Grace: It is a federal award.

Mr BLEIJIE: It is a federal award and this state minister has written to the federal Attorney-General to implement it in Queensland. The minister has written to the federal Attorney-General wanting this award condition to be placed in Queensland.

In fact, in her letter to the Attorney-General she says—

... permit the Queensland Government to introduce legislation setting minimum conditions for independent courier drivers modelled on Chapter 6 of the New South Wales IR Act. The Commonwealth Attorney-General requested that draft legislation and outcomes of consultation on the same be provided ...

That is why a lot of those organisations are opposing these particular provisions, because they say their workers will be worse off under these provisions than they currently are. If there are edits or amendments that need to happen in that space, it should happen at a federal level. That is why, under the industrial relations system we have under the Commonwealth—and the Labor state government outsourced that responsibility to the Commonwealth government and so that is where the debate should be had for a nationally consistent approach. What we will have now is different approaches for this gig economy across different jurisdictions. That will not work.

Let me get to the heart of this bill. As the minister said, these are rogue entities. This is what this bill is about. This is empowering the union monopoly to continue in Queensland. I attended one of the committee hearings. I challenged the Queensland Council of Unions representative there—and all the unions were lined up—who is absolutely opposed to these other organisations having any input into the industrial relations system, the QIRC or the Industrial Court.

At a public hearing I asked whether the representative could advise the committee what the affiliation fees are for each union? She said, 'I don't know. I will have to take it on notice.' I asked that question and that particular union representative took it on notice. She told the committee that she would take it on notice and come back to the committee. There is nothing in the committee report which details the affiliation fees of the Queensland Council of Unions. Why is that? It is because they do not want people to know. They do not want the Queensland public to know what these Labor aligned unions are paying in affiliation fees to the Queensland Council of Unions. I put to the House that the reason the Queensland Council of Unions does not want anyone to know what these affiliated unions are paying is because it is a lot of money. Where does the Queensland Council of Unions' money go? It goes to the Queensland Labor Party. That is where it goes.

When I challenged the Queensland Nurses and Midwives' Union by saying, 'You are giving money to the Labor Party,' they said, 'We are not affiliated with the Queensland Labor Party.' They may not be officially affiliated with the Queensland Labor Party but they are certainly an affiliated entity of the Queensland Council of Unions. I put to the House that they are funnelling and channelling their money through the Queensland Council of Unions to the Labor Party. Do not believe—

Opposition members interjected.

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

Ms Grace: Prove it. Go and say that outside.

Mr BLEIJIE: I am about to. The nurses union in Queensland would have us believe that it is not affiliated with the Labor Party and does not campaign for the Labor Party. I will table for the information of the House two different flyers. One is a standard corflute billboard titled 'Talking political', authorised by the QNMU. It is against the Liberal-National coalition government. I also table another flyer being handed out at election booths by the QNMU: 'We support Labor's plan to fix aged care'.

Tabled paper: Bundle of photographs regarding Queensland Nurses and Midwives Union (QNMU) federal election material [1759].

Government members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members to my right, order!

Mr BLEIJIE: The QNMU would have people and the hardworking frontline nurses believe that they do not participate in political campaigns. Here is the proof that they do. They participate in political campaigns. I put it to you that the QNMU do not campaign for the Liberal National Party of Queensland. They funnel their money through to the QCU. That is where they are putting all their money.

Government members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members for Waterford, McConnel and Thuringowa, order!

Mr BLEIJIE: We have a situation in Queensland where we have all these unions affiliated and non-affiliated with the Labor Party. One has only to look at the ECQ disclosure log to see the Queensland Council of Unions' huge donations to the Labor Party. The Queensland Nurses and Midwives' Union donated \$110,000 to the Queensland Council of Unions.

An opposition member interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: Get this; are you ready for this? When was that donation made? It was made on 9 October 2020. What happened in October? That is right, there was a state election.

Ms GRACE: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. There are two members who are interjecting who are not in their seats. I suggest that if they want to interject they sit in their appropriate seats.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: I ask members to return to their appropriate seats if they want to interject.

Mr BLEIJIE: On 9 October the Nurses and Midwives' Union gave the Queensland Council of Unions \$110,000—just a few weeks before the state election. On 8 October 2020 the Queensland Teachers' Union, the QTU, gave \$115,000 to the Queensland Council of Unions—three weeks before the state election. I put to the Queensland Council of Unions representative at the committee hearing whether those donations that the nurses union and the Queensland Teachers' Union gave to the QCU were used for political campaigning. She admitted and basically said, 'We exist to campaign against the Liberal National Party in Queensland.' That is the reason for their existence.

Honourable members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: I ask the House to please come to order. I will be giving out warnings.

Mr BLEIJIE: The Queensland Council of Unions representative essentially made out that their priority in life is to campaign against the Liberal National Party.

Ms Fentiman interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: I am continually being interrupted by the Attorney-General who is deliberately interrupting.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, Attorney-General!

Mr BLEIJIE: We have a situation where the Queensland Council of Unions did not disclose how much of the hard-earned union money of teachers and nurses is essentially funding the Queensland Council of Unions. I put it to the House that the Labor Party is being funded through a scheme that channels money from unions, that may say they are not affiliated with the Labor Party, through the Queensland Council of Unions to the Labor Party.

Government members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members to my right, cease all interjections.

Mr BLEIJIE: That is what is happening.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Nanango, order!

Mr BLEIJIE: The Labor Party campaigns are being funded through funds from teachers and nurses in Queensland who do not know where their money is going. They do not know where their membership fees are going. If we look at the membership fees associated with joining the QTU or the QNMU, it is at least \$400 more than it costs to provide a core service.

Mr Smith interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Bundaberg, order!

Mr BLEIJIE: We have other organisations out there providing the core service of advocacy for teachers and nurses as these teachers and nurses have chosen to join another organisation because they are not happy with the QNMU and the QTU. The members are choosing to flee these organisations.

Ms Fentiman interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Attorney-General, order!

Mr BLEIJIE: We know that to provide these services the QTU and the QNMU are essentially charging their hardworking frontline members about \$400 more than it costs to provide these core services. If we look at that \$400 paid by a nurse or teacher member—and there are 17,000 members paying an extra \$400 per annum—that is being forced to be given to the Labor Party.

The real money at stake is the 120,000 nurses and teachers who are threatening to join a cheaper union: 120,000 times \$400 is \$48 million per annum, and that is the crux of this. There is a situation in Queensland where teachers and nurses on the front line believe they have to join the Teachers' Union or the QNMU, but there is a better way and there is another way. Members are fleeing the QNMU and the Queensland Teachers' Union in droves because they know they can get better service from other organisations like NPAQ and TPAQ—

Honourable members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Lui): Members, I have asked multiple times for the House to come to order. I will be warning people.

Mr BLEIJIE: I would plead with teachers and nurses in Queensland to seriously start questioning their membership in the QNMU and the QTU because the hard-earned money they are making from their job is being funnelled and channelled to the Labor Party and they do not know it. That is what is happening. When I said previously that the Queensland Council of Unions basically said their sole objective is to campaign against the Liberal National Party, the minister was giving all these hand gestures to indicate, 'That's correct. That's right.'

Ms Fentiman: Absolutely.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection. She said 'absolutely'. I would put it to the House—

Mr Harper interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Thuringowa, you are now warned under the standing orders.

Mr BLEIJIE: I put it to you, Madam Deputy Speaker, that the majority of teachers and nurses on the front line just want to get about and do their job for students in our schools and patients in our hospitals. They would be horrified to know that essentially \$400 of their union dues is being channelled and funnelled to the Labor Party. That is a disgrace. If I were them, I would be questioning their unions about their expenditure. We know that the Queensland Council of Unions refused to tell the committee how much affiliation fees are and how much they are getting. They refused to tell the committee that hundreds of thousands of dollars in donations to the QCU from the Queensland Teachers' Union and the QNMU are then funnelled to the Labor Party. Nurses and teachers cannot be certain that their hard-earned funds, their membership dues, are not being used for political purposes. They absolutely are.

The Labor Party talked about freedom of association. The Labor Party is happy to have freedom of association just as long as they associate with a Labor aligned union. That is their mantra. They are happy to have freedom of association as long as it is with a Labor aligned union that channels the money to the Labor Party, because they fund their campaigns and ministers are in their seats because of union members. Members in this House from the Labor Party are only here because of preselections and dodgy deals done with union officials. That is the existence of the Queensland Labor Party. That is how it is. That is why Minister Grace does the bidding of the unions in this House every time she moves amendments to industrial relations legislation.

I put to you, Madam Deputy Speaker, that nurses and teachers should have the right to be represented by anyone they choose to have advocate for them in the QIRC. They are going to be denied that right because of this industrial relations bill. This Labor government is lining their own pockets. Monopoly unions will continue to exist in Queensland and they will fund Labor Party campaigns, just as we have seen political gerrymander donation laws under this Labor Party. They have done everything they can to ensure their electoral success, whether it is stopping people donating to the Liberal National Party—

Ms Fentiman interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister, order!

Mr BLEIJIE: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The Attorney-General is quarrelling constantly throughout my speech. Maybe she needs a glass of water. I think she needs a water to calm down.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, members! Order!

Mr SMITH: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I believe that the member for Burnett just said very misogynistic and unparliamentary words and I wonder if he will withdraw his comments.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, members! Member for Burnett, I did not hear your comments. We can review the audio or I will ask you to withdraw.

Mr BENNETT: I withdraw.

Mr BLEIJIE: Minister Grace previously said in her contribution that organisations are still free to register for the Industrial Relations Commission. No, they cannot, because under the 'conveniently belong' rule if there is a union already established dealing with nurses or teachers, another organisation will not be allowed to register. I take the interjection of the minister rubbing her hands together. What is she saying? You are happy to accept—

Honourable members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Lui): Member for Toowoomba South, you are now warned under the standing orders.

