



# RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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## FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

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## THURSDAY, 1 DECEMBER 2022

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 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.

### REPORT


#### Auditor-General

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I have to report that I have received from the Auditor-General Report 7: 2022-23—*Major projects 2022*. I table the report for the information of members.

*Tabled paper:* Auditor-General Report 7: 2022-23—Major projects 2022 [\[2020\]](#).

### PRIVILEGE


#### Speaker's Ruling, Referral to Ethics Committee

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, on 17 November 2021 and 26 October 2022 I ruled private members' bills introduced by the member for South Brisbane out of order. The first ruling was upheld by the House after a dissent motion by the member. Yesterday the member sought to introduce a bill that was not only a revenue bill but also an appropriation bill. That bill was not only contrary to my previous rulings but also the clear requirements of section 68 of the Constitution of Queensland 2001.

Members have a right to introduce private members' bills and have them considered. However, members do not have a right to ignore the rules and introduce bills that they know are out of order. This was not the first time or the second time but the third time the member has engaged in this activity. It wastes time. It wastes resources. It shows a blatant disrespect for the Speaker and the assembly.

As I stated yesterday, rules mean something in this House. Deliberate, continual attempts to breach the rules, or repeatedly and knowingly ignoring the rules, not only disrespects the authority of the Speaker; it interferes with the Legislative Assembly's authority and functions. In Ethics Committee report No. 118 the committee discussed the obligations and duties of members to abide by rules of the assembly and how members may be in contempt by wilfully or recklessly breaching the assembly's rules. I will be referring the member for South Brisbane's wilful conduct in disrespecting rulings to the Ethics Committee for its consideration.

#### Speaker's Ruling, Referral to Ethics Committee

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, the right to protest in a free society is an important part of our democracy. We welcome protest at the Speaker's Corner and we, as an assembly, have passed laws to facilitate and protect proper lawful protest. The protest that occurred in the assembly yesterday was not a lawful or peaceful protest. It was a protest that attempted to disrupt our primary democratic institution. The protestors attempted to shout down democracy by being the loudest voice in the chamber and disrupting the assembly's process. Protestors, located in the public gallery above members, caused fear to some members in their place of work. It is unacceptable for our members to participate, incite or encourage such protest.

With reference to the protest and disruption in the assembly yesterday, I note that standing order 266 provides for examples of contempt and states—

Without limiting the power of the House, it may treat as a contempt any of the following:

...

(26) making public statements (either orally or in writing) inciting or encouraging disruption of the Legislative Assembly by bringing the proper proceedings of the Legislative Assembly or its committees into disrepute.


After the protest yesterday, the member for Maiwar posted on his Facebook page a statement that, amongst other things, stated—

So to those who took a stand today, I just want to say: you are absolutely right.

A live stream of the protest taken by accomplices to the protest was also attached to the member's Facebook page. Accordingly, I will be referring the member for Maiwar and his Facebook post for the further consideration of the House via the Ethics Committee. I will also be asking the Ethics Committee to review the entire incident to ensure that the protestors were not aided or abetted by any members or staff. I remind members that standing order 271 now applies and members should not refer to these matters in the House.


## SPEAKER'S STATEMENTS

### Edmonds, Ms M


 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, one of our valued parliamentary attendants is retiring after 25 years of service. Margaret Edmonds began with the Parliamentary Catering Service in March 2001 and was appointed catering supervisor, cafe and bar, in October 2007. Margaret transferred to be a parliamentary attendant in January 2015. Margaret's last working day is tomorrow.

Margaret has been an enormously friendly face, helpful and someone who has really been the face of parliament over such a long time to many members. I am sure you will all join me in wishing Margaret the very best for her retirement.

### Parliament, Christmas Tree

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, tonight after the rising of the House at 6.30 pm, we will all witness the lighting of the Parliament House Christmas tree on the President's Verandah. However, the weather has not matched the merriment of the season with persistent rain yesterday and more forecast again for today. Therefore, the event must still go ahead! We shall hold the event in the Members Reading Room and on the adjoining covered verandahs from 6.30 pm. In support of the season of goodwill and joy, I shall permit for one night only the consumption of drinks in the Members Reading Room. Do not expect it to happen again. I encourage all members and staff to attend the celebration this evening.

### Visitors to Public Gallery

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I wish to acknowledge the presence in the public gallery this morning of members of the Multicultural Queensland Advisory Council, who are visiting parliament as guests of the Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs. Please make them feel welcome here today.

## PETITIONS

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

### Glenore Grove, Warrego Highway Overpass

**Mr McDonald**, from 1,246 petitioners, requesting the House to ensure the planned overpass on the Warrego Highway at Glenore Grove is built [\[2021\]](#).

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

### Youth Justice

2,610 petitioners, requesting the House to enact laws that ensure violent juvenile offenders appear before a court to determine guilt and appropriate punishment [\[2022\]](#).

### Building Belonging Report, Recommendation 39

530 petitioners, requesting the House to reject Recommendation 39 of the Queensland Human Rights Commission's Building Belonging report [\[2023\]](#).

### Body Corporate and Community Management Act

247 petitioners, requesting the House to amend section 151(3) of the Body Corporate and Community Management Act 1997 [\[2024\]](#).

### Water Charges

1,142 petitioners, requesting the House to have local councils in Queensland cease the practice of charging landowners a cost for water on top of water infrastructure charges [\[2025\]](#).

Petitions received.

## TABLED PAPER

TABLING OF DOCUMENTS (SO 32)

MINISTERIAL PAPER

The following ministerial paper was tabled by the Clerk—

Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services (Hon. Ryan)—

[2026](#) Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements—Queensland Government's Third Implementation progress report—November 2022

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

### Housing



**Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympics) (9.38 am): Following the urgent housing round table our government held with key industry stakeholders earlier this year, we convened the Queensland Housing Summit in October. This summit for the first time brought together all levels of government alongside the construction industry and the real estate industry along with planners, developers, community service organisations, homelessness advocates and community housing providers. Almost 200 people joined in person with many more attending virtually. This was an historic step forward where we were able to bring to the table meaningful solutions to the housing challenges being experienced not just in Queensland and Australia but right across the world.

Australian Retirement Trust chief executive Bernard Reilly, who attended the summit, said—

As a large investor with more than two million members across Australia, this was a great opportunity for us to participate in the discussion around ways to tackle the housing pressures being experienced around the country.

Fiona Caniglia, Executive Director of Q Shelter, said—

In just one week, the Queensland Housing Summit and the Federal Budget have changed the trajectory for housing in Queensland and Australia.

I particularly want to acknowledge federal housing minister Julie Collins, who travelled to Brisbane to attend the summit as our keynote speaker.

Queensland has recently joined the federal government and all other states and territories in forging a National Housing Accord. This landmark agreement has an ambitious target to build one million new homes over five years from 2024, a significant proportion of these to be built in Queensland. The National Housing Accord is further evidence of what we can do when we work together and what can be achieved when we have a Labor federal government that is eager to collaborate and get things done. It is in this same spirit today that I table the *Queensland Housing Summit: outcomes report*.

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Government: Report titled 'Housing Summit: Outcomes Report—November 2022' [\[2027\]](#).

The report sets out a clear, comprehensive program of action that our government will deliver, backed by \$56 million in new funding to address the critical housing challenges that many Queenslanders are facing. This funding is on top of the record housing investment that our government is already making. At the summit we committed to doubling the size of our signature Housing Investment Fund to \$2 billion, which supports an increased target of 5,600 new social and affordable homes. This takes the government's investment in social and affordable housing to a strike level of almost \$4 billion.

Today I announce additional housing funding of \$56 million, backing in over 50 actions in this outcomes report including: \$11.7 million to help approximately 2,500 Queenslanders stay in their leases to avoid homelessness; \$10 million of targeted loans and grants to people experiencing severe rental stress; a further \$10 million to deliver more temporary emergency accommodation with onsite support; and \$8.5 million in additional support for after-hours homelessness outreach services in Cairns, in Townsville, on the Sunshine Coast and Gold Coast and in Brisbane. There is a further \$5 million of immediate housing support for at-risk families and \$3.3 million in cost-of-living relief, including emergency food relief, which will be particularly important over this Christmas period.

To further drive housing supply, the State Development director-general is currently auditing state owned land and buildings to identify properties that could be repurposed for social housing or crisis accommodation—this audit is expected to be completed in three months—and the government is working with community and faith-based organisations to similarly identify properties that could be used for vulnerable Queenslanders.

In this outcomes report, my government has committed to strengthening the remit of Economic Development Queensland to drive new housing supply. Specifically, I want to see Economic Development Queensland have social housing as part of its purpose—just like the urban land development authority that was abolished by the Newman government in 2013. We will implement streamlined planning approvals for housing projects, particularly social and affordable housing, to promote increased housing supply, diversity and affordability.

Recently, a local teacher in my electorate reached out about a student in her class whose family was doing it tough and had fallen into homelessness. The community and the Inala Housing Service Centre rallied around this family. A few weeks later the teacher wrote back to my office to say, ‘My students shared the news with me that the family had secured a house.’ They were so excited to have a four-bedroom house, with mum going to pick up the keys the following day. I contacted the mum, who confirmed the news, and we all cried with relief and appreciation.

I know that many members have had exactly the same experience, and I pay credit to our electorate offices and the housing agencies that work together—not just for minutes but sometimes over days and weeks—to achieve a result for a family. People are going to their local members with issues, and we are trying to solve those issues to the best of our ability.

I stand by our government’s commitment to do what is needed to ensure every Queenslanders can have access to a safe, secure and affordable home. I want to be clear that there is more work to be done to achieve this, but we are taking this important step forward. Another imminent step will be the opening of our modular homes factory in Eagle Farm, where QBuild is using modern methods of construction to create prefabricated homes. Fingers crossed, we will be able to achieve this before Christmas. Our government has committed to exploring a prefabricated homes factory in regional Queensland as well.

**Mr Mander** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The member for Everton will cease his interjections.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Members to my right!

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Unbelievable.


**Government members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The House will come to order. Minister for Energy, Deputy Premier and Treasurer, I will deal with the member for Everton. Member for Everton, that was a loud interjection out of the blue. You are warned under the standing orders.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** We are also committed to exploring a prefabricated homes factory in regional Queensland so that we can keep building Queensland homes for Queenslanders. We will continue to work with all levels of government, industry, the private sector, our community housing providers and housing and homelessness community organisations to deliver this responsive and extensive program of work.

To oversee the implementation of the Housing and Homelessness Action Plan and the outcomes of this report—a program of almost \$4 billion—our government will establish a housing delivery board. This board will advise cabinet on the health of the housing system and identify further opportunities to turbocharge housing supply and get support to those who need it the most. I look forward to attending National Cabinet in the coming days where I will table our outcomes report to drive this important conversation at the national level. Back home in Queensland, I look forward to re-engaging with the housing round table in the first quarter of next year to check in on our progress so that we can together secure a positive housing future for all Queenslanders.

### Christmas, Giving


 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympics) (9.45 am): It is the start of Christmas month and that means it is the start of the season for giving. Every year our government gives \$400,000 to four charities to help disadvantaged Queenslanders experiencing



hardship over the festive break. I look forward to presenting \$100,000 each to the Salvation Army, UnitingCare Community, St Vincent de Paul Society and the Smith Family. I am also helping to launch the Smith Family's annual Christmas Appeal later today with this donation.


One in six children in Australia grow up in disadvantage and require extra support to actively participate in education. Poverty should not be a barrier for a child to reach their full potential, and this donation will help more children get the support they need, including access to learning and mentoring programs. The Smith Family is hoping to raise \$5.6 million nationally through their annual Christmas Appeal this year to help more than 13,330 students access education support. I implore members here today and families at home: if you can, please consider the gift of giving this Christmas. We are grateful for the service of charities which helps to ensure all Queenslanders live active, healthy, happy lives not just at Christmas but year-round.

### Mangoes

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympics) (9.46 am): It is the start of December and the official start of summer, even though it is unseasonably cold and windy today. What is in season and what says 'summer in Queensland' more than anything else is Queensland mangoes. You know that you are the Queensland Premier in December when two boxes of mangoes arrive on your desk—including this one for you, Mr Speaker.

In Bowen we have the Big Mango, and down the road Marto's Mangoes is using artificial intelligence technology to scan the fruit for internal defects. How Queensland is that? It is a special week for our mangoes. It is the 40th anniversary of the R2E2 mango—the one that I held up—not to be confused with R2-D2. It was our scientists at the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries at our Bowen research facility who in 1982 struck mouth-watering gold when they crossed a Bowen and Kent mango and created the R2E2. That breakthrough has meant that this now highly popular mango variety is enjoyed around Australia and overseas. The R2E2 mango accounts for up to 70 per cent of all mangoes exported from Australia. We back our mango producers, we back our export businesses and we back our agricultural industry because they are the backbone of this great state and provide us with delicious produce like mangoes. It just would not be Christmas without them.

### Housing

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics Infrastructure) (9.48 am): Just over a month ago, the Premier hosted an historic event that brought together almost 200 people. The Queensland Housing Summit took a collaborative approach to finding ways to ensure Queensland families have access to secure, affordable and diverse housing. Those attending were from all levels of government, community housing and service organisations and the construction, property development, real estate and finance industries. Importantly, community members with lived experience of housing stress and homelessness also participated.


The Premier has today tabled the *Queensland Housing Summit: outcomes report*. The report sets out initiatives to be led by my department including the creation of a specialist cross-government housing delivery board that will drive the implementation of the actions in the outcomes report and ensure results are achieved. We are also expanding the role of the government's land use planning and property development agency, Economic Development Queensland, and plan for a post-Olympic housing stock boost achieved through the use of Olympic village infrastructure.

My department will also continue its audit identifying government owned land and buildings that could be used for housing. Included are sites leased to other entities such as local councils that could potentially incorporate accommodation. Hundreds of potential sites have been reviewed, of which seven have been short-listed for further investigation in Southport, Varsity Lakes, Fortitude Valley, Wynnum, Bundaberg, Mango Hill and Albion, and the audit is continuing. Better planning opportunities are also being explored.