Mr BLEIJIE: We have the minister now rubbing her hands together. 'Great monopoly. Beautiful monopoly,' she says. That is the heart of it. I hope that teachers and nurses on the front line can be shown this so they can know their money is being channelled to the Labor Party. If they do not want it channelled and funnelled to the Labor Party and if they want a choice of advocate group in Queensland, there are other options available and it is not the Queensland Nurses and Midwives' Union and it is not the Queensland Teachers' Union. The 'conveniently belong' rule essentially means that another organisation cannot register in the Industrial Relations Commission if there is an industrial organisation already registered. Other advocacy groups have used incorporated association legislation because workers want them to. Workers want the choice to say to NPAQ or TPAQ, 'We want you to represent us.' This government says, 'No, you don't have'—

Ms Fentiman interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Attorney-General, I have called you to order multiple times. I will now warn you under the standing orders.

Mr BLEIJIE: I put it to the House that Queensland teachers and nurses have woken up to the facts about their unions. They have chosen to flee those unions in droves and go to other places. Because they have, guess what happens? The \$300 to \$400 a year they are taking from those unions is not being funnelled back to the Labor Party, so in the last 12 months the unions have gone to the Minister for Industrial Relations and said, 'Our bottom line has tanked, and as minister you need to change the legislation and get us our money back. You need to change the legislation and stop all forms of competition in this state.'

In the 14 years I have served in this place, this would be the most purely politically, ideologically driven, union-favouring bill I have ever seen debated in this House. They do it with glee. They do it with cheer because they know this piece of legislation will guarantee that more unions will give more money to the Labor Party and ministers will get plum jobs on \$350,000.

Mr McDonald interjected.


Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection from the member for Lockyer. Labor Party members will be rubbing their hands together. Nurses and teachers—and other organisations, I might add—across the state have woken up to the fact and turned off the tap to these union movements. They are now saying, 'We don't want to be associated with these unions.' The education minister does not trust her teachers to make a choice and say, 'No, I don't want the Teachers' Union. I want another advocate group.' She will not give them that right and she will not give them that choice. That is shameful and disgraceful. That is putting your own ideology ahead of every teacher and teacher aide in the state.

This is such an issue that the Crime and Corruption Commission recently released a report and asked for submissions on the influencing practices. I submitted to that, and I table a copy of that submission which has not been made public before.

Tabled paper: Email, dated 29 July 2022, from the member for Kawana, Mr Jarrod Bleijie MP, to the Crime and Corruption Commission, titled 'Submission to Influencing Practices' [1760].

It talks about the influence the union movement has over the Queensland Labor Party. It expresses my concern and that of many people, including workers in the industrial relations office of this minister. It is shameful what this Labor government is doing. The only way we will change this, to give choice for workers, is to change this government in two years time.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Lui): Before I call the next speaker, I remind the following members that they are on warnings under the standing orders: the members for Cairns, Scenic Rim, Nanango, Miller, Broadwater, Theodore, Southern Downs, Kawana, Thuringowa, Toowoomba South and Waterford.

 **Ms RICHARDS** (Redlands—ALP) (7.20 pm): Wasn't that quite the show for the chamber tonight from the member for Kawana. Well done. Goodness gracious me. Maybe the member for Kawana has forgotten that we are the government that has introduced some of the strictest donation and expenditure laws in the country—short-term memory, my friend. There was talk of schemes, of channelling and funnelling money, of transparency, accountability and integrity, and of knowing what you stand for.

Before I table a document on NPAQ, I go back to that fake outrage from the other side that they stand for workers and I remind them of their track record. The member for Kawana's track record in industrial relations speaks for itself. He cannot rewrite that history from when they were in government, with 14,000 workers who were sacked, not to mention the nurses who were sacked. That is insane. Their track record included wage freezes, the introduction of laws to stop the democratic right of unions to campaign on political issues, voting against labour hire laws, voting against paid domestic and family violence leave and voting against industrial manslaughter laws. They have no credibility when it comes to standing up for the workers of Queensland—no credibility whatsoever.

I go back to talking about schemes and funnelling and channelling. When people join a registered industrial organisation, they need to know that it is transparent, accountable, it has information that can be found, it is registered and there is a rigorous process. Let us have a look at the structure of NPAQ, and it might have changed. Greater minds than mine have put this together because people could not possibly have any idea what they had signed up to.

It says that NPAQ is part of QNurses First Inc. and there are other notable business names which include the Midwifery Professional Association of Australia, the Nurses' Professional Association of Australia, the Nurses' Professional Association of New South Wales and the Nurses' Professional Association of Queensland. There are over a dozen operational entities that are all interrelated. It is

absolutely incredible to see NPAQ and those groups and the shareholder structure. For the benefit of the House, that was my attempt to try to unscramble an egg and understand it. I table that diagram for the benefit of the House and the member for Kawana so we can try to get to the bottom of what it all looks like when it comes together. It is really quite incredible.

Tabled paper: Organisational chart titled 'QAS Group and NPAA Services Organisational Chart as at 2 November 2021' [1761].

The member for Kawana spoke about fees. Mr McGuire actually had to take on notice a number of questions, and one of them was the fee structure for the services that RUSH provides to its members. I asked him, 'When you look at that diagram and you see all of those organisations, you would think you would know if you were the treasurer of an entity. You would think you would be able to answer pretty quickly what position you had.' Unfortunately, on the day, Mr McGuire had to take that question on notice and come back to us with which unions he was secretary or treasurer of. He came back to us to let us know that he is the treasurer of the IWUA, which I understand holds the notable business names that include the Independent Workers Union of Australia, the Council of Independent Unions and the Independent Council of Unions.

He is the treasurer of the HS First Inc. trading as SOPPA, which I understand holds the notable business names that include the Sworn Officers' Professional Association of Queensland, the Sworn Officers' Professional Association of Australia, IPUQ, IPAUS and the Midwifery Professional Association of Queensland. There are so many acronyms; it is mind-boggling. He is the treasurer of CWEA Inc. trading as AMPS, which I understand also holds the notable business names of Australian Medical Professionals' Society, Care and Disability Workers Professional Association of Queensland and of Australia, Care and Disability Workers Union, Disability Workers Union, CWUA and the CADPAA. There is a lot of information!

Hopefully everybody has had a chance to look at the NPAQ website because it is pretty interesting. If you want to view their constitution, you have to go into their office. On the website it says you have to go down to the Emporium in the Valley to view their constitution in full. On the ASIC website though, NPAQ has their principal place of business listed as 9/27 Evans Street, Maroochydore. Go figure! I am not sure they know where they are housed. On that chart, I think they have associated entities that are within the *Courier-Mail* building at 41 Campbell Street. It is an interesting amount of information. I do not know if anybody would know what they were signing up to with their NPAQ membership. When you look at all of that information, you would have to be concerned. To think that the treasurer of those entities did not even know whether he was the treasurer or not—seriously! We have to wonder about transparency, accountability and integrity.

In the QPU submission, they noted that the restriction of the freedom of association and general protections to members of registered organisations is fair and effective and strikes a good balance between ensuring that organisations have the rights and accountabilities under the legislation and that employees in the system are able to achieve fair and effective representation and the right to freedom of association free from employer or other external influences. The NPAQ website is misleading. They are misleading their members because they cannot perform the services they are saying they can on their website. That is absolutely misleading. We talk again about transparency and integrity and the services they know they can legally provide, and they are misleading their members.

Mr Smith: Honest Queenslanders.

Ms RICHARDS: Yes, honest Queenslanders! One of the other interesting submissions to the committee was from Justice Peter Davis, the President of the Industrial Court of Queensland. During our inquiry, he provided us with some correspondence. He outlined his concerns with regards to unscrupulous agents who are charging fees to provide representation in the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission and the Industrial Court. His commentary formed the basis of our second recommendation within the report, and I am pleased to see the minister has been able to investigate the approaches available to us and is including those in the amendments to be moved in consideration in detail. I also add that the Queensland Law Society backed in the comments made by Justice Davis in support of the changes that this legislation will make.

Sexual harassment is a really important component of this bill. It builds on the work of the federal Sex Discrimination Commissioner, Kate Jenkins, and the national *Respect@work* report. That report shone a spotlight on the prevalence of sexual harassment in workplaces across the country. I am absolutely proud to be part of a Palaszczuk government that is committed to doing all we can to prevent and address sexual harassment in the workplace.


In terms of minimum employment standards, this legislation seeks to align with the national employment standards in the Fair Work Act 2009. The other important piece, which the minister touched on, is parental leave. The bill removes gendered divisions of parental care. We believe individual

parents should decide how to allocate childcare responsibilities to best fit their family's circumstances. In a modern, contemporary society, I think that is entirely appropriate. The amendments will ensure Queensland families can make their own decisions.

The bill also supports parents, or those with responsibility for caring for children, who are returning to work by allowing them to apply to their employer to change their work from a full-time to a part-time basis. I know from experience back in the day in architecture that when mums left full-time work to take maternity leave it was so hard for them to return to work. This is important for our Queensland workplaces. The amendments to domestic and family violence leave will align Queensland with federal legislation.

In regards to the courier drivers, I noted the member for Kawana only wanted to talk about the companies being Menulog, Uber Eats and Deliveroo, but I wonder how many drivers he actually spoke to in terms of the conditions under which they operate. That is a really good piece of legislation. It has been modelled on the legislation in New South Wales which has been operating for more than 40 years. It is a really good piece of legislation.

In conclusion, I thank the committee, the secretariat, submitters, witnesses and the department for their involvement in our inquiry process. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (Broadwater—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (7.29 pm): I would like to make a few short contributions on the Industrial Relations and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, but I want to start where the member for Kawana did and say that the opposition fully supports anything that can improve workplace conditions in terms of sexual harassment. The truth is if the government was serious about that and working with us, it would never be in this bill. Let's call it for what it is: this bill is an absolute, full-throated payback for the union movement for what it has done for this government in this chamber. If they were up-front—and it is not too late—those provisions they would remove from this bill because they have no connection to the bill we are debating.

I have listened to the minister and, indeed, the previous speaker. Throughout all of it, I cannot see where there has been any defence whatsoever of giving people a choice. In the end, we will hear speaker after speaker and, for all the value of their experience in the union movement, which they will speak about, no-one will be able to explain why somebody having a choice to embark on a similar experience with a multitude of different people representing them is in any way, shape or form wrong or why it matters who represents a worker in the QIRC. No member will be capable of doing that, because the minister was not able to. I suspect it will be difficult for anyone else because, in the end, choice is something we should all get out of bed for every day. We should give every worker in this state that option.

I will make this assessment: this is not about choice, it is about payback. It is about a government doing favours in its dying days and members looking for opportunities after they leave this House. Some will leave of their own choosing, others might leave due to a forced decision, but one way or another there is a whole heap of people who are desperately conflicted in this and, as a result, this is about payback.


This government has a history when it comes to payback in this area. It has had lobbyists operating out of taxpayer-funded buildings; it has had attacks on the independent officers like the State Archivist and the Integrity Commissioner; there has been a culture of fear that has permeated through the Public Service, and Professor Coaldrake's report showed that; and they have a history when it comes to doing everything they can to ensure that their political stocks are protected. I point to the changing of our voting laws without notice or debate. I point to the changing of the donation laws to know what this government will do to create an unfair advantage for the union movement the likes of which we have never seen before in this state.

The minister spoke of the five-year review. It was a stitch-up. Be honest about it. Be up-front about it. There was no consultation, there was no communication, and the composition of that body was never going to lead to a fair and honest outcome, ever.

The vast majority of people who join a union in any profession, in any industry, do so for one reason and that is for insurance, for protection. That is the No. 1 reason. I will explain the reason why the majority of them do not join a union, and that is to contribute to political campaigns. That is not their reason. For there to be no accountability for where money goes, quite frankly, is undemocratic. The previous speaker spoke about the need for openness and integrity. I agree. Therefore, show where the money is going. The deputy leader outlined where he believes the money is going, and it would be very important and fitting for workers, when they are scrimping and saving to find that extra bit of money to pay those dues, to know where that money is going.

In my limited remaining time, I want to refer to where the minister spoke about the minimum standards for the independent courier drivers. She said, as did the deputy leader, we are talking about the drivers for Deliveroo, Uber Eats and all manner of those things. Every one of those workers deserves to be able to do a fair and honest day's work, and we should do everything we can to ensure that is the case, but the minister said this does not affect them. Too right! It is not state legislation, it is federal legislation. What this bill is proposing is unprecedented in its stupidity in that it is asking another House to do something in order for this place to implement it. I would have thought that is well and truly putting the cart ahead of the horse.

Finally, I will make a prediction. I saw the minister rubbing her hands with glee and there were some off-putting remarks that many people who go to work and pay their union dues would be, quite frankly, embarrassed at that performance. I will make a little synopsis and a prediction. Right now behind closed doors, there will be any number of Labor members rubbing their hands with glee, saying, 'We've got away with this,' but they said the same thing about the land tax grab. On day one the shadow Treasurer called it for what it was and he called it a renters tax. It might have taken over half a year for the penny to drop, but in the end Queenslanders worked it out and saw it for what it was, and so they will with this. As every day goes by, it becomes increasingly evident this government has stopped listening; as every day goes by, it becomes increasingly evident this government is looking to pay back the people who have put them there for three long terms; and as every day goes by, Queenslanders are working out that it is time to change this government.

 **Mr O'ROURKE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (7.37 pm): I rise today to speak in support of the Industrial Relations and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. This is an important bill which continues the Palaszczuk Labor government's great legacy of industrial relations reform and ensures that our industrial relations laws remain contemporary and tackle emerging issues in this space.

This bill makes improvements to our industrial relations framework in four key areas. Firstly, the bill acts on the findings of the landmark 2020 *Respect@work* report, which found that addressing sexual harassment in Australia is complex and confusing for both victims and employers to understand and navigate. The bill addresses this by: ensuring a consistent definition of 'sexual harassment' and 'discrimination' between the IR Act, the Anti-Discrimination Act and the Commonwealth's Sex Discrimination Act; making 'sexual harassment or sex- or gender-based harassment' an industrial matter, which means that victims can seek assistance from the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission, and the commission then has various powers to deal with these matters; and providing that a person who commits sexual harassment or sex- or gender-based harassment can be summarily dismissed on grounds of misconduct.

As a member of the committee, it was great to see that these changes were widely supported in the submissions from across the spectrum. I have great confidence that these amendments will provide greater protection for workers subject to sexual harassment and I am confident these changes will help provide a greater public understanding of the insidious conduct and the impact it has on victims.

Secondly, the bill improves Queensland's employment standards and addresses the gender and pay gap in a wide variety of ways. The bill delivers important reforms to various forms of leave including: removing gendered language from parental leave; expanding access to adoption and cultural leave for children from five to 16 years of age; granting parents 30 days of flexible unpaid leave for the two years after the birth, adoption, surrogacy or cultural recognition of a child; providing parental leave for parents of a stillborn baby to allow those parents time to grieve their loss—this is an incredibly important reform—and clarifying that sick leave is exclusive of public holidays. The bill also deals with the gender pay gap by prioritising and making it one of the first items considered in the bargaining process. This will bring transparency and accountability to the process. I commend the change.

Thirdly, the Palaszczuk government is addressing the precarious employment of independent courier drivers by creating a jurisdiction within the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission to set minimum rates and standards for these contractors. Not only will these amendments create more jobs and financial security for these workers; they will also hopefully increase road safety and better outcomes for all road users, as we have seen in New South Wales. I thank Professor David Peetz for his submission to the committee, which highlighted the safety outcomes achieved in the New South Wales system. I welcome the introduction of this to Queensland.


Lastly, I turn my attention to the issue of registered industrial organisations. This part of the IR bill responds to the recent development, since around 2014, of fake unions, which cause confusion and have misled both workers and employers. In both Queensland's and Australia's industrial relations system registered industrial organisations for both employers and workers are central to these systems

and have been for many decades. This bill makes clear the distinction between registered industrial organisations, which represent the industrial interests of employers and employees, and other entities that are not registered under the IR Act and cannot properly represent workers' industrial interests in the state IR tribunal and in collective bargaining. Because of the weight of the industrial responsibilities placed on these registered industrial organisations, they are subject to very high levels of accountability and transparency. By contrast, unregistered organisations, often set up under the Associations Incorporation Act 1981, which purport to be able to represent their members industrially, simply are not subject to anywhere near the level of transparency or accountability. These fake unions which have sprung up only have to comply with the same requirements as the golf club down the road.

In fact, one moment which for me really cemented this lack of transparency and accountability occurred when Mr Jack McGuire, one of the leaders of a fake union, could not answer a simple question posed by the committee during the hearing asking him which of the fake unions he had helped establish if he was the secretary or treasurer. The member for Redlands touched on that. He could not respond. This is deeply concerning and shows the lack of accountability within these bodies. This bill brings about sensible changes to stop these organisations which are not honest about what they can do industrially for their members, not transparent about their political links to the LNP and not accountable to their members.

The bill makes clear that any such misrepresentation will be subject to penalties which are to be determined by the independent umpire, the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission. The bill also requires that there are consequences for incorporated associations under the Associations Incorporation Act 1981 that falsely present themselves as having a right to represent the industrial interests of employees and employers under the IR Act. This is important because the IR Act and the Associations Incorporation Act serve very different purposes. The IR Act is designed to support a complex system of workplace relations in Queensland, whereas the Associations Incorporation Act provides a simple and inexpensive means of incorporation for not-for-profit associations. As a member of the committee, it was notable to read submissions from both employers and worker groups that they support this aspect of the bill.

This bill will ensure that Queensland's industrial relations framework remains contemporary and tackles emerging issues in this space. It is a worthy addition to the Palaszczuk Labor government's industrial relations amendments. I wholeheartedly support this bill.

 **Mr LISTER** (Southern Downs—LNP) (7.45 pm): I, too, rise to speak on this bill. As the deputy chair of the Education, Employment and Training Committee, I had a good chance to look through it and I have to say it is a wicked, scrofulous piece of legislation. It is the most naked example yet of the Labor Party having given up on ordinary Queenslanders and now feathering the nests of their paymasters in the union movement. This is a disgraceful vindication of everything we have always known about the Labor Party, and that is that they are beholden to the trade union movement. Here they are actually nakedly legislating for their donors to the disadvantage of the competitors of their donors. I ask members can we—

Mrs Frecklington: It is embarrassing.

Mr LISTER: It is embarrassing. I take that interjection from the member for Nanango. I ask members of this House: can they imagine what would happen to a local government councillor if they were to lead the charge for local laws that benefitted their donors to the disadvantage of their electoral competitors? It would not happen; they would be before the CCC. Because we have a unicameral House in Queensland and because the party that holds the Treasury benches can do as it pleases, we have reached this point. It is a low point and I take as wise words and very insightful words those of the Leader of the Opposition when he said that this may be like the renters tax. This is such a wanton and naked attack on the rights and freedoms of people to truly associate as they wish, motivated by the avaricious instincts of the Labor politicians involved and the union movement that supports them.