The South East Queensland Regional Plan Shaping SEQ will be reviewed to ensure it stays responsive to changing circumstances in the housing market. I hosted the first meeting of the South East Queensland Regional Planning Committee to begin the review last week. Other opportunities to be explored include the potential for introducing Queensland government priority growth areas to the planning framework to better unlock land in greenfield and infill areas. These initiatives will complement those already underway, including \$200 million in infrastructure funding, fewer restrictions on secondary dwellings and faster approvals for emergency housing. On behalf of the Queensland


government, I thank all those who participated in the Queensland Housing Summit and the earlier Queensland Housing Round Table. I look forward to putting this report into action to deliver more homes for Queenslanders.

### Housing

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (9.50 am): The challenges Queensland faces in addressing the current housing shortage are not unique, but Queensland's suite of solutions to address those challenges are unique. Only a state with a balance sheet as strong as Queensland is in a position to establish a Housing Investment Fund and then to have a balance sheet strong enough to double the size of that fund from \$1 billion to \$2 billion. Doubling the size of the fund means doubling its returns. We will now see the Housing Investment Fund deliver \$130 million each and every year—ongoing funding to create new housing stock where it is needed the most. This increased investment means we are now targeting construction of 5,600 new social and affordable homes. Measures like the Housing Investment Fund are about creating new construction pipelines. Putting more money into the existing pipeline when the supply of tradies and materials is fully consumed would not be nearly as effective.

Another uniquely Queensland approach to increasing housing supply is the partnership between the Brisbane based Australian Retirement Trust, Queensland Investment Corporation and the Brisbane Housing Co. This partnership provides a new model for the financing, development and operation of social and affordable housing around the state. Importantly, it is a model that can be scaled up when the need and opportunity arises. This partnership may have started as a uniquely Queensland idea, but it is unlikely to remain so for long. The involvement of housing super funds in increasing housing supply is one of the key elements in the Albanese government's Housing Accord. Indeed, last week the Chief Executive of industry superannuation fund HESTA, Debby Blakey, announced her fund would follow Queensland's lead with a \$240 million investment in super housing partnerships to deliver build-to-rent properties in Victoria. While other states may follow our lead elsewhere, here in Queensland it is only the Palaszczuk Labor government that has a plan to get more Queenslanders into suitable housing sooner.


### Housing

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algeria—ALP) (Minister for Communities and Housing, Minister for Digital Economy and Minister for the Arts) (9.53 am): Last month the Premier hosted the Queensland Housing Summit, bringing local, state and federal levels of government together alongside industry and sector expertise to address our shared challenges. The summit brought together almost 200 attendees including people with lived experience, frontline service providers, community housing providers, the housing and construction industry, local governments and peak bodies. With their expertise and insights, we collectively identified the immediate housing challenges facing Queenslanders and charted a path forward together. The *Queensland Housing Summit: outcomes report* tabled by the Premier today builds on the work already underway through the Housing and Homelessness Action Plan and demonstrates to Queenslanders that we are a government that listens, acts and delivers.

Delivering for Queenslanders in need is at the heart of the work of my department and we do this by working hand in glove with the housing and homelessness sector and community housing providers. Delivering on the outcomes of the Housing Summit is no exception. There are several key measures in the housing outcomes report designed to alleviate immediate pressures that will be available through my department over the coming weeks to support Queenslanders with housing assistance, including investing \$10 million to expand private rental assistance to help Queensland households in rental stress stay in their home—this means families at risk of losing a private rental home have more support through bond loans, rental grants and the rental subsidy scheme; investing over \$11 million to expand tenancy support to sustain current tenancies for vulnerable Queenslanders—this means more direct support to Queensland families to keep a roof over their head; investing \$10 million to deliver more temporary emergency accommodation with on-site support faster by using under-utilised accommodation—helping families with nowhere else to go have a place to stay while a longer term solution is found; providing a further boost of \$5 million to the Immediate Housing Response Package to enable people at risk of homelessness to remain housed—bringing the total amount to \$26 million; and providing additional support of \$8.5 million for after-hours outreach in five priority locations—this means we are linking vulnerable people who are sleeping rough with a place to stay and wraparound supports.

We are doubling emergency relief funding for vulnerable Queenslanders to \$2 million and partnering with 86 NGO providers across Queensland. This means that vulnerable families struggling with cost-of-living pressures do not have to choose between rent and other essentials. We are also investing \$1.3 million to double support for food relief services like Foodbank and OzHarvest to help keep food on the table of vulnerable Queenslanders. I look forward to continuing to work closely with the sector, community housing providers and my cabinet colleagues to deliver better housing services now and into the future. As Queenslanders we have that optimism and resilience to step up and collectively tackle the challenges ahead, and the Housing Summit outcomes report builds on our government's solid foundation to achieve just that.


## Housing

 **Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement) (9.56 am): We understand just how tight the housing market is right now. To tackle the challenge faced across Australia, we need short-, medium- and long-term solutions that deliver for Queenslanders, and I am proud to say that the Palaszczuk government has a clear road map for the future. It is focused on delivering outcomes based on thorough engagement, and we are getting on with the job and already delivering results. Following the Housing Summit the Premier announced the new QBuild Rapid Accommodation and Apprenticeship Centre at Eagle Farm, and just four weeks later this centre is manufacturing and delivering prefabricated and modular housing systems. It is bringing more industry capacity and bringing more housing supply into the market quicker. Specifically, it will deliver across two streams: one, new social housing for those Queenslanders most in need; and, two, new homes for our frontline workers across Queensland, and it is rapid. The first prototypes have already rolled off the floor and are being assembled right now, but we are not stopping there.

Today I can announce the first stage of our Government Employee Housing program that will build more than 400 new homes in four years. This is the largest investment in homes for frontline workers in this state in a generation, freeing up the market for others and putting downward pressure on rent—new homes for workers like teachers and paramedics in places like Barcaldine, freeing up 24 homes in Central Queensland, and in places like Normanton and Palm Island homes for workers like nurses, freeing up 47 homes in North Queensland.

Ramping up our rapid response, I can also announce more homegrown tradies are joining the QBuild team. Applications are open now for a further 30 young apprentices. They will join the impressive pipeline of skilled tradies we are already delivering through our other training initiatives enabled through investment by this Labor government like the renewable energy training centre at Pinkenba which will see new homes fit-out with new renewable energy resources, unlocking labour shortages, and like the plumbing industry training centre at Beenleigh which will deliver plumbing, gasfitting, fire services and mechanical services workers plus trade-ready Queenslanders for our new hydrogen industry. We are ensuring builders have the workforce to deliver new, energy efficient, affordable homes. Queenslanders can count on this Labor government to deliver more homes more quickly and futureproof the Queensland workforce to keep on building for Queensland.

## Racing Industry

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (9.59 am): There is no greater friend to Queensland racing than the Palaszczuk government.

**Ms Palaszczuk** interjected.

**Ms GRACE:** I will take that interjection from the Premier. From today, our new sustainable funding model takes effect—thank you, Treasurer. Amongst a raft of positive changes, 80 per cent of betting tax revenue will now be returned to Racing Queensland, up from 35 per cent. The benefits of our new model are already clear. Today I can advise the House that Racing Queensland will offer an additional \$31 million in prize money for events in 2023.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Ms GRACE:** It is so nice to hear them so excited about racing in Queensland—other than the member for Mermaid Beach. That is an extra \$17 million for thoroughbreds, \$9 million for greyhounds and almost \$5 million for harness racing. This funding increase is a direct result of the Palaszczuk government's betting tax changes, benefiting Queenslanders who train and race in their home state.


The reforms also allow clubs to negotiate their own sponsorship deals with Tabcorp or corporate bookmakers. It is great to see that the first cabs are off the rank, with turf clubs on the Gold Coast, Sunshine Coast, Ipswich and Toowoomba announcing a new five-year deal with Tabcorp yesterday.

I am also pleased to announce the recipients of round 5 of the Country Racing Program. Forty-eight projects at 40 clubs across rural and regional Queensland will share in \$2.6 million in grants. This will support vital infrastructure maintenance and upgrades and support good, local jobs. Projects include new stewards towers at Atherton in the electorate of Hill, at Blackall in Gregory and at Mount Isa in Traeger. There will be jockey room upgrades at Laura in Cook, at Moranbah in Burdekin, at St George in Warrego and at Stanthorpe in Southern Downs. We on this side of the House look after the Nationals because the Liberal Party has abandoned them sorely. There will be judges facility upgrades at Kumbia in Nanango and Mount Perry in Callide. Look at those opposite: they want more—and they will get more. There will be running rail improvements in Gympie. We look after the Nationals in Gympie. I have a soft spot for the member for Gympie; we will look after you in Gympie. There will also be a new water truck for Bundaberg.

To top it off, the bumper summer carnival is underway, culminating in the Magic Millions race day at the Gold Coast on 14 January with an extended 10-race card and an extra \$1.5 million in prize money. This will bring the total prize money for the day to almost \$12 million, making it the only race meet in the Southern Hemisphere to feature eight \$1 million races. That is extraordinary.

Queensland is leading the way once again, with the industry continuing to grow in Queensland thanks to the Palaszczuk government. In fact, its annual economic contribution is up 60 per cent since this government was elected to nearly \$2 billion, supporting 14,000 jobs—which, I might add, is the exact number of public servants they sacked. I encourage all members to head trackside this summer, because that is where I will be.


### Mangoes

 **Hon. ML FURNER** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities) (10.03 am): Queensland has a long and proud tradition of backing its agricultural industries to succeed, and that is certainly the case when you consider the work of the Palaszczuk Labor government. We support our farmers through drought and flood, through cyclones and through all sorts of climate impacts. We elevate their produce on the world stage through international trade missions, supported by the wonderful team at Trade and Investment Queensland. We supported them through the COVID-19 pandemic by declaring the industry essential and helping them cross borders to get their produce from paddocks to plates.

The support we provide is not always in response to a dramatic development or disaster. This week represents the 40th anniversary of the development of the R2E2 mango by researchers from the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries. It was Queensland government scientists at our Bowen research facility who made the breakthroughs that meant this now highly popular mango variety is enjoyed around Australia and in other places. In 1982 they struck mouth-watering gold by crossing a Bowen and Kent mango and creating the R2E2. Mr Speaker, no doubt you will enjoy the mango the Premier tabled in the House today. Now, 40 years later, not only has the fruit become a summer staple across Australia but also it is popular with international exports. R2E2 has accounted for up to 70 per cent of all mangoes exported from Australia. The mango has gained wide acceptance throughout all mango-growing regions and is the third most popular variety grown in Australia.

The impact of this kind of research is the reason why in the state budget we have committed \$140 million in research and extension funding to help our farmers become even more successful, supporting thousands of good jobs across the state. The Palaszczuk government is the best friend of Queensland farmers, and that is why I am known as the farmer's friend.

### World AIDS Day; Parliament, Conventions

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (10.05 am): Today, 1 December, is World AIDS Day. As Minister for Health, it is a day I am proud to commemorate. World AIDS Day is recognised in over 190 countries and has been recognised in this state since 1992. Several candlelight vigils will be held across the state tonight, including in Brisbane at the New Farm Park Rotunda—I am hoping, weather permitting—to raise awareness about HIV and AIDS.

In Queensland, evidence demonstrates the increasing proportion of people newly diagnosed with HIV achieving viral suppression within six months due to effective treatment and monitoring, regardless of where they live. This success is also reflected in the decrease of new HIV diagnoses, down from a

peak of 246 in 2014 to just 124 last year. While this is testament to the success of our collective response to HIV and AIDS, we must remain vigilant in the fact that HIV is still very much an important public health issue in this country. In fact, HIV remains a priority in the Queensland government's Sexual Health Framework, released in January this year. Supporting this framework are a series of action plans including the Queensland HIV Action Plan, which will be updated in early 2023 following the launch of the ninth National HIV Strategy 2023-2030.

We have made significant progress in the five priority action areas of the Queensland HIV Action Plan including across prevention, testing, treatment, addressing both stigma and discrimination, and research and surveillance. We have rallied together across government, non-government and community controlled health services to achieve outcomes. We have increased access to medication which significantly reduces a person's risk of HIV. We have implemented peer-led education and awareness-raising programs as well as point-of-care testing programs.

All of these positive contributions are the result of our actions, so I stand here today to further our commitment to people living with HIV and AIDS. Today I will join Brisbane's deputy mayor, Krista Adams, in signing the Paris Declaration right here at Parliament House. Today, Brisbane and the state of Queensland will join the Fast-Track Cities network of more than 350 cities across the world committed to end the AIDS epidemic by 2030. This Fast-Track strategy aims to achieve 95-95-95 HIV targets to ensure that 95 per cent of people living with HIV will know their status, 95 per cent of all people living with HIV will receive sustained antiretroviral treatment and 95 per cent of all people living with HIV on antiretroviral treatment will maintain viral suppression. We are almost there. In fact, of the estimated 5,850 people living with HIV in Queensland last year, 91 per cent know their HIV status. Of these, 91 per cent were on antiretroviral therapy and 93 per cent of these people were maintaining a suppressed viral load. These figures are a testament to Queensland's response to HIV and AIDS so far, and I am excited to see what we can achieve together by 2030.

Mr Speaker, you mentioned at the start of today the importance of members of this chamber following the rules of this parliament. I also want to reflect on the importance of following convention in this parliament. That includes the convention of not reflecting on the absence of a member from the chamber. I feel the need to raise this because the Manager of Opposition Business yesterday afternoon put out a social media post that stated—

Labor's vote just went from 47 to 48. What changed? The Leader of the House @YvetteDAth finally made it to the house on time. The person charged with setting their standard didn't not show up in time for a vote. Talk about another stumble in a very bad year.

The convention to not reflect on someone's absence is there for a reason. Whether government or non-government members, members could be absent because they are attending a very special event or function that requires their attendance. They could be attending a funeral. They could be sick or, as in my case, they could be undertaking a medical procedure as a follow-up from their most recent skin cancer check.

**Opposition members** interjected.


**Mr SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mrs D'ATH:** I should not need to stand in this chamber and explain my absence. I think the response of those opposite right now is atrocious. The convention is there for a reason and everybody should respect that, especially the Manager of Opposition Business. I ask and remind members to follow that convention.

**Mr Dick:** Why don't you apologise?

**Mr SPEAKER:** Thank you, Treasurer. You will direct your comments through the chair or you will be warned.

### Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce, Report

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (10.10 am): We are currently in the middle of the 16 days of activism against gender-based violence, so today I am proud to formally table the Queensland government's response to the landmark report of the independent Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce, *Hear her voice—report two: women and girls' experiences across the criminal justice system*.