I heard the member for Rockhampton speaking about the inability of a witness to identify his role. There was something else on that committee that happened. The representative of the Queensland Council of Unions, who undertook to answer on notice a number of questions about the funding arrangements they had, which was how much each union had given and how much they had given to the Labor Party—

Mr Boothman: Affiliation fees.

Mr LISTER:—and affiliation fees; I take the interjection. The representative of the Queensland Council of Unions produced a letter which was basically telling the committee that they are above disclosing such information. Naturally, we work in a political environment where the government controls everything, and nothing could be done about that.

I heard the minister talk about the circumvention of the act by agents. This is nothing to do with looking after the individuals. This is all about restraining the growth of competitors to the Labor affiliated unions or those which channel funds through the Queensland Council of Unions for the electoral purposes of unions; the ones who decide who sits on the Treasury benches in this House when the Labor Party is in power; those who decide who gets a seat and who does not; and those who decide what job, if any, a retiring Labor member, either through defeat or a lack of free selection or some other method, is going to get.

I cannot help but think that Linda Lavarch is a perfect example, a virtuoso example, of somebody who has been looked after subsequent to leaving this House. She led what was nothing more than a sham of an investigation, an inquiry into how the law should be changed. As the member for Kawana, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition said, there was no consultation.

In fact, there was no consultation at the bill stage with the Red Union Support Hub, the Teachers' Professional Association of Queensland, or the nurses equivalent.

Ms Boyd: They are not a union.

Mr LISTER: I take the interjection from the member for Pine Rivers who says that they are not a union. To me, a union is an organisation that looks after its workers, and I have something to say about that. When I was a pizza delivery boy, my nickname was Dougie and I worked for Silvio's. I found out in my first pay slip—which had been delayed—that I was being charged union fees. I was not told, 'Here you are, please apply and join the union.' I was not thanked for my contribution, I was not given any voting rights. I was merely a cash cow so that a dodgy Labor union could do a deal with a dodgy big employer to sell out their workers. I was on \$7.30 an hour delivering pizzas. I think the haughty suggestions from the Labor members opposite that 'unions look after workers' are just as hollow as the justification for this bill.

I, like the other members on this side of the House, abhor the abuse of people and sexual harassment in workplaces and so forth—we all do. If it is so important, why did the Labor Party devalue and sully that intent, as well as the paid family and domestic violence leave, by lumping it in with this dreadful appalling bill, this disgraceful bill which drenches in shame the government which supports it?

Mr McDonald interjected.

Mr LISTER: It is a smoke screen. I take that interjection from my friend the honourable member for Lockyer. We have heard about democracy in the union movement. The members of the red unions who met outside this place told me that they were leaving the Labor-donating unions, because they were not being listened to. They felt that there had been some sort of deal struck between the union and their employer that would prevent them from representing them fully and without reservation. We heard that unions are not-for-profit. I certainly agree that they are not-for-profit, because every cent that they have they give to the Labor movement.

It is not just the money, of course—union pay the workers who work on members' campaigns. They go out there while being paid by the members of the union. Under the Labor donation laws which excluded Labor, you could have volunteers come and assist on premises and so forth. That is because it suits the Labor Party to enjoy that kind of largesse from union bosses, but they have a price to pay. When the union movement, rigid and unaccountable as it is, decides that it is losing too many members—we have heard the large sums of funds at stake here are going to red unions—something has to be done about it. Beholden to the paymasters and the preselection masters, the overlords of this government, they come in here with this rot. They trot in here with a bill like this which nakedly seeks to disadvantage the opponents of the union movement. This is nothing short of corruption.

I return to chapter 10A and the ludicrous use of this bill to enshrine a power which resides with the federal government. This is because of the obsession that the Labor movement has with destroying those people who wish to work for themselves in a flexible arrangement. Now, I was one of those. I was Dougie the pizza delivery boy. They wanted my money, but they did not want to represent me. When I did turn up at the TWU's headquarters, after not being able to get much sense out of them on the phone, I was told to do something that I cannot repeat in this House. Democracy in the unions means that you have to tow the line. To think that there is true democracy in the union movement is a joke. In reality, if you do not tow the line—depending on which union you are in—you would be ostracised, or if you are in the CFMMEU you might find yourself with concrete boots! So, that is what we are dealing with. For the Labor government to come in here and compare the red unions with their own unions is absolutely obscene.

I was interested in the contribution that His Honour Justice Peter Davis made in his submission—his name has been trotted out a lot. When I talk about the industrial system I am, of course, talking about big business, big unions and big government—not the little guys. I wonder whether to complete this perfectly symmetrical plot, His Honour Justice Peter Davis is the same person who was reported in the *Courier-Mail* for being responsible for making sure that volunteers on election day were fed and watered, according to Mr Peter Russo the member for Toohey. It seems to me that this whole system is rotten. They are happy to roll out the red carpet, then bung up the port holes for a Labor-appointed judge who is assisting in justifying this legislation, but they will not listen to the guys who are out here from the red union standing up for their own rights.



Mr SULLIVAN (Stafford—ALP) (7.55 pm): I rise proudly to support the Industrial Relations and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. This government has a proud legacy of providing an industrial relations regime that places working Queenslanders at its core. As a party, and as a movement, this is central to the values we hold and the values that the people of Queensland rely on Labor governments to deliver and protect. That is in stark contrast to those members opposite who have a history of sacking workers, of attacking their industrial rights, kneecapping their workplace health and safety laws, and taking an axe to their workers compensation regimes to name a few.

This is in stark contrast to the fake unions better described as the mysterious nebulous private organisation that they are inappropriately trying to portray themselves as unions. Do not take my word for that. Let's look at the evidence in black and white provided by the entity to the committee, the entity that calls itself the Red Union Support Hub. George Orwell himself would have been proud! Under cross-examination at the public hearing of the Education, Employment and Training Committee, Mr McGuire the director of the so-called Red Union Support Hub made it clear that his is not a legitimate worker representative organisation—it is a front for a privately-owned private interest. I note the tangled web of association, private interest executive holders, indeed the conflict of interest as explained by the chair, the member for Redlands, in the document that she just tabled. I associate myself with her contribution this evening.

I point to the answers provided by the so-called Red Union Support Hub under questioning from the chair where the director could not even answer a simple question about what office bearer positions he or his other shareholders held across the various organisations, only some of which the member for Redlands could fit into her contribution tonight, that he pretends are representative of Queensland workers. Tellingly, he could not say what position he held in organisations who, in turn, fund and are directly pay the Red Union Support Hub. Talk about the very definition of conflict of interest!

I thought it was telling that these so-called unions did not even present to the committee themselves, but rather it was the Red Union Support Hub who spoke on behalf of any of the number of organisations and many trading names—a list that is hard to define in such a contribution tonight. Under questioning from me, Mr McGuire confirmed that the Red Union Support Hub was not an incorporated association itself, but rather it was a private entity that raises income by charging fees to the very organisations of which they are executive officeholders. These are not my words; this is the evidence of the red hub itself. I can point to pages 22 to 24 of *Hansard* from the public hearing transcript. When I asked who are the shareholders, Mr McGuire confirmed that it was himself, Graham and Kath. When asked what relationship the red hub had with Queensland Association Services Group Pty Ltd, Mr McGuire confirmed that the Red Union Support Hub was a wholly owned subsidiary of the QIS Group. He further confirmed that the QIS Group had the same three shareholders he listed above—the officeholders of the entities that pay fees to the hub.

I further asked about these murky structures and whether these organisations had separate establishments, or are co-located? His response was 'They are one and the same.' Could you imagine a clearer statement about the murky relationship between these fake unions and a private interest shareholder entity? These entities do not have elections run by the AEC or the ECQ, as registered organisations do; they are not held to the same regulation standards. Mr McGuire tried to describe himself as being like a law firm but, of course, he and his private entity are not a law firm. They are not members of the Queensland Law Society, nor do they answer to the Legal Services Commission. He tried to describe his structure as that of the QCU, but then admitted that unlike the QCU that has formal affiliates, the red hub is a private commercial arrangement—a private commercial arrangement whereby the officeholders then pay their own company. They are not held to the same transparency requirements—

Mr Hart: What is wrong with business?

Mr SULLIVAN: I take the interjection from the member for Burleigh. That is right: it is a business. It is not a representative of employees; it is a business with three defined shareholders. It is a private company portraying itself as an employee organisation. They are not held to the same standards for very good reason: they are in fact not a registered industrial organisation.

This bill seeks to ensure transparency for workers and employers alike. Our system is based on arbitration and conciliation. For more than a century our country has sought an industrial relations system that is based on fairness for employees and employers, and central to that is our cooperative industrial relations structure. Employers want certainty in dealing with legitimate organisations and the QIRC needs to operate in the context of hearing from and dealing with the legitimate voices of both employees and employers, and that is what this legislation delivers.

As the minister outlined in some detail, this bill is completely consistent with International Labour Organization conventions and I associate myself with her comments. We are sick of seeing shady, fake organisations mislead workers about their ability to represent them industrially. That also goes for employers. I mean, the notion of a bosses' union warrants its own full contribution, but we do not have time for that this evening.

There are other important reforms in this bill. This legislation introduces better industrial protection for workers who suffer sexual harassment in the workplace. There are fantastic reforms in that regard. It increases parental leave for adoptive parents by increasing the age of the child at the time of the child's adoption for whom leave entitlements for parents can apply. It introduces reforms to provide flexibility to ensure family balance when it comes to parental leave. Families are all different and the parental leave arrangement that works for each household should be able to be enjoyed. That involves the possibility of a mixture between parents or leave arrangements that can leapfrog each other. This suits the modern age. Personally, I think it also reflects that we have a modern economy in a modern society where it should not be assumed that mothers are the only caregivers and men should also consider their responsibilities. This bill also clarifies that leave entitlements for parents extend to those parents whose children are born still. That is a very important entitlement and obviously one very close to my heart.

This bill provides better support for gender pay equity. In layman's terms, it effectively brings the issue of pay equity to the forefront of negotiations rather than leaving it to a box to tick at the end of that negotiation process. I think we will see real improvements over time.

This bill better protects transport workers, particularly independent courier drivers, by introducing a jurisdiction to set minimum conditions for the independent courier industry. I particularly want to thank the TWU for the evidence they provided, particularly Mr Thakar, an independent courier who gave his personal testimony to the committee.

I think it is telling that the opposition, specifically the member for Kawana, who did join the committee for public hearings, did not ask a single question about any of these important reforms when it came to workers' rights—none of them. They are obsessed with unions and did not ask anything about what they say they now support—not one question. The member for Kawana was so obsessed with trying to run a protection racket for his mates in the fake unions that he could not even be bothered asking about the provision of parental leave for parents of children who were stillborn or about the change to the age of adopted children and the associated leave for parents or about improved mechanisms to tackle sexual and gender-based harassment in the workplace. He could not be bothered and was not interested. We should not be surprised, as this is the person who, when in government as industrial relations minister, took an axe to workers' rights—it was knocked off in the High Court—not just by sacking any public servant he could find but also by unilaterally cancelling the acting levels across government, setting careers back, and taking an axe to the Queensland workers compensation scheme, despite his own backbench committee saying that he should not.

I also want to mention the issue raised by Justice Davis of the Supreme Court sitting as President of the QIRC. As the minister explained, the president of the QIRC said that there was a particular trend that is quite concerning, with the charging of fees for so-called agents. A procedural mechanism that was meant to ensure support from friends and others in the workplace has been misused by those who are seeking to inappropriately profit from it. Procedural fairness elements that are meant to make the QIRC a fair and friendly jurisdiction to access are being inappropriately used for private profit.

I thank the minister and her department for bringing forward this legislation. The department and the minister's office have provided great support throughout this process. I thank the submitters throughout this process, including Justice Davis. I thank the committee chair and the secretariat for their fantastic work. I look forward to this fantastic reform progressing through this parliament.



Mr DAMETTO (Hinchinbrook—KAP) (8.05 pm): I rise to make my contribution to the Industrial Relations and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. At the outset, I want to acknowledge the good work of the committee as we went through what I thought was a good process—hearing both sides of the story. We heard from people who supported the bill and from people who did not support the bill. I acknowledge some of those people. We heard from the Australian Christian Lobby, Fair Go for Queensland Women, Maternity Choices Australia, Australian Industry Group, Red Union Support Hub and Retail and Fast Food Workers Union Inc. We even had Uber there. There were a number of other submitters, but they are some of the people who submitted and came to give evidence to the committee. Once again, I acknowledge the work of the committee as we went through this process.

Whilst the KAP does welcome some of the amendments in this legislation that offer genuine protection against sexual harassment, the KAP has a strong stance against the amendments that remove gender-specific language from the Industrial Relations Act. We believe that this ties into something the KAP has fought hard for—that is, being able to use gender-specific language in everyday terminology and making sure we are not cancelling these concepts from our culture. We are 110 per cent behind making sure that those who want to use gender-specific language will continue to be able to do so.

A government member: Nobody's stopping you, brother.

Mr DAMETTO: Absolutely. I must remind people that the KAP did introduce legislation into this House to not discriminate against people but to protect people who want to use gender-specific language. The reality is that it was voted down by both sides of the House. Unfortunately, both sides of the House are starting to back a woke agenda. It will continue to roll through this place on the long march to the left by both sides of politics. The explanatory notes state—

Clause 8 amends section 57 (Definitions for division) to omit the definition of 'maternity leave' as this language implies gendered division of parental care. Section 57 is also amended to include a definition for 'stillborn child'. The Bill defines 'stillborn child' as a child who has shown no sign of respiration or heartbeat, or other sign of life ...

We have no dramas with that part of the bill. Clause 10 amends section—

Ms Boyd interjected.

Ms Pease interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Martin): Member for Pine Rivers! Member for Lytton!

Mr DAMETTO: It is a pleasure to have the member for Pine Rivers in her seat interjecting tonight, as always.

Ms Boyd interjected.

Mr DAMETTO: I am genuine in saying that; I enjoy her interjections.

Ms Pease: What about mine?

Mr DAMETTO: I am sorry; I do not know what electorate that member represents.

Ms PEASE: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take personal offence at that statement and I ask him to withdraw it.

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

Mr DAMETTO: I withdraw, and it is great now to know who the member for Lytton is.

Ms Pease interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Martin): Member for Lytton! Pause the clock. Member for Lytton, I will ask that you stop interjecting. The member for Hinchinbrook has withdrawn. I would ask all members to listen to the member for Hinchinbrook's contribution in silence.

Mr DAMETTO: The objective of the bill is to push out non-Labor aligned unions to ensure that they do not have the ability to represent workers through the Industrial Relations Act. These are the government's own words about its legislation—

It will provide protections against those who make false and misleading claims about being able to represent the industrial interests of employers and employees under the Act.

This is a direct shot at alternative unions and I believe directed straight at the Red Union. I want to talk for a second about how I believe all of this came about. During the COVID-19 pandemic there were a number of restrictions put in place and some of those were vaccine mandates and restrictions in workplaces. It is very difficult for a person to ask their union for help to represent them as a worker

when the union would have to go against the people that they are there to support. There is a longstanding relationship—borne out of the union movement and the Labor Party—between the Labor Party and the union movement. No-one can deny that. I think it would be very hard to deny that. The fact is how are they as a worker supposed to go to their union to ask for representation against the people that the union is married and tied to? It is almost impossible. Then along came the nasty, as the Labor Party would try and frame it, Red Union group—that is, the Nurses' Professional Association of Queensland, the Teachers' Professional Association of Queensland, the Professional Drivers' Association of Australia, the Australian Medical Professionals' Society, the Sworn Officers' Professional Association of Australia, the Independent—

Ms Pease interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Lytton, you are warned under the standing orders. We will hear the rest of the member for Hinchinbrook's contribution in silence.

Mr DAMETTO: I will continue for the member for Lytton: the Independent Workers' Union of Australia was also borne out of that. This was a group of organised people who decided that they would try to fill a gap where the traditional unions were unable to support the workers who wanted representation and a number of workers decided to come across to these other unions. This is where it gets interesting, because this plays out every day. Believe it or not, I get approached by union members all of the time saying, 'Nick, we vote for you, Nick. We love the fact that the KAP's doing a great job, but unfortunately I need to pay my union dues to stay employed at a certain place, and guess what? I'm not happy. I'm not happy that my union dues go to the Labor Party that works against you in Hinchinbrook.' However, they cannot stop paying their union dues because they need to stay employed at a certain place.

Mr Smith interjected.

Mr DAMETTO: If the member wants to talk about paid membership, we will go down that road if he likes in a second. The fact is some people are not happy with the Labor Party and they are not happy with the way the union movement not only works as a protection racket for those opposite but also predicates their message. As we go forward I believe there should be some type of choice in the market. Part of the union movement is to fight for arbitration—choice in the workforce. Do members know what? The only way people are going to get choice right now is if they jump through all of these new hoops that have been put in place.

I hate to use these words—my own grandmother would wash my mouth out with soap for using this name—but even the Labor Party's Gough Whitlam had a vision for Australia's workers to have the freedom of trade unions of choice. He believed in workers' rights to organise into a union without interference from government. To enshrine these rights, he ratified industrial labour conventions into Australian law and now these rights are under attack. The people that those opposite put on a pedestal fought for this and now legislation will pass through this House over the next two days that is going to pull that to pieces.

Everyone should have the right to choice and the workers who were denied that choice looked for choice, but unfortunately they have been vilified. The only argument that I hear from the Labor Party right now to shut down these other false unions, as it has labelled them, is their organisational structure, but the reality is these unions have not been able to have the same organisational structure and it will become even more difficult into the future because of the way this new legislation has been drafted.

Mr Katter: Just like they did to minor parties.

Mr DAMETTO: Yes. It seems odd, but in the last term of government the Labor Party moved the goalposts around donations and gave the union movement the ability to be able to donate large sums of money and also ensure that it could pay for things during election campaigns, and it does. It is right there and we can see it, and that is why we have Labor Party MPs tied to certain unions. That is the reality. I have even had members on that side of the House approach me when I have asked about how they voted on something and they have actually said, 'My vote is owned by the union I represent.'

Government members interjected.

Mr DAMETTO: Members opposite can ask each other that one later. This legislation will hinder the ability for workers across Queensland to have the representation they seek into the future because the fact of the matter is we will not be able to have these people represented properly next time the Labor Party government decides to attack workers' rights. I condemn the bill.



Mr SMITH (Bundaberg—ALP) (8.16 pm): Someone had to do it, but 'Solidarity forever, for the union makes us strong!' How good is it to be a member of a real union? How proud am I to be a member of the Queensland Teachers' Union and the United Workers Union, and I was also a member of the

Independent Education Union? It is great to be a member of a real union. Those opposite should try it sometime. It is liberating, let me tell them. I will start my contribution with the public briefing that occurred when the committee was briefed by the department and the Office of Industrial Relations. There were some very good questions asked. The Chief Government Whip, the member for Capalaba, asked a really good question along the lines of which organisations were asked by the inquiry to put in submissions and so forth and be a part of the review. The member for Kawana kept asking, 'Why wasn't NPAQ and TPAQ given an opportunity in that review?' The answer that kept coming back was because they are not a registered industrial organisation.