*Tabled paper:* Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce report titled 'Hear her voice—Report 2: Women and girls' experiences across the criminal justice system', government response [\[2028\]](#).

In developing its second report, the task force received hundreds of submissions from victim-survivors of sexual assault. I want to again thank each and every one of them for their contribution to this vital reform. Report No. 2 makes 188 recommendations for government to do better by putting victims at the centre of responses and by strengthening our criminal justice system. Last week the government released its response to report No. 2, including a significant investment of \$225 million over five years to implement responses and build a long-term plan to improve women's and girls' experience of the criminal justice system.


**Mr SPEAKER:** I am sorry, Minister. Members from both sides will cease their quarrelling across the chamber or I will start warning members. If you want to have a conversation then take it outside.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** This brings our government's total investment to eliminate domestic, family and sexual violence to over \$1.3 billion since 2015. Key initiatives of the response include establishing a victims' commissioner; court IT upgrades in 81 locations to make it easier for victims to give video evidence; piloting a victims' advocate service in key locations and developing the most appropriate model for a statewide victim advocate service; a community education campaign to improve awareness and understanding about sexual violence, including consent; additional resources for the DPP to support victims through the system; and enhancing our sexual assault response teams and implementing an integrated model in two new locations. We will also progress legislative amendments as a priority to move to an affirmative model of consent to better reflect community expectations.

I am also very proud that we will progress amendments to recognise stealthing as rape and reform the laws of evidence and procedure as they apply to sexual offences. Stealthing, the removal of a condom without consent, is not only a breach of trust but also fundamentally violates the consent given for a sexual act. It is rape and it should be recognised as such.

These reforms have been championed by advocates such as Chanel Contos, who started the Teach Us Consent movement to push for better consent education in schools and break down the cultural attitudes that underpin sexual violence. Tens of thousands of people have signed Chanel's petition and, in 2021, she was awarded the Young People's Human Rights Medal at the Australian Human Rights Awards. I am so pleased that today Chanel joins us in the Queensland parliament to support our reforms. I thank her for her tireless advocacy. Because of people such as Chanel, Australia is becoming a safer and more respectful place for women and girls.

### Small Business, Grants

 **Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development) (10.14 am): Today I am very excited to announce that the Palaszczuk government delivers for small businesses another two—yes, two—rounds of grants from our Big Plans for Small Business program from the fourth round of our Business Growth Fund and from the second round of our Business Boost Fund, together supporting established businesses from Far North Queensland to the Gold Coast and west of Julia Creek.

The Business Growth Fund, worth a combined total of \$2 million, delivers grants of up to \$50,000 for businesses to purchase specialised equipment that will help them accelerate growth, increase production and expand their workforce with the aim of supporting them to grow from small- to medium-sized businesses. For instance, in the electorate of Nicklin, Diablo Co. distillery won a grant to purchase a bottling machine that will dramatically increase volume, particularly for its very popular alcoholic ginger beer. In Bundaberg, manufacturer Bluestream Group will now be able to commission a router with an oscillating knife attachment to help remove the bottleneck in their production line. How good is that? Of course, I know the members for both of those electorates are very excited to know about that.


The Business Boost Fund, worth a combined total of \$2.5 million, gives small business grants of up to \$15,000 to help businesses go to the next level in their business. With these latest grants, South-East Queensland and regional businesses are taking their achievements to new heights, boosting their turnovers, growing their workforces and improving their resilience. For instance, the Vision Splendid Outback Film Festival in Winton will receive just over \$11,000 to create a new website that includes a ticketing platform and film directory with online streaming options. I am sure the member for Gregory will be very happy to know that. In the electorate of South Brisbane, Call Social, a paid ads agency working with female-first brands across Australia, will receive financial support aimed at improving employee retention.

I announce these grants at the same time that applications are open for another program from our Big Plans for Small Business suite, which is our very popular \$5,000 Business Basics Grant Program. I encourage all members to alert their local small businesses to this program on the Business

Queensland website. The Palaszczuk government puts support for small business as one of the key pillars of our economic recovery plan. Small businesses employ almost 50 per cent of all private sector employees in the state and are the heart and soul of our local communities.

Since the beginning of COVID, we have invested over \$2.5 billion in small business support to help businesses to both survive the pandemic and to grow and thrive. We tailor our support for small business on the basis of ongoing engagement and consultation with small businesses right across Queensland and with our critical small business stakeholders. I thank them for that excellent working relationship. In Queensland we are committed to good jobs, better services and a great lifestyle. These programs will help to achieve that goal.


## ABSENCE OF MINISTER

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (10.17 am): I advise the House that the Minister for Tourism, Innovation and Sport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics and Paralympics Sport and Engagement will be absent from question time and the House today and tomorrow due to illness. I therefore advise the House that the Premier will take questions regarding Minister Hinchliffe's portfolio during question time for the remainder of the week.

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

**Mr SPEAKER:** Members, today question time will conclude at 11.17 am.

### Forensic and Scientific Services

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (10.17 am): My question is to the Minister for Health. Today is one year since the opposition asked its first question on the DNA lab and six months since the minister said that the opposition was politicking on the issue. Today the opposition is calling for a new reconstituted commission of inquiry to look at individual cases. Will the minister commit to a new inquiry so that victims of the DNA debacle get the justice they deserve?

**Mrs D'ATH:** I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question. They said they wanted a commission of inquiry; we have a commission of inquiry. Now they want a different review—a different inquiry. We have one of the most respected retired judges in this state overseeing a commission of inquiry. The work has already been done in relation to the interim report, looking at samples within a certain time line that fell within the range that was addressed in that report and the actual statements that were provided to the court. We have a cross-agency working group—across Attorney-General, QPS and Health—working on the interim report and also ongoing work as—

**Mr PERRETT:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. There is no time on the clock.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Thank you. I appreciate that, member for Gympie.

**Mrs D'ATH:** That working group will be ongoing as we await the report. There has been much information gained through the evidence being put forward and the work we are already doing with the commission of inquiry as we await the release of that report in a matter of days. In relation to an inquiry to work through the individual cases, that work has already commenced. We are already doing that in partnership with QPS.

**Mr Bleijie:** That's not what the victims are telling us.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Kawana, the Minister for Health is being responsive, as I am hearing her answer. I would like you to hear it as well.

**Mrs D'ATH:** That work is already ongoing. First, you have to identify those samples. Then they need to be prioritised as far as ongoing cases, past cases, matters that had not progressed to charges or to any prosecutions. Then it needs to be determined whether those tests need to be done or whether there were other samples that related to that case such that it is not necessary to go back to that particular sample.

Once those samples have been identified, we can take those samples to further concentration to see if there is full or partial DNA identified. Once we have done that, we can be working with the individual victims of those cases about how we progress that. There will be work done with the legal stakeholders and with the victim support groups to ensure they are aware of what will come of that process, but we are at an early stage. We do not even have the complete report yet. Many recommendations may come out of this commission of inquiry that will help us frame that work, but to suggest that we should be setting up another inquiry—

*(Time expired)*

### Forensic and Scientific Services

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** My question is to the Minister for Health. It is 72 days since the health minister said that she hoped to know within a month how many samples had been impacted by the DNA testing debacle. For the sake of victims, can the minister confirm how many cases have been impacted, or will they be forced to continue to wait?

**Mrs D'ATH:** I thank the member for his question. Those victims are well aware that there is a commission of inquiry going on that will help identify what we can be doing to ensure the public has full confidence and trust in how we fulfil our obligations around forensic services going forward. In relation to the interim report—

**Mr Crisafulli** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Leader of the Opposition, you are consistently interrupting the minister. You are cautioned.

**Mrs D'ATH:** I can advise that, in relation to the interim report recommendations around identifying the statements, there have been 1,840 statements that contained a finding by FSS that there was either no DNA or insufficient DNA to progress. All of those statements have been identified. We have been working with stakeholders about the format in which those new statements should be issued. I understand that there is agreement on what those will contain. There has been work done with the scientists and counsel working with the commission of inquiry to ensure that what we are doing satisfies the recommendations out of that report. Statements will start being replaced or issued quite shortly. That work has been done. We are getting on with that. We have committed to seeing this commission of inquiry through, getting the report and acting on these recommendations to ensure the public does have trust and confidence in our FSS going forward.

### Energy Industry

**Mr HARPER:** Good morning. My question is to the Premier and Minister for the Olympics. Will the Premier update the House on Queensland's contribution to the nation as an energy powerhouse?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the member for Thuringowa and wish him a good morning and a merry Christmas. Happy Mango Day as well from North Queensland. As we know, our energy is being transformed. I was delighted to join the Deputy Premier, the member, Minister Stewart and the Minister for Energy in Townsville recently. We were talking about Fortescue and Windlab really power-boosting that North Queensland renewable energy zone. It is absolutely massive. It is really driving the transformation of our energy. North Queensland will benefit immensely, with thousands of jobs. It is a very exciting time to be in North Queensland. I know that North Queenslanders see the potential and the opportunity there.

It would be remiss of me today not to talk about the energy issues that are occupying the national debate at the moment. As we know, there needs to be more supply of gas. That is an interim measure that needs to happen ASAP. We know that Queensland has an abundance of gas. There is more gas ready to develop in the Bowen Basin—13,000 petajoules—and in the Galilee Basin. What the federal government should consider, in conjunction with the New South Wales and Victorian governments, is building a pipeline. That would be one of the easiest solutions to releasing more supply. If the issue is supply of energy, for gas to get to those southern states, there is a solution that I am putting on the table that is readily available. They would be able to pay for that pipeline and we would release that extra domestic gas. That is an option that is very conceivable.

Let me state categorically in this House again today that, in relation to our coal-fired power generators, we will not jeopardise the direct household benefits that we are able to give Queenslanders that ease cost-of-living pressures. We can do that because our assets are in public hands. Over the past four years we have been recognising cost-of-living pressures. This did not just happen overnight. The opposition might have suddenly realised this week that cost of living is an issue, but we knew that four years ago. Just this quarter, every Queenslanders is receiving \$175 off their electricity bill.

### Forensic and Scientific Services

**Ms CAMM:** My question is to the Minister for Health. The opposition has been contacted by a sexual assault victim who was initially told there was no DNA, then told there was DNA, then told DNA did not match and is now not being given access to her own forensic report. On calling the hotline, she was given no help. Given the experience of this rape survivor, will the minister commit to a new, reconstituted commission of inquiry to look at individual cases?



**Mrs D'ATH:** I thank the member for her question. We deliberately made sure when we established this commission of inquiry to have extremely broad terms of reference to allow the commissioner to look at all aspects of the forensic services system—how it was operating, any failings, systemic failings and the impact that can have in relation to those findings. As we have seen, the commissioner has taken that brief very seriously by already releasing an interim report and recommendations around the statements issued to courts. We have given a commitment to look at all of those—not just the ones with statements but all of those within that time frame of 2018 to 2022—that fall within that range that were not further tested or did not go on to concentration. We are working with QPS on that. To suggest that another commission of inquiry be set up before the current commission of inquiry even finishes its work and delivers recommendations is just extraordinary. This is just quite extraordinary.

**An opposition member** interjected.

**Mrs D'ATH:** I will take that interjection. That is an appalling statement to make and it is a reflection on the work being done under the commission of inquiry that is currently ongoing to say that victims are not being given a say or a voice in this process.

**Mrs Frecklington** interjected.

**Ms Camm** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Nanango. Member for Whitsunday, you have asked the question; please listen to the answer.

**Mrs D'ATH:** Queensland Health, the Attorney-General's department and the Queensland Police Service are working through these processes and working with external stakeholders to ensure that we provide support going forward, provide information about the pathways that will be available and how these cases are going to be assessed. It is early days. We do not have the report or the recommendations yet. We are not going to establish a commission of inquiry on top of a commission of inquiry when we are still waiting on the report. We will take those recommendations very seriously because we want to ensure particularly victims have confidence and trust in our forensic services system.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Pine Rivers, member for Whitsunday and member for Nanango, you are all warned under the standing orders. If you wish to have a conversation, take it outside. I say to members that when a minister is being responsive to the question asked you know that I have said consistently that I take a dim view of people not allowing that answer to be given in full.

## Housing

**Ms McMILLAN:** My question is of the Premier and Minister for the Olympics. Will the Premier update the House on actions out of the Housing Summit, and are there any alternative approaches?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the member for the question. Today is a very important day because we tabled the outcomes report of the very important Housing Summit we held. I thank everybody who participated. I thank my ministers who attended as well as local members who were representative of the government. Opposition members were there as well. As I said, in the first quarter of next year we will have an update on the round table we held. I think it is very important to continue that engagement.

There has been no other government that has put so much money into housing. Our Labor government is absolutely committed to tackling this issue. We recognise that this issue is not just a local issue, not just a regional issue, not just a state issue; it is a national issue. It is enlightening to see that housing ministers from around Australia can now actually get together to talk about housing, form an accord and talk about the building of houses that is going to happen with an injection of money into the states and territories.

It was appalling that the member for Everton was interjecting before when I was talking about a QBuild centre which is making prefabricated homes for our workers in regional and remote parts of our state. This is about fast-tracking homes to get them to remote places. Secondly, it is what the councils have been talking to us about because it frees up the housing supply in their local communities for other people who are living there. It is absolutely appalling that the member for Everton rejected this idea outright. He should be embracing every idea that comes forward.

I back those local QBuild workers working there and the apprentices learning the trade, making the prefabricated homes in Queensland for our frontline workers. On that side of the House we know their attitude when it comes to frontline workers—sacking. That is their record. That is the record they stand on. They have no credibility when it comes to that.

In today's Housing Summit outcomes report there is \$56 million in immediate funding, including cost-of-living relief for food and to ease the rental pressures that families are facing. I thank everybody who attended the summit. For once it involved people sitting down together and collaborating—recognising that we cannot solve all of these issues on our own. We have to work together. It is a bit like the Nationals and Liberals—you have to work together.

*(Time expired)*

### Minister for Health and Ambulance Services

**Ms BATES:** My question is to the Minister for Health. Can the minister categorically confirm that her furniture was being stored at the same complex at the same time it was being paid for by taxpayers for a vaccination hub?