The member for Capalaba asked a very important question. The member for Capalaba asked why the Redlands Softball Association was not asked to contribute. Because it is not a registered industrial organisation. Why was the Country Women's Association not asked to contribute? Because it is not a registered industrial organisation. It is only a real union if it is registered. That is the only way that it is a real union, and that is what is so important about this bill. This bill is about the importance of being registered—

Mr Hart interjected.

Mr SMITH:—so that it can represent its members seeking representation. It was wonderful to read through the transcript. Mr Moxham made it very clear. He said—

The unregistered organisations have no rights of representation under the industrial relations framework. Currently, the nurse who has chosen to join the unregistered organisation cannot rely on that organisation to perform any representational rights on their behalf within the confines of the industrial relations framework. The members who have joined registered organisations continue to have their rights represented as they currently do under the Industrial Relations Act because registered organisations have those representational rights within the framework.

Workers cannot be represented by an unregistered association. It is an association, not a union.

We heard the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Broadwater, say that this was about protecting workers. You cannot protect workers if all you can do is provide advice. Advice is not representation. Advice is not protection. That is the absolute critical difference here. I notice that the member for Burleigh is looking at me almost dumbfounded, but that is what it is: representation through registration. It is as simple as that, member for Burleigh. That is the whole point of this bill.

Let us talk about representation and the Red Union—TPAQ and NPAQ. They cannot be there for the negotiation of the EBA. You are not a union if you cannot negotiate at an EBA. You can provide advice. What good is advice? When I was a teacher and I was a member of the IEU and we were going through our very first bargaining agreement at the school, we had a trained organiser who knew the legislation, who had done EBAs before and was part of a registered union. They did not just provide advice, they actually negotiated on behalf of the membership. That is the difference between a registered union and an association. NPAQ are basically the Redlands Softball Association, except the Redlands Softball Association are harder hitters. You cannot have someone from the Red Union legally represent members at the Industrial Commission. I know firsthand because I have spoken to the Red Union. I wanted to find out what they were all about. What they said was we cannot negotiate an EBA because the government and the QTU have signed a secret deal. Legislation is not secret. Maybe if you are blind to it it is, but it is not secret. The Red Union are misleading honest Queenslanders. Their submission is stamp-your-feet tantrum stuff. I read this and I thought it was written by a preppie, but to be fair to the preps—

Ms GRACE: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I think I am overhearing some unparliamentary language from the member for Burleigh who keeps yelling out—and I am not sure who it is directed to, maybe a lot of us on this side—the word 'corrupt', 'you're corrupt'. I do not know who he is relating that to, but I find that unparliamentary, I find it offensive and if it is aimed at me I ask that it be immediately withdrawn.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Martin): I did not hear the comments. The word 'corrupt' is unparliamentary if it is directed at an individual member. If it was said I would ask that you withdraw.

Mr HART: I withdraw.

Mr SMITH: Well done to the minister, who I know is a proud union member herself and proud of what they have done for this great state of Queensland and for all those wonderful Queenslanders who are members of real unions. Let us have a look at the submission of the stamp-your-feet union. In 'Background' in the paragraph numbered 2 'Making legislative changes that crush workers' rights' is what this bill is doing.

Mr Hart interjected.

Mr SMITH: You cannot represent workers if you are not registered. They advertise that workers should leave a registered union where they can actually be represented and therefore protected and come over to a fake union where they lose all of those rights in the Industrial Commission. That is exactly what this stamp-your-feet union is all about. It is on their sponsored ads. Ever since I started googling them their ads keep coming up on my Facebook feed. On its ads it compares itself to the Queensland Teachers' Union. They have a big tick against 'enterprise bargaining' except they cannot negotiate enterprise bargaining. How is that for misleading? That is deadset 1950s advertising. That is Joe Camel with the cigarette saying, 'Don't worry, it's healthy for you.' They cannot provide on-site support because they do not have right of entry because they are not registered.


Mr Hart interjected.

Mr SMITH: The member for Burleigh can listen to this: on their own website they state, 'No, we do not have the right to barge into a school and sit in the staff common room as they have. We could apply for that right and get it, but that is not how we operate.' They could apply to be registered, they could apply to be a real union, they could apply to represent workers, but, as they say, that is not how they operate. TPAQ advertise membership for \$442. What a waste of money that would be because they cannot even represent you.

The Queensland Council of Unions outlined in its fantastic submission to the committee the requirements for a registered organisation: registration; union rules; election rules; inquiries into elections; the conduct of elections. We heard the member for Redlands talk about the TPAQ constitution. Much like it surprises members to find out that the member for Thuringowa is a paramedic, it will come as a surprise that I am a teacher.

Mr Hart: We haven't heard that before.

Mr SMITH: No, we have not. My friends who are teachers have called up TPAQ and asked to see the rules and regulations, the voting rights and so forth and where can they find the constitution? They have to go to Brisbane. A teacher from Bundaberg has to drive all the way down to Brisbane to see a constitution of, in their words, a union. What a disgrace. Meanwhile a quick Google search of the United Workers Union shows on their website 'Important policies & Notices'. One can click to view the UWU privacy policy, membership agreement, member code of conduct, member council and national executive election, declaration—convention delegates. It goes on: the annual financial report—year ending 30 June 2021. A real union is clear, they are transparent and they represent workers. They do not want to try to crush the rights of Queensland workers by being a fake union. Let us remember TPAQ said it themselves: they could go out and get registered and get a right of entry, but that is not how they operate. They do not stand up for Queensland workers; the mighty union movement does.

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Theodore—LNP) (8.27 pm): I rise to make a contribution on the Industrial Relations and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. I have been in this chamber for about 10 years and this bill would have to be one of the most draconian, self-serving bills I have seen. It reeks of hypocrisy and self-interest. This bill is paying back the union masters of those opposite.

Mrs Gerber: Look at them. They don't like it.

Mr BOOTHMAN: I take that interjection. They do not like it. We talk about the rights of the individual. A worker has the right to join a professional organisation that will best represent them. In recent years we have seen a massive flood of people moving away from the Labor aligned unions to these independent professional associations because they want choice. All they want is choice. Many times in this chamber we have talked about individuals having rights without government interference. I was reading in the easy read guide to the Human Rights Act the section on 'Peaceful assembly and freedom of association'. These people have a right to be associated with a union which is not aligned to the Labor Party.

What is wrong with that? I have never seen the Red Union storm a government building as the CFMEU did. You can peacefully attend a rally or an event but you must not use violence. The newspaper article talked about how a security guard was pushed to the floor.

Mrs Gerber: People were scared.

Mr BOOTHMAN: I take that interjection: people were terrified.

Debate, on motion of Mr Boothman, adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

Buderim Electorate, Volunteers



Mr MICKELBERG (Buderim—LNP) (8.30 pm): Tonight I rise to recognise some of the stalwarts that make the Buderim community great. I start by acknowledging and offering my sincere appreciation, on behalf of the Buderim community, to Dr Russell Stitz who has dedicated his entire life to helping others. After five years at the helm, Russell has made the decision to step down as the chair of the hugely successful Buderim Foundation. I have previously informed the parliament about the contribution of the Buderim Foundation, which is the sixth-largest community foundation in Australia. Since it was formed in 2008, the foundation has provided more than \$1.2 million in grants to support the Buderim community. Organisations such as Riding for the Disabled, our local SES and local P&Cs are just some of the many groups that the Buderim Foundation continues to support.

I want to thank Russell for the essential role he played in growing the Buderim Foundation to what it is today. His charitable work is admirable, especially after a long career as a top Queensland surgeon. Dr Stitz is one of Australia's most prominent and highly awarded clinicians. While Russell will no longer chair the foundation, I have no doubt he will keep a strong presence in our community. On a personal note, I would like to thank Russell for his counsel and friendship since I was elected as the member for Buderim in 2017.

In the Buderim electorate we are very fortunate to have many great active community groups. I attended the annual Buderim Garden Festival over the weekend just gone. It was a true spectacle of spring, despite the rain clouds across the Sunshine Coast. I am always in awe of the blooms that our local green thumbs are able to grow and I thank them for sharing the results with the rest of our community. The hard work of volunteers and garden club members does not go unnoticed. The Buderim Garden Club was recently awarded the Outstanding Service to the Local Community Award by Garden Clubs of Australia. I cannot think of a more fitting award for those involved. There are around 750 garden clubs in Australia and it was great to see the Buderim Garden Club recognised for its long contribution to our community. That is another great example of how volunteers serve our Buderim community and make it a better place.

Lastly, I want to recognise the Buderim Library, which I am told is possibly the longest running volunteer-led library in Queensland if not Australia. Last week I joined the celebrations for the library's 135th anniversary. I want to give a special mention to the longest active member of the library, Sue Williams. She was Sue Edwards at the time she joined the library in 1956 and she still regularly borrows books, almost 70 years later. The library is run entirely by volunteers who keep the doors open for avid readers, six days a week. One hundred and thirty-five years is an incredible achievement and the library makes an incredible contribution to our community. It is nearly as old as Buderim itself. We are a proud community in Buderim thanks to the rich history being kept alive by our volunteers, just like those at the Buderim Library.

Cairns Bula 7s



Mr HEALY (Cairns—ALP) (8.33 pm): Tonight I rise to commend the 2022 Bula 7s Invitational Rugby Tournament that was held in Cairns on 14 and 15 October. The competition is a proud initiative of the Fijian Community Association of Far North Queensland and a wonderful addition to the region's sporting calendar. This is the second year the event has been hosted. It was my absolute pleasure to be in attendance and to be part of a state government that not only respects and appreciates our Fijian community but also backs it up with tangible support on the ground.

The Bula 7s tournament was first run in 2021 and, despite the uncertainty of the COVID pandemic, the inaugural competition was a success due to the energy, commitment and passion of the organisers. In the first year, players and teams came from all around Queensland as well as Victoria, New South Wales, Western Australia, the Northern Territory and the Torres Strait. This year we saw even greater representation with the added dimension of teams who fielded players with diverse cultural backgrounds from Africa, the Cook Islands, Italy, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Samoa and Tonga as well as a strong contingent of First Nations peoples. All up, 220 players participated in 20 teams.


If the strength of any community is in its diversity, we saw that power in full flight at the Bula 7s with not only superb athletic and physical sporting endeavours on display but also a fantastic sense of community pride and harmony, which help build a much needed unity and spirit within our community. To that end, the tournament features role models and ambassadors who champion youth resilience and opportunities through training and the workforce. More broadly, the Pasifika community make an

outstanding contribution to our region in many walks of life. Through sharing their wonderful culture to sport and business, the Pasifika community are positive and significant contributors to the social and economic fabric and wellbeing of the tropical north.

Additionally, the further advantages in promoting an active and healthy community are immense and cannot be underestimated as we see men and women of various ages participating for the challenge, camaraderie and fitness sport can bring. Undoubtedly, the benefits of the Bula 7s tournament reach far and wide, with the visitation of players, teams and rugby enthusiasts from across the region and nation boosting the tourism economy and delivering a sound return to all of our hotels, restaurants and various tourism products.

The Bula 7s is set to become an iconic event for the Far North and one that will tell the story of the tropical north for years to come. As I said, it is a spirited competition that brings together our different cultures, heritage and backgrounds. Most importantly, I offer my sincere congratulations to the organisers and players.

Burnett Electorate, Fire and Emergency Services

 **Mr BENNETT** (Burnett—LNP) (8.36 pm): I welcome the recent independent review into emergency services. It is a huge relief to finally see help coming our way. It was a good announcement—thank you, Minister—for rural fires, SES, Volunteer Marine Rescue volunteers and, of course, Surf Life Saving volunteers. For years we have been calling for rural fires, the VMR and SES volunteers to get more support, more funding and better communications. They have been operating on sausage-sizzle and raffle budgets and spending their weekends raising money to save lives.

The Emergency Management Levy was originally designed to fund important and necessary services for Queenslanders, but it has not been all that it could be. The levy was established in 2014 to ensure a more sustainable funding base for emergency services, but it fast became the primary source of funding for the QFES department. Despite seeing a funding increase from \$391 million to \$630 million in the last budget, the combined Volunteer Marine Rescue funding was only 1.6 per cent of that. As I said, today's announced reform is very welcome. The total revenue from EML should have gone a lot further. Even though, through the levy, the revenue has increased by hundreds of millions of dollars, there was no real new money. As it was originally set out, the LNP wanted that money to go to those organisations. The EML made up a whopping 74 per cent of the department's total operating income. The recent review was scathing, highlighting deficiencies in the current system, resulting in a complete overhaul.

I cannot thank enough our local SES and VMR volunteers and Rural Fire Brigade members who, for a long time, fought alongside us for their fair share of resources. A huge thank you must go to the Rural Fire Brigades Association Queensland General Manager, Justin Choveaux, who has been a huge advocate. Although time will not allow me to name all the rural fire brigades in my electorate—there are some 38 of them—I do want to thank Judy Ferrari from Wartburg, David Ross from Woodgate, John Dean from South Kolan and all the volunteers from across the region.

Wendy Gearside from Woodgate first responders has been advocating hard for her community and I thank her. Thanks go to Luke Harding and Kieran Galey from the Bundaberg SES for doing so much for our community. Another big thanks must go to Volunteer Marine Rescue's Rod Studholme and Graham Kingston, state manager Keith Williams and, of course, Josie Meng and the crew at VMR Round Hill. There are many more people who volunteer their time to keep us safe in the Burnett and Bundaberg region. You are our unsung heroes. On behalf of our community, I thank you for all you do.

It has been great to finally see common-sense prevail with the recent review, thanks to people power, perseverance and the dedication of our emergency services personnel. I look forward to working to ensure more resources and funding are delivered for the Burnett. There are still many issues around appliances, the chain of command and communications. I thank the minister for hearing us on all of the issues raised by stakeholders. I think we are already much better placed. I look forward to finding solutions to many of the issues.

I want to acknowledge all the wonderful emergency services personal in Bundaberg. I look forward to attending the annual Brian Prince Awards to be held on 25 November. The awards are run by Rotary. They are the Bundaberg region's very own awards and are awarded in remembrance of an outstanding Rotarian and paramedic, Brian Prince. I give a shout-out to Laurel and David Prince and Brant Duff for organising such a great event.

Sharp, Mr C; Caboolture, Small Business Network



Hon. MT RYAN (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (8.39 pm): I start by thanking the member for Burnett for the acknowledgement. He is actually a fundamentally decent member of parliament and I appreciate his acknowledgement of the government's announcement today, ultimately to uplift fire and emergency services in the state. I thank him for his support and also his acknowledgement.

I would like to pay tribute to a person who recently lost his life in the Caboolture area: Chris Sharp, a former president of Caboolture Rotary. His funeral is tomorrow. He was another fundamentally decent person. I have many good memories of my dealings with Chris Sharp, not only as president of Caboolture Rotary but also as a contributor to the Caboolture community. I have good memories not only of him hosting the toad races at the Caboolture Historical Village for the flag day, which is often held around Australia Day, but also of his efforts in respect of the Rotary Christmas raffle, which raises significant money for community initiatives and good works in the Caboolture area. I offer my condolences to his lovely wife, Cheron. I know that this is a very tough time for her, for members of Caboolture Rotary and, quite frankly, for our community because Chris was such a great community champion. I will miss him. He was a fundamentally good and decent person.

I also acknowledge some of the outstanding work that is being done in the Caboolture region through my small business network. Every couple of months I host a business coffee catch-up at the Caboolture Sports Club, and just last week we hosted the most recent opportunity for small businesses in the Caboolture and Morayfield region to catch up, to network and to share stories around how their businesses are going. Over 100 businesses attended last week's catch-up. We shared stories about how they are being proactive in our community around not only providing job opportunities for young people but also dealing with the challenges around the tight labour market that many industries are experiencing at the moment.

Those small businesses are exceptional contributors to the Caboolture-Morayfield region and I am very fortunate to have such dedicated people who not only run businesses in my local community but also have a keen focus on the future generation of not only employees but also business owners. It was very good to share with them some of the initiatives that the state government has around supporting small businesses and, of course, supporting opportunities for young people to get into the workforce. I commend all those businesses that attend my small business network and I look forward to catching up with them at the next one.

Floods, Recovery Assistance; Resilient Homes Fund




Mr McDONALD (Lockyer—LNP) (8.42 pm): I rise tonight to speak on something very important to our community, particularly those who have been flood affected. I have mentioned in this House before a couple of important programs to help those affected by floods. I will take everybody in the House back. I am talking about hundreds of families in the Lockyer Valley and Somerset region who have been affected by those floods. Some of them were affected back in 2011, 2013 and 2017. When 2011 happened they were told it was a one-in-100-year event. Now we know that is not the case.

We do have the QRIDA program, which does help out farmers. They can get up to \$75,000. We have helped a lot of people get particularly the first \$15,000 of that grant. Because of the cumulative effect of the floods and the recent rains we have had, earthmovers and contractors just cannot get on the farms to get the work done. There is an arbitrary timeline in place for the floods of 26 February. That timeline is fast running out; it is 5 December. For the floods in May the timeline is January. I have called on the minister before, and I again ask the minister, to speak with his federal counterpart and get an extension to take the stress off farmers, their families, the contractors and the workers. They just will not be able to meet that arbitrary date. The earthmovers and contractors are proposing to be doing work well into 2023. Please, give us a reasonable extension.

My next issue involves the Deputy Premier. I was heartened that on 16 October the Deputy Premier was quoted as saying that, regarding the \$741 million Resilient Homes Fund and particularly the \$350 million that is available for voluntary buyback, there have been 500 houses identified across the eight local government areas of South-East Queensland, and one of those is for the Lockyer community. I call on the Deputy Premier to fast-track these flooded homes, to give those families certainty so they can move on with their life. Many of them were those who were flooded in 2011. For financial, emotional or other logical reasons they chose not to move back then, so these families are well placed to make an early decision and take that voluntary buyback. I ask the Deputy Premier to

fast-track that decision to get those Lockyer Valley communities funded in that voluntary buyback so that those families can move on with their life and I ask the minister for agriculture to please get an extension that our farmers and the contractors can work with.

50 Shades of Pink Gala Ball; Clamp, Mr D and Mrs N

 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (8.45 pm): I rise to tell the House about a fantastic event held on Saturday night in the electorate of Logan: the 50 Shades of Pink Gala Ball at the Yarrabilba State Secondary College. It was a simply great event organised by the Belle Raisers, especially Penny Goodall. The pink ball is a fantastic event where locals are invited to dress up in their best and have a dash of pink to support the McGrath Foundation. Councillor Laurie Koranski as emcee made a lot of fun of both me and Councillor Jon Raven. Great food was provided by Thom and Ann's, with students of the college doing the service.


A special guest was Queensland cricketing legend Michael Kasprovicz, who spoke for the McGrath Foundation. He also spoke about the great work of the Jimboomba Cricket Club, which had raised record amounts for the foundation. I am proud to be a supporter of both these organisations that are doing great work in our local community. They are building in community and our school community—it is great to see the education minister here—because it was their school hall that they were in and it was simply fantastic.