**Mrs D'ATH:** I thank the member for her question. Let me be very clear that where the furniture was stored was not part of the lease arrangements with the hospital and health service. I am more than happy to state that it was on the same site where there was personal storage made available that was not part of the lease arrangements and was not—

**Mr Bleijie:** Hope not.

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

**Mrs D'ATH:** I will take that interjection because their question inferred that. Their question inferred that it was being paid for by taxpayers. It is completely inaccurate that that statement is made. I am not surprised that the member would ask a question like that. It is not under the lease arrangements—

**Mr Crisafulli** interjected.

**Mrs D'ATH:** The Leader of the Opposition is just a fool; he really is. Those on the other side are scraping the bottom of the barrel. As I said, the director-general has put a statement out making it very clear that I have had no involvement—

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Sorry, Minister. Member for Logan, member for Pumicestone and member for Oodgeroo, you are all warned under the standing orders. The Leader of the Opposition will cease his interjections or he will be warned.

**Mrs D'ATH:** I addressed this at length yesterday. The fact is that I had no involvement in the selection of this site—the negotiations. I had no representations made to me or on my behalf. I had no involvement in any of the arrangements around the financial payments. This particular storage area was not part of the leased area.

### Housing

**Mr WHITING:** My question is of the Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics Infrastructure. Can the Deputy Premier update the House on what the Palaszczuk government is doing to ease housing pressures across the state, and is the Deputy Premier aware of any alternative approaches to disaster recovery?

**Mr Dick:** Something that matters.

**Dr MILES:** I thank the member for Bancroft for his question. In doing so, I take the interjection from the Treasurer. It is indeed a question on something that matters. The member for Bancroft and I represent neighbouring communities. We are pleased to work closely, along with all of the other Labor members in the Moreton Bay area—there are a lot of us—with the Moreton Bay Regional Council and Mayor Peter Flannery.

Our communities are doing much of the hard work of delivering the additional housing supply that South-East Queensland needs. We are working closely with the council to make sure that the infrastructure keeps pace with that additional housing. Delivering the housing and infrastructure we need to manage the sheer population growth happening in the south-east right now while we also maintain Queensland's fantastic lifestyle takes leadership. The decisions that leaders make have ramifications.

I know those opposite resent being held to account for the decisions that they make in this place, but for some of those decisions the implications take time to be felt. Take, for example, the issue of housing supply. It can take 10 years for decisions that we make in this place to impact housing supply—like, for example, the LNP's dismantling of the Urban Land Development Authority, created explicitly out of the Queensland housing affordability strategy.

We have heard this week about 'Bleijie-ja vu'. This is 'Bleijie-ja vu' all over again. In the 2011 election campaign Campbell Newman said—

If I was elected premier, we will curtail this organisation ...

We need to empower local government to do the planning work ...

How did that work out? He announced that at the Property Council breakfast. At the same Property Council breakfast they said 'it would be irresponsible to wind back the powers of the ULDA'. They said they would do it on day one and they did it on day one. Let's look at what they deleted from the ULDA's purposes—

- (a) the availability of land for urban purposes;
- (b) the provision of a range of housing options ...
- (c) the provision of infrastructure for urban purposes;
- (d) planning principles that give effect to ecological sustainability ...

**Government members** interjected.

**Dr MILES:** Wait for it—

- (e) the provision of an ongoing availability of affordable housing options for low to moderate income households.

We heard at the Housing Summit that that was one of the causes of low affordability and we will fix it.

*(Time expired)*

### **Metro North Hospital and Health Service, Contract Disclosure Log**

**Mr MICKELBERG:** My question is to the Minister for Health. Why is the Metro North HHS contract disclosure log for 2021-22 not on the open data portal while the contract disclosure log for 2022-23 is?

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member, I ask you to repeat that question because I am not sure I understood the question.

**Mr MICKELBERG:** My question is to the Minister for Health. Why is the Metro North HHS contract disclosure log for the period 2021-22 not on the open data portal while the contract disclosure log for the following financial year 2022-23 is?

**Mrs D'ATH:** I am happy to follow up for the member with the HHS as to why they have not got that open log there. I do not know that answer because that is a matter for the hospital and health service as far as their open data log is concerned. If the member wants to write to me, I am happy to follow that up with the HHS for him.

**Honourable members** interjected.

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

**Mr Brown** interjected.

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

**An honourable member** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** You are welcome.

### **Energy and Jobs Plan**

**Mrs McMAHON:** My question is to the Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment. Will the Treasurer update the House on how the Palaszczuk government is delivering its plan for Queensland's renewable energy future and is the Treasurer aware of any alternative approaches?

**Mr DICK:** I thank the member for Macalister for her question because the member for Macalister knows that our government's Energy and Jobs Plan sets a clear path for where we want Queensland to go in the future.

**Mr Hart:** You want electricity prices to go up? Seriously?

**Mr DICK:** We believe in renewable power, member for Burleigh, just as we believe in public transport. That is why I was so pleased to join the Premier and my other ministerial and parliamentary colleagues at the opening of Australia's first Hydrogen Centre of Excellence in Beenleigh—and a great day it was, too. It delivers on the commitments we made since we came to office to build skills, to develop a renewable hydrogen industry and to chart a future—a future lit up by renewable energy.

We were very pleased to develop that facility built around the smallest molecule in existence, and that is hydrogen. There is only one thing that is smaller, and that is the LNP's policy platform. We are now more than halfway through this parliamentary term. Queenslanders know the plans and policies of our government: our nation-leading COVID-19 Economic Recovery Plan that is delivering for Queenslanders; our Good People Good Jobs: Queensland Workforce Strategy, which is building a pathway for better jobs and skills; our Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan; our Queensland Health and Hospitals Plan; and today our *Queensland Housing Summit: outcomes report*.

Our plans are clear for the people of Queensland, including our budget—good jobs, better services and protecting Queensland's great lifestyle. The current Leader of the Opposition leaves Queenslanders with absolutely no idea about what he stands for. All he does is whinge and whine and complain to avoid declaring a position. We saw it in the House on Tuesday when the Leader of the Opposition used every meaningless word he could to avoid stating publicly whether he supported—

**Mr Crisafulli** interjected.

**Mr DICK:**—I am coming to that, Leader of the Opposition—a Voice to Parliament or not. He still has not stood up in front of the media. He still has not declared publicly yes or no. Do you support a Voice or not?

**Mr SPEAKER:** Direct your comments through the chair.

**Mr DICK:** Does he have the courage to overturn the LNP State Council's decision? Does he have the courage to stand up to David Littleproud, another LNP member of his party in this state? What do the voters in Chatsworth and Clayfield and Moggill and the voters on the Sunshine Coast and the Gold Coast—their heartland—think about his lack of position on the Voice to Parliament? He is being judged—no plans, no idea, no vision. Certainly his position today is no to the Voice unless he says otherwise.

*(Time expired)*

### Minister for Health and Ambulance Services

**Ms SIMPSON:** My question is to the Premier. Despite what the health minister said yesterday, the Ministerial Code of Conduct says a minister must notify the Premier about any conflict of interest with their ministerial responsibilities and what action they will take to deal with it. When did the health minister notify the Premier about the storage conflict and did the minister provide the required conflict of interest management plan?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Let's explain to the member for Maroochydore about cabinet.

**Dr Miles:** She's never been there!

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I am not going to comment on that. I am not commenting on that, Deputy Premier. You may say that but I am not commenting on that. What happens is that at cabinet you ask: are there any conflicts of interest? Guess what: this did not come to cabinet because it was a decision of the department. We know those opposite have not experienced time in cabinet.

**Dr Miles:** They had time enough.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** That is right and we saw the destruction they did to Queensland. If there is no decision made in cabinet, you do not have to declare a conflict.

**Mr Janetzki** interjected.

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

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I am happy to give the opposition a little lecture here today on how cabinet operates. I have been involved in cabinet decisions now for over a decade and chair of cabinet for over seven years, so I do have some experience to give to the member for Maroochydore about how cabinet operates. There we go: there was no conflict declared because it was not a decision of the cabinet.

**Mr Crisafulli** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The Leader of the Opposition will cease his interjections. You are warned under the standing orders. Members, I have issued enough warnings today. Please allow the minister responding to answer the question.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Whilst I am on my feet, let me say this: those opposite continue to smear members of the public and statutory office holders. The member for Kawana attacked the new Integrity Commissioner the other day in this House—disgraceful. Those opposite campaigned for months about the laptops. There has been no apology. Now they come in here and they make up stuff about the health minister.

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

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** It is disgraceful and it is wrong and it is a new low in politics.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Premier, I ask you to resume your seat. What is your point of order?

**Mr POWELL:** My point of order is on relevance under standing order 118(b). The question was about the Ministerial Code of Conduct, not the Cabinet Handbook and definitely not what the Premier is talking about.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Premier, I understand you have responded to the question. Do you have anything further to add?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** The final thing I want to say is that for three or four months we were attacked relentlessly about laptops. There were personal attacks against my office, against me and against the government. The CCC found the allegations absolutely baseless, and to this day there has been no apology.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Premier, can I give you some guidance: I will ask you to come back—you have finished? Thank you.

### Youth, Jobs

**Mr SMITH:** My question is of the Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing. Can the minister please advise the House on what the Palaszczuk government is doing to support young workers entering the workforce for the first time and is the minister aware of any alternative approaches?

**Ms GRACE:** I thank the member for Bundaberg. As a former teacher, he is passionate about this. When students leave school, as we know, they enter the real world—they enter the workforce. The school holidays have started for some and they are coming soon for others. To add to the excitement, lots of young people are starting their first jobs and heading out to the world of work for the first time. They will know what this government stands for in protecting them.

We have made a number of amendments in this House and a number of changes that were all opposed by those opposite, who stand for nothing but whingeing, mudslinging and raising accusations. Even when they are found to be incorrect and totally baseless, they still continue to come into this House and raise those same issues. There are no morals opposite about doing the decent, ethical thing. It is nothing but whingeing, whining, accusations and mudslinging. Do you know what, Mr Speaker? The fish rots from the head. It is the Leader of the Opposition who allows all of that to happen. The Leader of the Opposition is the one writing the questions. The Leader of the Opposition is the one giving them those questions, and half the time we cannot even understand what they are saying to those who are answering the questions. The Leader of the Opposition knows that he stands for absolutely nothing.

We brought in wage theft legislation to protect those young workers; they voted against it. We brought in changes to the Industrial Relations Act to protect them against harassment, and guess what? They voted against it. We brought in health and safety legislation to make sure that health and safety is paramount for these young people who are very vulnerable, and at every stage all we get from them is whingeing, whining and negativity. There is nothing positive at all. They tried that in Victoria. They come in here all the time and they are taking their lessons, the whole lot of them over there, from the Leader of the Opposition—

**Mrs Gerber** interjected.

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

**Ms GRACE:**—and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. They did that in Victoria and look what happened to them. I feel sorry for the backbench that has to do the work of the Leader of the Opposition and listen to the member for Kawana saying the same things over and over again. It is like groundhog day. Give us a break, please, and change your tactics.

### Minister for Health and Ambulance Services

**Mr BLEIJIE:** My question is to the Premier. Is the Premier planning to reshuffle her cabinet and remove the health minister?

**Honourable members** interjected.

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

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the member for Kawana for the question. The Minister for Health will remain the Minister for Health. Let me say that there needs to be a reshuffle over there. The first one to go should be the Leader of the Opposition. Bring back the member for Southport and reinstate the member for Clayfield. At least he understands policy. At least he produced some policies. You can bring back the member for Nanango. I know she is a National, but at least she produced some policies. They were not very good policies—the Bruce Highway and the failed Bradfield scheme—but there were some ideas there.

**Mr Watts** interjected.

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

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I concur with what Minister Grace was saying. All you hear from the member for Kawana is this droning day in, day out. There is no substance. All you get from the Leader of the Opposition is whingeing and whining. Whinge, whinge, whinge. When I go out in public they say to me, 'That man just whinges all the time.' Whingeing and complaining—

**Ms Grace:** An unhealthy opposition to Jackie Trad too.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** That is right. Then we have the member for Everton, who does not want any jobs for apprentices or young people building prefabricated homes. He does not want jobs for apprentices or young people.

**Dr Miles:** Make housing more expensive.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** That is right. Then you have—wait for it—no-one from the opposition can say whether they support the Voice or not—not one person. Show some leadership! When I was leader of the opposition, if I had not produced policies I would have been on the front page of the *Courier-Mail*. What about this man over here? Nothing. He is not fit to be the leader—

**Mr Watts** interjected.

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

**Ms PALASZCZUK:**—after two years. Show me your policies. Show me a policy. Show the public a policy. There is absolutely nothing there. If I was the member for Burleigh or the member for Warrego or the member for Mermaid Beach I would be asking, 'What's going on over here?' Have a shadow cabinet meeting—

*(Time expired)*

### Housing

**Mr SULLIVAN:** My question is of the Minister for Communities and Housing, Minister for Digital Economy and Minister for the Arts. Can the minister outline the Palaszczuk government's investment in social and affordable housing and advise the House of any other approaches the minister is aware of?

**Ms ENOCH:** I thank the member for Stafford for the question. The member for Stafford and I recently officially opened a new complex in his electorate with a \$3.2 million investment to see 10 new social homes. We met some fantastic residents. Of course, that is happening right across Queensland. We have delivered over 4,000 new social homes since we came to office, completing new builds in Toowoomba, Ipswich, Logan, Gold Coast, Mackay, Nambour, Townsville, Rocky and many other locations, and we have commenced even more. We exceeded our target last financial year to 832 new commencements. I can say that we have almost commenced about 5,000 new social homes since we came to office in 2015. They are across the state again in places like Townsville, Caboolture, Cairns, Bundaberg, Nerang, Holland Park, Eight Mile Plains and multiple locations. There is more to come with our record investment of nearly \$4 billion, including the doubling of our Housing Investment Fund to \$2 billion. This will see thousands more social and affordable homes being commenced in the next few years.

Today we saw the outcomes report from the Housing Summit provide even more insight into the work we can be doing together to ensure there are more solutions right across the housing sector. We do that because we have a very strong plan. We have our Housing and Homelessness Action Plan and

our strategy, and we have the plan that has come from the outcomes report that really binds all of government—and obviously those from across the sector—to support outcomes going forward. What are the plans from the LNP? Apparently, there is a three-point plan that has come from the opposition. The member for Everton has somehow scratched together three points, maybe on the back of a coaster somewhere in some imaginary shadow cabinet meeting that happened somewhere, I do not know—

**Mr Furner:** They met in a telephone box.

**Ms ENOCH:** Somewhere. It was very small. This three-point plan is pretty flimsy, I have to say. There is no mention—absolutely zero mention—of homelessness supports or prevention, nothing on crisis accommodation for women and children escaping domestic and family violence, nothing to support vulnerable cohorts or vulnerable communities. Do you know why? Because when they were in office it is those same services they cut. We know what their real three-point plan is. We know exactly what their three-point plan is. It is not to support Queenslanders and those who are vulnerable or those who need a roof over their head. We know what their three-point plan is. It is to cut, sack and sell again.

### Right to Protest

**Dr MacMAHON:** My question is to the Premier. In reference to the Premier's comments yesterday that people have the right to protest silently in public, is the Premier aware of the history of the union movement, whereby loud and disruptive protest has been crucial and effective?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the member for the question. I say to the member that what happened in this House yesterday was not the democracy nor the state that we want to see people live in. Yes, people do have the right to protest. I think it is a very serious issue if any member of this House was involved in that protest and there should be very serious consequences for that if that is the case. You might laugh about it, but it is not a laughing matter.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Through the chair, Premier.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** It is not a laughing matter because some members approached me afterwards feeling very unsafe in their workplace. The irony of the whole situation yesterday was that I was talking about renewable energy. Unlike the Greens, the Labor Party can actually bring about change to people's lives. Unlike the Greens, we have substantial policy that we can put in place. Let me say that every single one of my members is absolutely proud of our Energy and Jobs Plan that we released, and we will implement that plan—the strongest in the nation.

What happened yesterday was something that we do not want to see happen in this parliament. We are representatives of the people and we come in here to debate issues and this is a workplace. Outside here, we have normal protests that happen and that is where they happen; they happen all the time. They can be loud and people can speak, but we ask people to respect the laws of our land. What happened yesterday is disrespecting this parliament. This parliament is the house of democracy for Queensland. Mr Speaker, I applaud your sentiments that were said today. I understand that some of these matters may be referred to the Ethics Committee and I hope those members who may have been involved in this cooperate with the investigation.

Let me also say that our Energy and Jobs Plan is a concrete, substantial plan. It is going to be \$62 billion and it is already backed with money from our government to kickstart those planning processes. It is involving a SuperGrid and it is changing our coal-fired power stations into clean energy hubs. It has been welcomed by industry and it has been welcomed by the community.

**Mr Berkman** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The member for Maiwar will cease his interjections.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** The member for Maiwar might like to go out to his constituency and ask them who is going to build the steel. Perhaps the member for Maiwar wants a reality check—

**Mr Berkman** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The Premier's time has expired.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** He needs a reality check about how—

**Mr SPEAKER:** The Premier will resume her seat.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Don't drive a car then.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Premier, I caution you because I had asked you to resume your seat. The member for Maiwar's interjections were also after I had called the House to order. You are warned under the standing orders.

**Ms GRACE:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I think I may have taken offence. I think I was interjecting before and I think I was shooed by the member for Maiwar. I find it unparliamentary that a man wants to shoo a woman. If that was the case, I find it offensive and I ask that he withdraw that and never repeat it again if it was directed.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Maiwar, was there any suggestion of that?

**Mr BERKMAN:** Mr Speaker, I can absolutely clarify that I did not make any noises or gestures in respect of the member for McConnel.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Thank you for clarifying that. Member for McConnel, your point of order is noted.

### Mission Australia Youth Survey

**Ms BUSH:** My question is to the Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Youth Affairs. Can the minister update the House on the results of the Mission Australia Youth Survey, what the Palaszczuk government is doing on the issues that matter to young people and any alternative approaches?

**Ms SCANLON:** I thank the member for Cooper for the question. Mission Australia have just released a report that shows the most important issues that are impacting young people—the first being the environment, the second being equity and discrimination, and the third being mental health. I am very proud of our record in this state of investment in things like recycling, our national parks and climate change. When it comes to equity and discrimination, we have a very proud track record in this parliament and on this side of the House.

When it comes to progressing a Path to Treaty, in this parliament just this week we said that we support a voice for First Nations people. We are introducing changes to the births, deaths and marriages act so that a person's legal identity can match their lived identity. We have reinstated the LGBTIQ+ Roundtable after the LNP axed it. We are making sure that women's voices are heard on boards and in positions of authority. We are making real and meaningful reform in areas like affirmative consent, stealthing and coercive control. We are also investing significantly in the National Disability Insurance Scheme—a proud Labor achievement—and we provide around \$2 billion to that scheme annually. Just this week, I had the opportunity to sit down with the Multicultural Youth Queensland Council to hear how we can improve their lives as well. When it comes to mental health, we are very proud of our \$1.6 billion investment. We are unashamedly placing a levy on the top end of town to make sure that young people have access to services. That is in stark contrast to those opposite who shamefully closed down the Barrett centre—the only adolescent mental health facility that this state had at the time.

We also know that a lot of young people are talking at the moment about the Spotify Wrapped release for 2022. It made me wonder what the opposition's top songs might be. Perhaps the top song for the Leader of the Opposition is *Death By a Thousand Cuts*. For the cosplay progressive over there, the member for Bonney, his top artist may be Faker. As for the baddest of them all, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, frankly, *The Less I Know the Better*.

There is a bit of fun in here, but I want to quote that well-known philosopher Lizzo when I say it is 'about damn time' that we actually know what those opposite stand for and what policies they will put forward at the next election. They have a bad habit of saying one thing and then doing the opposite. The Leader of the Opposition says that he is a politician of conviction. Well, I wish I knew what that conviction was. We know that young people care a lot about many issues, but those opposite will not be up-front with people about what their position is on things like the Voice, on repealing abortion reform, on climate change, on our Energy and Jobs Plan, or on banning cash for access.

I know that the Premier is a big fan of Rufus Du Sol this week. She was supporting Australian artists. She was right in standing up against those opposite. When it comes to the cuts that we saw, when it comes to the privatisation of assets, we will always stand up for young people and Queenslanders.

*(Time expired)*

### Wind Farms, Planning Approvals

**Mr KNUTH:** My question without notice is to the Deputy Premier. State planning code 23 for wind farms overrides the Vegetation Management Act, which means that proposed wind farms such as Chalumbin are given a free pass to be built in communities that are deemed to have vulnerable, threatened or endangered habitats. Will the minister commit to fast-tracking amendments to state planning code 23 to ensure critical habitats are not being cleared for wind farms?



**Dr MILES:** I thank the member for Hill for his question. I can inform the member and indeed the House that, like all significant developments, wind farms such as those in the member for Hill's electorate require development approvals. If they are of sufficient scale, part of that development approval will also require an environmental impact assessment which will be considered as part of the state approval. Many of those wind farms also require Australian government approval, and that is the process by which we consider their ecological impact.

It is true that wind farm projects often require some level of vegetation removal in order to facilitate access roads, the pad on which the windmills stand, transmission lines, that kind of thing. Those environmental impact studies consider the level of those impacts and the ecological value of the trees to be removed. In most cases, they will require some level of offsetting. Under state approvals, that would often be a ratio of three to one of offsets—so for every tree removed, three trees need to be planted. If there are EPBC approvals, that may require a higher level of offsetting. I can assure the member for Hill that the government is very conscious of the social licence requirements for these kinds of projects and we do ensure that they meet all of the best practices in terms of those ecological impact studies as well as any offsetting requirements.

Wind farms are a critical component of our Queensland Energy and Jobs plan. We need them. Where there are unavoidable environmental impacts, we will impose upon those projects offsetting requirements. I trust that goes some way to addressing the member for Hill's concerns about the ecological impact of these projects in his electorate.

With my time remaining, I welcome the member for Hill's epiphany; it is wonderful that he has seen the light. The member for Hill and I agree on a lot of things, but for eight years we have disagreed on vegetation management. For eight years we have argued about vegetation management. I very much welcome the fact that the member for Hill is now concerned about tree clearing in his electorate, that he is concerned about the threatened species that live in those bushes and forests, and I look forward to his support on our ongoing efforts to limit land clearing here in Queensland.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The irony—you can cut it with a knife.

### Health Workforce

**Mr KELLY:** My question is to the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services. Can the minister advise the House of the great work our health workers are doing and is the minister aware of any alternative approaches?

**Mrs D'ATH:** I thank the member for Greenslopes for his question and acknowledge him as a registered nurse who can actually perform to his full scope. I want to acknowledge the work that the member did in helping with the vaccination of his own community during COVID. Thank you. He is allowed to do that! I acknowledge the amazing work that is being done across our health system, across Queensland. We have been holding the Hospital and Health Services Excellence Awards. I am attending one this Friday night and another one the following Friday night. I have been going to many of these. I want to acknowledge the Department of Health's and Queensland Health's awards for excellence. There are too many winners to rattle off, but I do want to mention that Clinical Excellence Queensland, led by Dr Helen Brown, won four awards, two for the VOiCeD, or Virtual Outpatient Integration for Care Delivery program. Children's Health Queensland HHS won three awards, two for its Queensland paediatric sepsis program.

I want to acknowledge George Morseau from Torres and Cape HHS. He is a one-man vaccination machine. George won two awards, one for promoting wellbeing, an individual award for outstanding achievement for his effort in vaccinating the vulnerable. He delivered a total of 1,058 COVID-19 vaccinations and was amongst the top 10 vaccinators in the entire health service. That was no mean feat when we are talking about Torres and Cape and the work that had to be done to lift awareness and deal with some of the fears that were up there.

I can stand here today in the chamber and proudly declare that George Morseau is not a dud, nor is any other health worker across the Queensland system. We know the member opposite has not apologised for her statement. However, when we look at who is actually a dud in Queensland, do not believe me; let's look at the member for Mudgeeraba's record. Arts minister—dud. Bates gave job to mates: 'MP Ros Bates' son Ben Gommers scored top role despite Premier Campbell Newman ordering an immediate job freeze'. Mised parliament—dud. Read a plagiarised speech in parliament—dud. The 'Controversies' section of her Wikipedia page is larger than all other sections combined—dud. Failed to publicly stand up for the 1,800 nurses and midwives sacked by Campbell Newman—an absolute dud.

**Ms Bates** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Mudgeeraba, I believe there may have been some provocation, but you will cease your interjections.

### Electricity Prices

**Mr JANETZKI:** My question is to the Treasurer. I refer to media reports that the Treasurer pressured CS Energy to withdraw their membership of an industry organisation. Will the Treasurer exert similar pressure and direct energy providers to lower the cost of power for struggling Queenslanders?

**Mr DICK:** No wonder they got the member for Toowoomba South well down the batting order today. They even had the member for Buderim asking an unintelligible question higher in the order than the member for Toowoomba South. We have the best scientists in the state trying to work out the question from the member for Buderim. They are working on the details. The department of science is working it out.

**Mr Janetzi** interjected.

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

**Mr DICK:** I am happy to take the question. I thank the member for Toowoomba South for the question because we are doing precisely that as a government. The first thing I would say is no-one has exerted any pressure on anyone to do anything. Not only do I expect—

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr DICK:** No, wait for it. Not only do I expect GOCs not to be members of the QRC; I expect every company in this state not to be a member of the Queensland Resources Council because of their campaign to undermine the resources and coal industry in this state, wasting their members' money on a worthless campaign. What the QRC is doing is putting a spotlight on the need for the resources industry in this state to maintain their social licence. The Queensland Resources Council needs to know that as the community sees these record profits, as they see the money going out of this state to international multinational corporations, Queenslanders know that royalties will only ever go one way, and that is up. Royalties will not go down in this state because Queenslanders deserve a fair and reasonable share.


Through our government owned corporations, we are giving those dividends back to Queenslanders—\$175 this year. Our government can do this because of public ownership of our assets which the member for Toowoomba South and the rest of them on the other side want to sell. Because we own those assets, we are giving the money back to Queenslanders—more than a billion dollars in dividends we have given back to Queenslanders since our election—to ease the cost-of-living pressures, because that is what Labor governments do. None of that money would have gone back under the strong choice that the member for Clayfield and all those members, including the member for Broadwater, had made. If they made that choice, sold those assets, that money would have never gone back to Queenslanders; it would have gone back to foreign capitals around the world. Only Labor governments will deliver that money back to Queensland.

*(Time expired)*

**Mr SPEAKER:** The period for question time has expired.

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTORAL AND OTHER LEGISLATION (EXPENDITURE CAPS) AMENDMENT BILL

### Introduction

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics Infrastructure) (11.17 am): I present a bill for an act to amend the City of Brisbane Act 2010, the Local Government Act 2009, and the Local Government Electoral Act 2011 for particular purposes. I table the bill, the explanatory notes and a statement of compatibility with human rights. I nominate the State Development and Regional Industries Committee to consider the bill.

*Tabled paper:* Local Government Electoral and Other Legislation (Expenditure Caps) Amendment Bill 2022 [\[2029\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Local Government Electoral and Other Legislation (Expenditure Caps) Amendment Bill 2022, explanatory notes [\[2030\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Local Government Electoral and Other Legislation (Expenditure Caps) Amendment Bill 2022, statement of compatibility with human rights [\[2031\]](#).

I am pleased to introduce the Local Government Electoral and Other Legislation (Expenditure Caps) Amendment Bill 2022. This bill implements an electoral expenditure caps scheme for Queensland local governments. The scheme continues the government's reform agenda for the sector, guided by principles of integrity, transparency, diversity and consistency. It delivers on our 2020 election commitment to the people of Queensland to implement electoral expenditure caps for local elections.

It is important that every Queenslanders has the best representation on their councils as well as every opportunity to be on that council. The electoral expenditure caps scheme introduced by the bill will ensure the equitable conduct of Queensland local government elections. The scheme will provide a fair opportunity for anyone to participate in the electoral process. Importantly, the expenditure cap scheme being proposed for local government elections is similar to the laws that are already in place for Queensland state elections.

In 2019, the Legislative Assembly requested that the Economics and Governance Committee review the feasibility of introducing expenditure caps for Queensland local government elections with a view to the model commencing after the 2020 local government elections. On 15 September 2020 the committee tabled its report which recommended that an electoral expenditure caps scheme be established for Queensland's local government elections. The government's response supported the committee's seven recommendations in principle, subject to further analysis and consultation.