On a more personal note, I would love to recognise the 70th wedding anniversary of a very special couple, Des and Noeline Clamp. They came from Collinsville, where they were working people—proud union members, proud church workers and attendees and of course proud community supporters. When they came to Brisbane they continued that, proudly supporting refugees who came into the Logan community. Of course, they built their family in Logan—fantastic people including Gail Kerr, who does such great work for Access.

Ms Pease: Gail is great.

Mr POWER: Gail is simply fantastic. Des and Noeline Clamp are real legends—a mother and father for so many. I spoke to one simply lovely African woman who said that she called Noeline 'Mum' and Des 'Dad'. Des is now in a nursing home, but the love that his extended family has for him is simply special to watch. I want to wish them, as I did on the day, a happy 70th anniversary.

Regional Queensland, Health Services

 **Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (8.48 pm): Our health system is collapsing in regional Queensland. The mandates still in place in Queensland Health have had a reverse effect and in fact are placing more people at risk. I have decided to read a letter given to me by a highly respected clinician outlining the desperate state of affairs in regional health. I table the letter.

Tabled paper: Letter, undated, from 'Regional Clinician' to the members of the Parliament, describing impacts of the Health Employment Directive No. 12/21 for Queensland Health staff in the Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health Service area [\[1762\]](#).

The letter states—

I am a clinician in your district and choose to keep my details non-specific for my own protection.

I have served as a traveling clinician and head of the department within the Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health Service for a decade.

In September 2021, the Health Employment Directive No. 12/21 for Queensland Health Staff was enforced.

The accumulated harm this directive has had, on the very people that members of parliament proudly represent, are unprecedented.

Since the Health Employment Directive, some of the longest serving and most dedicated staff in CHHHS are now terminated and those positions remain vacant.

I have been gagged by medical regulators and governing health authorities, stripped naked of my medical privacy and my career is being ripped out from underneath me.

Most recently, with the passing of the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022, the ethics, principles and pledges my colleagues and I live by are now worthless, with unfathomable future consequences to our patients and our rights.

When I began with CHHHS, the staff were ecstatic to finally have a local clinician in my field. My colleagues and I called for implementation of previously successful incentives to source clinicians specific to our department and region.

Bureaucracy hindered any form of meaningful action and the hurdles within the system have both deprived people of life saving treatments and further deteriorated health conditions.

In my local community, people express their plight with acute pain and how there is no treating clinician available in their time of need.

These people are tempting to seek basic healthcare services—which I am forbidden from being a part of due to the health employment directive.

How many people in your region have died or are living with a lesser quality of life due to delayed or complete lack of treatment?

I have committed my life to earning a degree and returning to my hometown to maintain and improve the mental health of my community.

When the system you choose to create, coercively controls, isolates and inflicts suffering on individuals—it is not only that person who suffers, but the family and community.

There are now barren services within our regional hospitals.

Unbelievable patient harm has occurred and is still occurring as a result.

The sentiments in this message are echoed by hundreds of people who I communicate with, who are too afraid to speak.

I am their voice today.

(Time expired)

Nicklin Electorate



Mr SKELTON (Nicklin—ALP) (8.51 pm): I rise to provide the House with an update on the many happenings in the Nicklin electorate. Last week I had the opportunity to support our veterans' community on the Sunshine Coast when I attended the inaugural Sunshine Coast Veterans Market. The event was coordinated by the Yandina-Eumundi RSL Sub Branch and featured over 50 stalls showcasing everything from arts and crafts, assistance dogs and animal rescues, cadets, ex-service organisations, woodworking, MMA, snake-handling demonstrations, counselling and nutrition. It was a great day out organised by Tracy Gilmartin and her team of volunteers, with another already being planned in the near future.

Not far from the RSL hall are Yandina Community Gardens, led by president Robyn Matthews. Robyn uses her passion for permaculture to inspire others to learn how to get their hands dirty for all the right reasons. They recently received a Community Sustainability Action Grant of \$43,000 which will be used to expand their already successful Food Waste Loop program. Through this program the garden partners up with local businesses to turn their food scraps into black gold—some of the best compost you will find anywhere in Queensland—helping to close the loop and keep hundreds of tonnes of waste out of landfill.

Last week I also had the honour of representing the Minister for Tourism, Innovation and Sport to congratulate runners finishing the gruelling Blackall 100. The race trail takes participants across the beautiful Blackall Range on the Sunshine Coast Hinterland, where they can experience vibrant ferny forests, subtropical rainforests, tall eucalypt trees, picturesque waterfalls and quiet hinterland hamlets. Congratulations to all of the participants who had a go—especially to Jamie Milne, who broke a Guinness World Record by completing the 100-kilometre run with 20 kilos on his back in just over 21 hours. Jamie did this to raise funds and awareness to support carers and people living with dementia.

The Woombye scout troop celebrated their centenary last Saturday with an open day at their den in Woombye. I would like to thank Henry Turner and Georgie Frost for the invite and the wonderful volunteers who dedicate their time to scouting. I especially enjoyed the historical display and tour given by Marion.

Also on Saturday I had the honour of checking out the second Bunya knockout competition. Thank you to Brad, the committee and the Nambour Crushers. This carnival is helping to create the next generation of First Nations Rugby players on the Sunshine Coast. Well done to the Coastal Blacks Rugby team for winning overall.

Finally, 28 October is Day for Daniel. I implore all, even those who normally wear blue, to don some red and support the Morcombe Foundation in their unswerving work in keeping our children safe.

Southport Electorate




Mr MOLHOEK (Southport—LNP) (8.54 pm): I am not sure if Southport is quite as multicultural as the seat of Stretton, but we are certainly coming after you. In the last census Southport was identified as one of the most multicultural census collection districts in the nation, with some 46 per cent of the

population born overseas and 28.7 per cent of households that speak a language other than English in their home. Four per cent of the population speak Mandarin; 2.5 per cent speak Korean; two per cent speak Japanese; 1.5 per cent speak Spanish; and one per cent speak Cantonese. That is probably why Southport is thriving when it comes to international education.

I rise tonight particularly to praise the work of Study Gold Coast, which is led by the Hon. Rob Borbidge AO, former Premier of Queensland, who is chair, and CEO Alfred Slogrove. During COVID international education did suffer some setbacks, but prior to COVID the Gold Coast and Southport were on track to receive more than 40,000 international students. Unfortunately, that took a little bit of a hit during COVID so there were only about 30,000 international students on the coast at that time. While we lost some, we gained a significant number from the southern states because of the excellent work of Study Gold Coast in looking after many of those students.

There are some 38 individual colleges and training institutes in Southport. We have Griffith University, which has a huge student population, but more importantly we have a number of other institutions such as: Academie College, led by David and Nanae Dolly; Barrington College, a fantastic hospitality provider; and a new college that just started last week, Demi International, led by Ann Donnarumma specialising in beauty therapy training. The Gold Coast TAFE campus in Southport specialises in allied health, hospitality and tourism and has a trade centre out at Benowa. We have Kool Kids early childhood training college, which trains not just Aussie kids but international students as well to specialise in early childhood development. That institution has recently moved into brand new premises at the top of Ferry Road hill. There is so much to be proud of, and I am very proud of the international sector in my electorate.

Vela, Mrs L; Lytton Electorate

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (8.57 pm): The bayside is an incredibly vibrant community. Sadly, we lost one of our shining lights just recently—the lovely Lenore Vela, who has contributed so much not only to the bayside but to the whole of the Queensland community. There is nothing that she did not do. She fostered over 130 children during her lifetime. Nothing was too small or too large. She worked on many projects. She was part of the Mud Army in 2011, and she worked to help other flood victims by making food and providing support in other ways. Vale, my lovely Lenore. She was a beautiful human being and she is sadly missed within our community. To her husband Robert: you are a great human being, Robert. You enabled her and supported her in all of her great pursuits.

On a happier note, Celebrate for Cause is another great organisation that has been raising funds for our bayside community for a number of years. In fact, they have raised close to \$200,000 over the last five years they have been running this wonderful event at the Royal Queensland Yacht Squadron, so thank you to RQ for their support this year. They always choose a local community organisation to raise funds for, and this year they raised funds for the Forgotten Women's Project, which is a housing co-op that provides housing for vulnerable women. They raised \$46,000 for that organisation, and \$11,000 went to the Bayside Community Fund, which I have spoken about in the House previously. It is a wonderful new community foundation we created on the bayside where we contribute funds that will support local organisations.

I am going to finish tonight with a bit of great news about the Wynnum Fringe which is going to start on 16 November. If people in the House do not have their tickets, now is the time to get them. It is a jam-packed program with so much going on over the event from 16 November to 4 December. There is something for everyone. There are community events, children's events and free events. The wonderful Marcia Hines is coming to do some disco, a bit of Velvet Rewired. Dave Hughes is coming, as is Akmal. It is a great program.

It is all on the bayside near the train line and it is affordable. I urge members to not miss out on this wonderful opportunity to support not only local artists but artists from across Australia. The wonderful thing is that both of those last two events I spoke about have been so well supported by the community. We have great community sponsors and stakeholders that are supporting both of these wonderful events. If you do not have your tickets, have a look at all of the events and buy your tickets and I will see you there. I cannot wait. I am really looking forward to the Spiegeltent at George Clayton Park. My good friend Margaret Vote is sponsoring that. I congratulate Tom Oliver and his crew on another Wynnum Fringe.

The House adjourned at 9.00 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, Linard, Lister, Lui, MacMahon, Madden, Mander, Martin, McCallum, McDonald, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Mickelberg, Miles, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Mullen, Nicholls, O'Connor, O'Rourke, Palaszcuk, Pease, Perrett, Pitt, Powell, Power, Pugh, Richards, Robinson, Rowan, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Simpson, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Watts, Weir, Whiting