In April 2022, the Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning released a discussion paper seeking stakeholder feedback on the proposed local government electoral expenditure caps scheme. This discussion paper was part of a consultative process, and every Queensland councillor and mayor was encouraged to make a submission on the discussion paper. I take this opportunity to thank all those who took the time to consider the discussion paper or make a submission. Feedback received reiterated broad support for introducing a local government electoral expenditure caps scheme and has informed the preparation of the bill. The local government department has continued to consult with key stakeholders through the release of an exposure draft of the bill. I turn now to addressing the committee's recommendations in more detail as I outline the key amendments in the bill.

To implement the government's policy in relation to recommendation 1, the bill amends the definition of electoral expenditure in the Local Government Electoral Act 2011 to align with the definition under the state scheme. The new definition includes the concept that expenditure is electoral expenditure if incurred for a campaign purpose. For third parties, expenditure is electoral expenditure if the dominant purpose for which the expenditure is incurred is a campaign purpose.

The treatment of third-party electoral expenditure also aligns with the state scheme. Stakeholders supported this change, and the amendments provide uniformity and certainty to candidates, political parties and third parties who may participate in both local and state government election campaigns. They also provide clarity for the enforcement of both schemes by the Electoral Commission of Queensland.

To implement the government's policy in relation to recommendations 2, 3 and 4, the bill provides for registration of third parties and for a sliding scale of electoral expenditure caps for Queensland local government elections with reference to the number of electors in the relevant division or local government area. The sliding scale does not apply to the Brisbane City Council. In Brisbane the caps are a fixed amount in recognition that Brisbane City Council's election environment differs from other Queensland local government areas.

The proposed local government scheme is intended to align with the state scheme where practical and appropriate. However, unlike the state scheme, the proposed caps for mayor and councillor candidates are grouped into tiers, recognising differences in elector numbers and the varied shapes and sizes of Queensland's 77 local governments.

Consistent with the committee's recommendations, the cap amounts have been determined based on further analysis and consultation since the committee's report was released. The caps apply during the capped expenditure period for quadrennial elections, by-elections and fresh elections. The bill provides for caps for mayoral candidates over five bands. Outside Brisbane City Council, the bands begin at a \$30,000 cap for areas with 30,000 or fewer electors. The highest band outside Brisbane applies to areas with more than 200,000 electors, allowing a cap of \$175,000 plus an additional 25 cents per elector for each additional elector over 200,000. For Brisbane City Council mayoral candidates, the cap is \$1.3 million.

There are four bands for councillor candidates. Outside Brisbane City Council, these bands range from a \$15,000 cap for areas with 20,000 or fewer electors up to a maximum cap of \$30,000 for areas or divisions with 40,000 electors or more. For Brisbane City Council councillor candidates, the cap is

\$55,000 per division. The expenditure cap for groups of candidates, or for registered political parties and each endorsed candidate, is the sum of the cap that would apply if each candidate were an individual candidate for the election. The expenditure cap is shared by the members of the group or by the political party and each endorsed candidate. However, the cap cannot be shared across different local government areas.

The purpose of these provisions is to ensure groups of candidates and registered political parties are subject to electoral expenditure caps while also being able to run coordinated group or political party campaign activities, for example, joint advertising or shared how-to-vote cards. These provisions are consistent with the view expressed in the committee report that caps for groups of candidates and political parties should be based on some form of aggregation method. The bill also provides for adjusting caps when there is a change in the number of candidates in a group or the number of candidates endorsed by a political party. For consistency with state electoral requirements, the bill requires a group or registered political party to notify the ECQ of changes to group membership or party endorsement. These requirements provide clarity regarding the electoral expenditure caps that apply to participants in an election, including the operation of adjustment of caps.

In relation to third parties, the bill provides that the electoral expenditure cap for an unregistered third party is \$6,000. A third party incurring more than \$6,000 of electoral expenditure must be registered with the Electoral Commission. The cap for registered third parties is equivalent to the mayoral electoral expenditure cap which would apply in the relevant local government area. However, for by-elections for councillor positions, the cap for registered third parties is equivalent to the councillor candidate cap, whether for a division or for an undivided council. The cap for registered third parties cannot be pooled across different local government areas and applies separately to spending in relation to each local government area.

To ensure the expenditure cap levels remain appropriate, the bill provides for the expenditure caps to be indexed according to the consumer price index. To ensure information about the expenditure caps is readily accessible and to provide certainty to candidates, the bill provides that information about the expenditure caps in relation to each election must be published on the ECQ's website and provided directly to each candidate in an election.

The bill models the length of the capped expenditure period for local government quadrennial elections on the length of the capped expenditure period for an ordinary state general election, that is, approximately seven months. For a local government quadrennial election held on the last Saturday in March, as required by the act, the period starts on the first business day after the last Saturday in the August preceding the election and ends on polling day. For by-elections, the capped expenditure period starts on the day notice of the by-election is published. For fresh elections, the capped expenditure period starts on the day the notice of the election is published, unless the capped expenditure period for a quadrennial election has already started.

To implement the government's policy in relation to recommendation 5 of the committee report, the bill provides that electoral expenditure incurred by an associated entity of an election participant is treated as though it were incurred by the election participant. The Local Government Electoral Act 2011 currently defines an associated entity in relation to political parties only. The bill amends this definition to align with the Electoral Act 1992. This means associated entities of candidates and groups of candidates will also be subject to the expenditure cap of the relevant election participant and to disclosure requirements, including electoral expenditure, gifts, loans and other amounts.

To implement the government's policy in relation to recommendation 6, the bill amends the Local Government Electoral Act 2011 to include new compliance and offence provisions to enforce the scheme. Where appropriate, the offences and associated penalties align with similar offences in the Electoral Act 1992. In addition, where appropriate, the bill aligns the record keeping and auditing requirements for state and local government elections. These requirements will ensure transparency and consistency between the state and local government systems.

Consistent with the state scheme, the bill requires registered third parties and political parties to open dedicated accounts for the election. However, for clarity, the operational requirements for the accounts and the associated penalties align with existing provisions in the Local Government Electoral Act 2011 about dedicated accounts for candidates and groups.

In relation to suspension and disqualification of councillors, the Local Government Electoral Act 2011 provides that a person may only be nominated as a candidate, or for appointment, as a councillor if the person is qualified to be a councillor under the local government legislation. The Local Government Act 2009 and the City of Brisbane Act 2010 provide that some offences, including offences

under the electoral legislation, are disqualifying offences. If convicted of an integrity offence, a person is disqualified from being a councillor for a period of four years. If convicted of a serious integrity offence, a person is disqualified from being a councillor for a period of seven years. A councillor is automatically suspended under the legislation if charged with a disqualifying offence. The bill prescribes certain offences as serious integrity offences or integrity offences. This reflects the importance of transparency, equity and compliance with the new scheme.

The bill also ensures transparency by introducing a new process for the registration of agents of election participants. Currently, the legislation provides for the appointment of an agent for a group of candidates and for a register of group agents. It provides for certain obligations on the agent of a political party but not for registration of the agents under the local government legislation. The legislation does not provide for an agent of a candidate or of a third party.

The bill inserts new provisions to align with the Electoral Act 1992. They provide for the appointment and registration of agents of political parties, candidates and third parties who are both registered and unregistered. The ECQ must make information regarding both the register of agents and the register of third parties available for public inspection. To ensure election participants can understand and adhere to the local government electoral expenditure cap scheme and to implement the government's response to recommendation 7 of the committee report, the department will work with the ECQ to prepare training and capacity-building resources for the range of election participants to be affected.

The local government electoral expenditure caps scheme is another significant milestone that will promote equity in Queensland's local government elections and diversity in our councils. Every Queensland community deserves the best council that it can elect. We must look to encourage everyone who is passionate about their community to put their hand up to lead their community. This bill will level the playing field and promote a fair opportunity for all participants in an election to communicate and participate in our electoral process. I commend the bill to the House.

### First Reading

**Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics Infrastructure) (11.31 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 State Development and Regional Industries Committee

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Bush): In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the State Development and Regional Industries Committee.

## MONITORING OF PLACES OF DETENTION (OPTIONAL PROTOCOL TO THE CONVENTION AGAINST TORTURE) BILL

### Introduction

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (11.31 am): I present a bill for an act to provide for the monitoring of places of detention under the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, and to amend this act, the Corrective Services Act 2006 and the Youth Justice Act 1992 for related purposes. I table the bill, the explanatory notes and a statement of compatibility with human rights. I nominate the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee to consider the bill.

*Tabled paper:* Monitoring of Places of Detention (Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture) Bill 2022 [\[2032\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Monitoring of Places of Detention (Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture) Bill 2022, explanatory notes [\[2033\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Monitoring of Places of Detention (Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture) Bill 2022, statement of compatibility with human rights [\[2034\]](#).

The Palaszczuk government is committed to protecting the human rights of all Queenslanders, including those in detention. In 2019, Queensland's Human Rights Act commenced ensuring public entities had specific obligations to act and to make decisions compatible with human rights. This historic legislation saw the enhancement of protections for Queenslanders in their dealings with public entities and protects specific rights including protection from torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment and humane treatment when deprived of liberty.

Earlier this year, the Palaszczuk government further upheld the rights of those in detention by establishing an Inspector of Detention Services to promote the improvement of detention services and places of detention and prevent harm to detainees. Today I am proud to introduce this bill to the House. It will bring greater transparency and public confidence by establishing a standalone legislative framework to facilitate a consistent approach to UN subcommittee visits to places of detention in Queensland. The Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, known as OPCAT, is an important international treaty that aims to prevent the torture and other ill-treatment of persons in places where people are deprived of liberty.

In 2017, the Commonwealth government ratified OPCAT. Australia's obligation of monitoring places of detention is separated into two components. First, it requires periodic visits by the United Nations subcommittee on Prevention of Torture to places of detention under Australia's jurisdictional control for the purpose of making recommendations to prevent torture and other ill-treatment of persons who are detained. The second component is to nominate a domestic body or bodies to act as a national preventive mechanism to regularly inspect and monitor the treatment of persons in places of detention across the country.

The bill delivers on the Premier's announcement in the House on 26 October to introduce legislation by the end of this year. It will remove the current legislative barriers which were encountered by the UN subcommittee during their recent visit to Australia. Members would be aware that the UN subcommittee made its inaugural visit to Australia in October this year. I would like to reiterate that Queensland agencies cooperated with the subcommittee in the lead-up to the visit. Access was provided to all facilities in Queensland as far as was permitted under the existing legislation, policies and procedures. The introduction of this bill will address those legislative barriers around access, such as the issues faced in accessing authorised mental health services and the Forensic Disability Service. Importantly, the bill represents another commitment made by this government to uphold human rights in Queensland and recognises that the observance of human rights is the most effective and safe way to manage custodial environments.

The focus of the bill is to: facilitate UN subcommittee visits to places of detention in Queensland for the purpose of its mandate under OPCAT; provide for access to information relevant to the UN subcommittee's purpose; and provide necessary safeguards to enable detaining authorities to preserve the privacy, security, good order and welfare and safety in places of detention during visits by the subcommittee.

The bill defines places of detention that fall within its scope. This will provide certainty to the UN subcommittee and government agencies as to the process to be followed for UN subcommittee visits to these facilities. Places of detention that are defined in the bill are: prisons; community correction centres and work camps; youth detention centres; inpatient units with an authorised mental health service; the Forensic Disability Service; court cells, police watch houses, police holding cells, or other places in a police station where a person is detained; any vehicle primarily used or operated for the purpose of transporting a detainee; and any other place other than a private residence prescribed by regulation where a person is a detainee.

The bill does not prevent the UN subcommittee from visiting places not within the bill's scope. The bill requires the minister with the responsibility for the place of detention and the detaining authority to provide the UN subcommittee with unrestricted access to the place of detention, except in limited circumstances. As provided under OPCAT, the bill provides that a responsible minister may object to a visit by the UN subcommittee on the grounds of national defence, public safety, natural disaster and serious disorder in a place of detention.

The bill also provides safeguards to allow for the maintenance of security, good order and management of the facility and to protect the health and safety of the detainees and other people in the facility, or to conduct essential operations. Under the bill, a responsible minister and a detaining authority must ensure the UN subcommittee has unrestricted access to all the information in their possession or control that is relevant to the UN subcommittee's purpose. Access to information could include, for example, the number of places of detention and their location, the number of detainees in a place of detention and information about their treatment and conditions of detention. Information could also include personal or health information.

The provisions contained in the bill balance allowing the UN subcommittee access to information to perform their functions under OPCAT with the necessary safeguards to protect the privacy of individuals. To safeguard privacy, in addition to the UN subcommittee's own guidelines, consent of the detainee is required if the UN subcommittee seeks to retain, copy or take notes of the identifying information. In order to protect particularly sensitive documents, the bill provides the UN subcommittee is not able to access excluded information, defined in the bill to mean cabinet information, information subject to legal professional privilege or other information that is prescribed by regulation.

The bill allows the UN subcommittee to interview detainees and other people that the UN subcommittee considers can provide relevant information. Consent is first required and a person may nominate a support person to be present during an interview and the bill provides that interviews must be held in private, away from others. To facilitate full and frank disclosure to the UN subcommittee, the bill provides protection to a person from reprisals. It makes it an offence for a person to take a reprisal action against another person for providing information or assistance to the subcommittee. It protects a person from civil or criminal liability in particular circumstances.

Subject to the passage of the bill, it is proposed that the bill will commence on assent. While outside the bill's scope, I note the Commonwealth government's ratification of OPCAT also requires nominating domestic bodies to conduct independent inspections of places of detention. NPMs complement the existing oversight mechanisms that are already in place in Queensland to prevent mistreatment or protect the human rights of detainees. NPM nomination for Queensland is subject to continuing discussions with the Commonwealth, as ongoing and sufficient funding is important to ensure NPM functions are performed effectively. We will continue this dialogue with the Commonwealth.

The introduction of the bill today represents an important step in Queensland's commitment to work in good faith towards implementing OPCAT here in Queensland. Together with the Inspector of Detention Services Act 2022 passed earlier this year, the bill demonstrates our ongoing commitment to human rights and ensures that fair and equitable treatment of individuals in places of detention is upheld. The Queensland government will continue to work with the Commonwealth government and other states and territories regarding OPCAT implementation in Australia. I commend the bill to the House.

### First Reading

**Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (11.39 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 Legal Affairs and Safety Committee


**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Bush): In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee.

## ANIMAL CARE AND PROTECTION AMENDMENT BILL

### Second Reading

Resumed from 30 November (see p. 3812), on motion of Mr Furner—

That the bill be now read a second time.


 **Mr MADDEN** (Ipswich West—ALP) (11.40 am), continuing: I rise to continue my contribution concerning the Animal Care and Protection Amendment Bill 2022. Over the last two years there have been a number of reviews and inquiries concerning animal welfare laws in Queensland. A discussion paper, 'Review of the Animal Care and Protection Act 2001: discussion paper', was released in April 2021 and submissions for responses to the paper closed in May 2021. The theme of those submissions received through the consultation process was that the current legislative framework is generally appropriate; however, it requires updating to reflect contemporary standards and to address several other identified issues.

The Martin inquiry, an independent inquiry commissioned by the state government into the management of retired racehorses, delivered its report to the Queensland government in 2021. As a result of the recommendations of the Martin inquiry, there is now more effective monitoring of livestock slaughter facilities by the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries and safeguarding the welfare of retired racehorses by the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission. As well, the Queensland Audit Office began an audit in March 2021 to assess the effectiveness of the department's oversight of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Queensland, otherwise known as the RSPCA. The Queensland Audit Office tabled its final report on regulating animal welfare in November 2021.

This bill amends the Animal Care and Protection Act to address the central issues that arose during the Queensland Audit Office report and recommendations contained in the report. A major feature of the bill is that it introduces tough new penalties that will apply to people who commit aggravated breaches of their duty of care to animals under updated animal welfare laws. Under the proposed amendments pursuant to the bill, people convicted of aggregated offences of duty of care to animals face up to three years in jail and maximum fines of up to \$270,000. Other changes to Queensland animal welfare enforcement laws include: clarification of some inspectors' powers in relation to entry and compliance with animal welfare directions; clarification of minimum standards for making codes of practice under the act, including the basis of scientific evidence; clarification of the scientific use of animals, including alignment of the scientific use provisions to the Australian scientific use code; a new framework for cattle spaying and pregnancy testing by laypersons; a requirement for dogs to be restrained in vehicles, with the exemption for working dogs; prohibition on the use and possession of prong dog collars; and, finally, prohibition on the use of yellow phosphorous pig poison.

With its report tabled in July 2022, the State Development and Regional Industries Committee, a committee on which I serve, made three recommendations: firstly, that the Animal Care and Protection Amendment Bill 2022 be passed; secondly, that the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries continue to work with colleagues in the Australian government as appropriate in relation to the prohibition on the import of dog collars incorporating protrusions designed to puncture or bruise an animal's skin; and, thirdly and finally, that the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries continue to implement the Queensland Audit Office recommendations concerning the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Queensland in full and actively monitor and assess the performance of the RSPCA Queensland in meeting its obligations under any activity agreement for delivering inspectorate services for the state.

In closing, I want to thank my fellow members of the State Development and Regional Industries Committee, the committee secretariat, the submitters, Biosecurity Queensland and Hansard. I commend the Animal Care and Protection Amendment Bill 2022 to the House.

 **Ms LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (11.45 am): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Animal Care and Protection Amendment Bill 2022. I wish to advise the House in the interests of transparency that I am a member of the Queensland Working Sheep Dog Association which is declared in my pecuniary interest register. I want to thank the committee for its consideration of the bill and the secretariat staff for its work on the bill. A subcommittee of the committee travelled to my electorate and had a very productive meeting with producers at the Roma Saleyards. It then proceeded to drive out to Charleville to the Western Meat Exporters's sheep meat and halal goat abattoir. Producers were able to put their views and concerns in relation to the proposal in the legislation to ban CSSP, or SAP as it was commonly known.

At the outset I want to make it clear: although broadly supportive of the bill, the LNP will be opposing clause 16 with regard to section 42 that sets out the ban on the use of yellow phosphorous CSSP feral pig poison. The LNP does not support this ban, especially as there is no equivalent alternative readily available for primary producers. I have heard members opposite advising the House that 1080 is an alternative. That was not the view that was expressed by producers at the subcommittee meeting at the Roma Saleyards.

The main objective of this bill is to modernise animal welfare laws to reflect changes in contemporary science and community expectations. To achieve this the bill proposes a series of amendments to the Animal Care and Protection Act, and these are outlined in the explanatory notes and the bill. I will deal with the section 17 amendment that seeks to prescribe a new offence of aggravated breach of duty of care. This is a new offence that applies in situations where, for example, as a result of gross or significant neglect a person has failed to provide for an animal's care to the extent that the animal has died or suffered serious deformity, serious disability or prolonged suffering. There is concern that this amendment creates a reverse onus of proof obligation on primary producers who face extenuating circumstances such as floods and fires which will obviously prevent them from dealing with access to and inspection of livestock. An example of where this has occurred is in the north-west



floods and my constituents have faced similar situations during prolonged flood events. AgForce outlined that this reverse onus of proof hanging over producers under extreme emotional and physically trying situations where 'if there is an exception, we will consider it at the time' is manifestly inadequate. The minister should clarify for primary producers that they will not be subject to these penalties in these extreme circumstances where they cannot actually get access to their livestock.

In relation to the banning of prong dog collars, I note that registered dog breeders are required under the Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Act 2008 to obtain a breeder identification number, and I ask the minister: what consultation did the department undertake with registered dog breeders? I ask this because the first that many knew about this ban was in a Facebook post from the Premier. It must be noted that prong collars are already banned under federal laws unless given specific approval by the Minister for Home Affairs. It raises concern as to why the state would seek to duplicate how the federal government is already regulating the use of these prong collars.

If federal and state government bans do not mirror each other there is another risk of inconsistency. The new section 37A prohibits the possession of a prong collar or another restraint device prescribed by regulation unless the person has a reasonable excuse. There is concern as to what is 'another restraint device prescribed by regulation'. We do not know what the other restraint devices are because we do not have visibility of the regulation. The government needs to clearly articulate what it is determining as 'other restraint devices'. I will give members an example. For instance, my neighbour has a restraint device for his Alsatian around his property. That dog wears an electric collar. Will his device be considered 'another restraint device prescribed by regulation'? Many others use electric collars for certain dog training activities. Are these captured? This needs clarification from the government. I ask the minister to clarify in his summing-up what are the other restraint devices referred to in this legislation. Minister, so there is no confusion with this clause, I would urge you to table a list in your summing-up.

I will now turn to the ban of the CSSP feral pig poison which is not supported by the LNP. One reason raised by the government as to why they want to ban the feral pig poison is because they state it is slow acting and inhumane. At Roma we heard from producers who are regular users of CSSP and their experience was the poison was a quick and effective method of destroying feral pigs. I ask the government which one is more inhumane—a quick death from a poison or being eaten alive by feral wild pigs, which is often the fate of young lambs and goats when they are preyed upon by feral pigs. Which one is more inhumane? CSSP is a targeted, accessible, efficient and cost-effective feral pig poison for both livestock and grain producers. There is no equivalent alternative. I have rung various different CRTs and rural suppliers. They do not have any alternative to it. Nicky from Morven emailed me about her family's experience—


I just want to express our frustration regarding the impending CSSP ban. We run 5,000 meat sheep and 2,000 goats at Morven and Mitchell. CSSP is essential and we are heavily reliant upon it for our pest control program. It enables us to be a more productive business achieving lambing and kidding rates of over 140 per cent. It is also a valuable tool for environmental outcomes.

In relation to the good climatic season which we are now experiencing in much of Southern Queensland, grain producers are telling me that they are being absolutely smashed by feral pigs. I have had calls from some who have lost up to \$50,000 in crop losses and they have no alternative feral pig control mechanism following this ban.

AgForce in its submission raised a number of very valid questions about the proposed ban. For instance, what research is the government relying on to demonstrate that CSSP is inhumane; what research is the government relying on to demonstrate the level of secondary poisoning caused by CSSP and what bird and animal species is the secondary poisoning occurring in; how many incidents of abuse with regard to the use of CSSP has the department investigated; how many offences have been prosecuted as a result of the investigations; and with the exotic diseases of African swine fever, lumpy skin disease and foot-and-mouth disease nearing Australia's borders, where control of feral pig populations may become critical in containment and eradication of these diseases should they reach Australia's shores, can the department advise which control toxins will be used to reduce the feral pig populations? I would like to hear the responses the department, the minister and the government have to AgForce's concerns because those concerns are shared by producers right across Queensland. We want to hear if this ban is based on evidence or is this ban based on trying to appease impractical and ill-informed activists.

AgForce stated in their submissions that they oppose this ban and that government and landholders require every available tool to manage feral pig populations, especially in the event of an outbreak of an exotic animal disease. That sentiment was echoed by the producers in my electorate. Those landholders say they need every tool available to them to control feral animal populations and,

in particular, feral pigs. All this Labor government is doing is taking away these tools. It will cause further damage to agricultural industries and the environment. Given there is no equivalent alternative and the extreme threat of foot-and-mouth disease, lumpy skin disease and Japanese encephalitis to human health, this ban on CSSP should not be implemented and the LNP will not support it. Queenslanders and our agriculture industries and the environment deserve much better from this Labor government.

 **Mr SMITH** (Bundaberg—ALP) (11.54 am): I rise to contribute to the debate and congratulate the minister, his team and the department on undergoing this much needed review. After 20 years there was a need for a review. We received 2,353 responses: throughout the discussion paper process there were 1,439 survey responses and there were 914 written submissions. That shows that Queenslanders have a lot of interest in this bill. There was a lot of interest from different organisations and community groups because not only do we love our pets but also we understand how important the livestock industry is to the Queensland economy. The expectations of the community have changed in relation to the practices of industry and how we look after our pets. Scientific research and practices have changed as well.

This is quite a broad bill. I will first address the new offence around aggravated breach of duty of care. Clause 5 section 17 is amended to prescribe a new offence provision for a breach of duty of care to an animal which causes death, deformity, serious disability or prolonged suffering. This recognises the pain and distress of animals as they die or lie at risk of dying. This can be from starvation, dehydration or even just the simple denial of veterinary care. I understand that care at a veterinarian can be expensive, but if you are going to own a pet or going to move into an industry where you rely on animals, community expectation is that there is a level of care for those animals. Largely those involved in the livestock industry care for their animals very well. There are only a few who engage in practices that would be caught up under this new offence. The maximum penalty is 2,000 penalty units or three years imprisonment. That is a big whack on the wrist.

The member for Gympie and the member for Warrego raised the concerns of AgForce. I do not in any way disparage those concerns. They are very genuine in terms of what is an acceptable exemption when it comes to a breach of duty of care. I did address this in the committee hearing. I asked a question on clause 5 section 17 in relation to exemptions around bushfires and natural disasters if industry cannot get to their animals; if they have to almost breach their duty of care or relinquish their duty of care because of a natural disaster. It is already in the current act, section 17(4)(b), which provides—

the steps a reasonable person in the circumstances of the person would reasonably be expected to have taken.

I said—

It gives examples in the legislation of a bushfire, a natural disaster or a flood as being an exemption in terms of what a reasonable person would do in that space.

I hope that provides answers for those opposite and for those who made a very reasonable submission to the committee. In no way is this government going to expect people to put their own lives at risk for the health, safety and wellbeing of animals. We understand how much they need and care for those animals. Hopefully that brings a bit of reason to the argument and that those opposite will not need to continue down that line of questioning as it is already in the act. Maybe if the shadow minister had bothered to read the act we would not need to be going down this line of conversation. That is okay; I will do their work for them.

Let's face it: we do all their work for them anyway, especially out in the bush. We look after the bush for the Nationals. That is what we do and plenty of the Liberals would do that as well.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SMITH:** Now that I have them on the line, I will remind them that there has not been even one private member's bill. The member for Gympie spoke about how they had a policy in the last parliament.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to point of order on relevance. I ask you to draw the member back to the bill. If not, he should just sit down.

**Mr FURNER:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point order. The member for Bundaberg is making a direct parallel with the contribution made by the member for Gympie yesterday. He is right on track in terms of referring to the content of this bill. I suggest there is no point of order from the member for Nanango.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Bush): Thank you, members. That will be the last point of order I will hear on that matter. Member for Bundaberg, I appreciate you are responding to some comments that have been made. You are also referencing generally private members' bills. I will bring you back to the long title of the bill.

**Mr SMITH:** Absolutely and I will reflect on that: I was making a direct comment on—

**Mrs Frecklington:** Reflecting on the chair.

**Mr SMITH:** I am not reflecting on the chair. I am reflecting on the comments of the member for Gympie.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Hart): Pause the clock. Member for Bundaberg, I urge extreme caution in not reflecting on the chair's decision.

**Mr SMITH:** Absolutely, Mr Deputy Speaker. I was reflecting on the words of the member for Gympie in this debate.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. It is obvious that the member is being disorderly. He is openly reflecting on the previous Deputy Speaker's decision. I ask you to bring him to order.

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

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Resume your seat, member for Mount Ommaney. Member for Nanango, I was listening closely to what the member for Bundaberg said. There is no point of order.

**Mr SMITH:** I will use a different word. The member for Gympie's comments, in his contribution, were about the LNP having a policy for the agriculture and livestock sectors in the last parliament. However, they do not seem to have a policy for this parliament. There is no policy for this parliamentary term and there are no private members' bills at all. I am sorry that the member for Nanango does not think that the member for Gympie is relevant. I quite like the member for Gympie. I think he is relevant but it is disappointing that the member does not.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take personal offence and I ask that he withdraw.

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

**Mr SMITH:** I will of course withdraw. I move to the introduction of firing or blistering to the act.

**Mrs Frecklington** interjected.

**Mr SMITH:** I am not even throwing out the line and I am still catching them. The bill introduces a new offence in relation to firing and blistering. Clause 14 of the bill prohibits the blistering of a horse or dog by providing that—

A person must not apply extreme heat or cold, or acid or another caustic chemical, to the leg of a horse or dog with the intention of causing tissue damage or developing scar tissue around the ligaments or tendons of the animal's leg.

I note Dr Cadwell provided a submission to the committee that suggested that there may be a loophole. I will touch on that point very quickly. Dr Cadwell said—

It's a subtle point in terms of the initial drafting which brought in an intention requirement into the provision to cause tissue damage or the development of scar tissue. As I have noted in the submission, that may well be an outcome of the process that is referred to as firing or blistering, but it subtly misrepresents probably what the intention is.

Of course I respect Dr Cadwell putting forward a position to make sure that people cannot get away with this via a technical legal argument. However, for me, the damage caused by firing or blistering is a result of the intention. Regardless of what the intention may be, the damage is a result of the intention and, therefore, I am very satisfied with the wording of the bill and the response of the department and the minister.

We have heard about the transporting of dogs. The RSPCA has recorded the injury or death of nearly 5,000 dogs each year as a result of not being secured when on a tray of a vehicle or a trailer. This bill will prohibit the unsecured transportation of dogs, although it would be reasonable to consider working dogs being used in the movement of livestock as an exception. I think that is very important because it recognises the important role of dogs in the livestock industry. Of course, we do not want to overburden farmers with red tape where we do not need to. That is very important. That is all about the minister listening to people in the industry, which is why he is, indeed, the farmers' friend.


We have heard a lot about prohibited collars and devices. We have heard those on the opposite side not quite fearmongering—I will not go that far but absolutely there is some form of mongering—when they talk about—

**A government member** interjected.

**Mr SMITH:** There is some sort of mongering. I will take the interjection if anyone wishes to use a different word. I want to provide clarity and assurance to those who question the phrase 'restraint device'. The bill states, 'restraint device means a device fitted to an animal for the purpose of restraining it'. It is quite clear in terms of what a restraint device is.

The reason that some regulation is left is because this is about forward planning. We want to ensure that if a restraint device comes onto the market that is considered cruel or that is designed to punish animals to a level that the community does not believe is acceptable, it will be regulated so that people cannot use it. The LNP should not be going around saying, 'This restraint will be banned, this one will be banned and this one will be banned. Tell us, tell us, tell us!' It is there. This is about forward thinking. This is about vision. I know that the LNP is not great at vision. In fact, their only vision seems to be in the rear-view mirror. They are good at looking back to the past, but they do not have a vision for the future. However, we on this side will worry about that. We will keep leading the state forward, time and time again.

I will very briefly touch on how good I think the reforms are around the RSPCA. If we give a lot of power to the RSPCA then it is important that the minister takes the right steps to ensure there is training and oversight.

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (12.06 pm): I rise to address the Animal Care and Protection Amendment Bill 2022. On 12 May 2022, the Queensland Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities introduced this legislation into the Queensland parliament and it was subsequently referred to the State Development and Regional Industries Committee for further examination. On 1 July 2022, the committee tabled its report with three recommendations, including that the bill be passed.

This legislation seeks to amend six specific acts and regulations: the Animal Care and Protection Act 2001, the Animal Care and Protection Regulation 2012, the Disability Services Act 2006, the Racing Integrity Act 2016, the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1936 and the Veterinary Surgeons Regulation 2016. As articulated in the State Development and Regional Industries Committee's report No. 23, this legislation primarily seeks to modernise animal welfare legislation in Queensland to 'reflect changes in contemporary science and community expectations'. On this point I note that, in his introductory speech, the Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries advised that the Animal Care and Protection Act 2001 had been in operation for 20 years without a significant review, prompting a review of the legislation in late 2020.

More broadly, the stated intent of the proposed amendments to this legislation are to strengthen various enforcement powers in order to address risks to animal welfare, prohibit certain inhumane practices and enable the development of an accreditation scheme to allow non-veterinarians to perform certain procedures on cattle. I also note that enacting this legislation will facilitate the introduction of a new so-called 'aggravated' breach of duty of care offence to apply in situations that result in the death or prolonged suffering of an animal.

The Queensland Audit Office had previously recommended that the oversight of the RSPCA Queensland be improved to ensure stronger inspectorate services and enhanced accountability of such services. With this legislation seeking to enact the Queensland Audit Office's recommendation, I note that the third recommendation of the State Development and Regional Industries Committee states—

The Department of Agriculture and Fisheries continue to implement Queensland Audit Office recommendations in full, and actively monitor and assess the performance of RSPCA Queensland in meeting its obligations under any Activity Agreement for delivering inspectorate services for the state.

This is an important recommendation especially in light of the recent tabling of the Queensland Audit Office report No. 2022-23 titled *2022 status of Auditor-General's recommendations*. That damning report found systemic issues across the Queensland state government in fully implementing the recommendations made by the Auditor-General. It is hoped that both the committee and the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries take note of the Auditor-General's recent report to ensure the timely and full delivery of the recommendations that have been made.

Taking a holistic view of this legislation, on the issue of animal protection and preservation I join with other parliamentarians in the Queensland parliament to state my unequivocal stance against animal cruelty. It is almost unfathomable that in a modern society various forms of animal cruelty can take place, including harm inflicted either intentionally or by neglect, particularly on family owned animals and pets. It is hard to believe and yet it still does occur in Queensland.

In my previous role as the Liberal National Party shadow minister for communities, disability services and seniors in the 56th Parliament, I was incredibly fortunate to see firsthand the transformational positive impact that owning family animals and pets has on Queenslanders, especially


elderly Queenslanders and those who may come from disadvantaged or vulnerable backgrounds, including those with disabilities. The overwhelming benefits of pet ownership are backed by an increasing body of empirical evidence. A 2020 report issued by the Harvard Medical School detailed a number of benefits for humans spanning across all age groups, including: the promotion of more active, secure and responsible children; and significant improvements for the lives of senior individuals, particularly in relation to combatting isolation and providing a sense of routine. Dog owners in particular have lower blood pressure, healthier and lower cholesterol levels and a lower risk of heart disease than those who do not own a dog.

Pets and family animals are also shown to have significant benefits in improving mental health outcomes by virtue of providing companionship, reducing stress, providing a sense of purpose and assisting with social interaction. There can be no question that animal protection and the prevention and eradication of animal cruelty must be paramount, yet it must be said that it is a little bit disappointing that yet again the Palaszczuk state Labor government has undertaken some substandard legislative consultation processes.

Included in the State Development and Regional Industries Committee report are multiple instances and concerning reports of the Queensland state government failing to adequately consult with key stakeholders prior to the introduction of legislation. In fact, there are even reports of industry stakeholders only becoming aware of this legislation when it was announced via the Labor Premier's Facebook page. There were close to 1,500 submissions on this legislation. That is quite considerable and not insignificant. Despite this, it would appear that the government has chosen to ignore a number of stakeholders and submitters and not meaningfully address the concerns and views that have been shared. I know that has been raised by a number of contributors to the debate so far.

In concluding my contribution today, I once again reiterate my firm support for genuine measures which seek to ensure not only the protection of animals but also the prevention of animal cruelty. As our modern society has changed, so too have many of our attitudes and expectations when it comes to animal and pet ownership. It is appropriate that legislation and regulations in this space are amended and modernised to meet these expectations. I know that in the minister's contribution he alluded to the need to modernise legislation in Queensland.

Finally, I wish to thank all members of the Queensland parliament's State Development and Regional Industries Committee for their work and examination of this legislation. In particular, I acknowledge the work of the shadow minister, the member for Gympie, in his review of this legislation and also his contribution earlier; the deputy chair, the member for Lockyer; the member for Burleigh; the committee secretariat; and all members of the committee. Again, I acknowledge the significant number of stakeholders who contributed to the committee's consideration of this legislation.

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (12.13 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Animal Care and Protection Amendment Bill 2022. Like all members of this House, I know that within my community there is always very strong interest when it comes to matters of animal welfare. We are also very lucky to have just outside my electorate the RSPCA facility at Wacol. It has a very strong influence in my electorate; a lot of people get their pets from there. Members may or may not be aware that it is the largest koala care facility in the state.

**Mr Madden:** I didn't know that.

**Ms PUGH:** There we go: it is the largest koala care facility in the state.

**Mr Madden:** Thanks for letting us know.

**Ms PUGH:** You are welcome, member for Ipswich West. We know that for many Queenslanders pets are more than just an animal that they own; they are absolutely part of the family. Indeed, many people now refer to their animals not as pets but as 'fur babies'. This is a sign of the increasing importance that owners place on their furry family members. My sister describes herself as a mother of three: she has two human children and an adorable little ragamuffin we call Captain Pants, a tiny but very energetic pugdog. There are a lot of people who would similarly describe themselves as parents of fur babies.

Due to this change in community attitudes, over the last little while in the electorate of Mount Ommaney and, I am sure, in electorates right across Queensland we have seen a lot of business growth and development in new and emerging industries. In my electorate, Pup PlayDates in Riverhills offers owners of small dogs—like my parents, who have a small dog—the opportunity to socialise their dogs with other small dogs of a similar size in a safe space. Also, Centenary Pet Sitting will check in on your furry mates while you are at work or are away. They feed, walk and play so that your animals' emotional needs are met. This is an incredibly popular business in my community. It is a growing team. Again,

this speaks to the changing community attitudes about the importance of not just looking after your pets in a physical sense but also nurturing your animals and caring for them in a loving way. These guys have a growing team at Centenary Pet Sitting. They are previous winners of my small business awards, which I will be speaking about tomorrow.

Similarly, Oz Wagtails has emerged in just the past 10 years or so but now is fully subscribed. It is like a full doggy day care centre. They will pick up your dog in a bus from your home and take them to the play centre at Sumner Road. The dogs get to go around and play. You can actually book your dog in for an excursion—they can go for a trip to the beach—and they send you little regular updates, just like you would do with children via Facebook. It is really no exaggeration to say that for many Queenslanders their furry companions are akin to their babies.

In addition to being very successful businesses, both Centenary Pet Sitting and Oz Wagtails have previously won awards in the Mount Ommaney logies, aka the small business awards, because these businesses are really popular and are really important. The community wants to support any measures that improve the safety and welfare outcomes for their furry pets. Whenever there are media reports about the mistreatment of animals, the neglect of animals or the need to rescue animals, there is always a community outcry that more needs to be done. That is what this legislation is all about.

Although Queensland has been at the forefront of animal welfare—I was glad to see us banning animal testing a few years ago—I am glad to be part of a government that is taking a very active interest and ensuring we have the most up-to-date legislation in the country when it comes to looking after our furry friends and our not-so-furry friends, as they do at the RSPCA. Queensland has often led the way when it comes to animal welfare, as I said. The interest shown in the submissions the committee received from the broader community is testament to the need for ongoing improvements and to the community sentiment about the importance of animals in our everyday lives. The member for Moggill highlighted that really beautifully when he spoke about some of the benefits that owning a dog, for example, can bring. I am on the fence: I also really love cats. I would not declare myself either a cat or a dog person. I think they are both great. I want to get one in there for the cats as well; they are good people.

**An honourable member:** Hear, hear!

**Ms PUGH:** Thank you. Cats for the win!

I express my support for the banning of prong collars on dogs. I know that there were submissions that supported these collars being kept, but I think most Queenslanders will agree that in this day and age prong collars do not need to be used. There is strong community support for the need to look after our fur babies. To put it simply, prong collars have the potential to cause fear and pain in dogs as part of their training. Surely, that cannot be good for the dogs' welfare. A number of groups also raised concerns with the use of prong collars. I note that in its submission Dogs Queensland said that it supports the banning of prong collars as detailed in proposed new section 37A(1)(a). This aligns with Dog Queensland's values regarding animal welfare, responsible dog ownership and the principles of positive reinforcement training.

This is another area that links to parenting as well. Once upon a time physically disciplining children was the norm and was what was expected. Then a lot of research emerged that it might not be the best way for people to discipline a child if they want to get a good parenting outcome. We are now seeing research emerge that when it comes to looking after animals that perhaps using fear and shock techniques is similarly not the way to get the best result from these animals. The explanatory notes outline—

If used incorrectly, prong collars can also cause physical injuries, such as bruising, scratching, and punctures to the skin of the dog. Over time, this can lead to scar tissue developing on the dog. In extreme but rare cases, prong collars have been associated with spinal cord injuries and other severe injuries.

I think we would all agree that that is the last thing we want to see for our furry friends.

It should also be noted that it is illegal to import prong collars into Australia. This was even law when the previous government was in power in Canberra. These collars are already prohibited in other states. I understand that Tasmania is investigating options when it comes to prong collars. Clearly, the time has come to stop being medieval to our animals.

There are a few other inhumane practices that this bill will prohibit. That includes the use of CSSP, otherwise known as yellow phosphorus, which is a poison used to kill pigs. That has already been stopped in other states. I know and understand that there is a need to kill feral pigs. From an environmental and agricultural point of view, most people in Queensland understand that, but wherever

possible we want it done as humanely as possible. There is also an ongoing threat of foot-and-mouth disease. With other poisons on the market, there is no need to kill inhumanely. There are poisons available to undertake these broadscale actions.

With the recent focus on the Melbourne Cup and the treatment of horses there—I think I said in an earlier contribution that my horse did not cross the finish line first and I am not much of a punter; I understand the member for Mermaid Beach usually has a few good tips—there is good news for horses—

**An opposition member:** No, he doesn't.

**Ms PUGH:** I will leave it to other members of the House to determine the veracity or otherwise of that.

**Mr Stevens** interjected.


**Ms PUGH:** You can take offence, member for Mermaid Beach. This bill will prohibit the firing and blistering of horses. The explanatory notes highlight—

These procedures have long been considered by veterinarians and horse owners to cause unnecessary pain, and to be an obsolete practice, as there is no scientific evidence to support a belief that it provides any benefits. The Australian Rules of Thoroughbred and Harness Racing also do not support the practice, and the procedure has been prohibited in other jurisdictions.

Prohibiting inappropriate practices, such as the painful practice of firing or blistering of a horse or dog, meets community expectations in relation to reducing and regulating animal welfare risks.

Outdated practices that do nothing to assist the animal should rightly be banned.

I could go on, but I think the intent of the legislation is clear. It is going to improve the lives of many animals—our little fur babies—across Queensland, without too many extra regulations for everyday Queenslanders to worry about. For those who look after their animals, like I am sure every single member of this House does, there will not be any big changes. For those doing the wrong thing this bill is going to make a big difference. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr ANDREW** (Mirani—PHON) (12.23 pm): I rise to speak on the Animal Care and Protection Amendment Bill 2022. According to the explanatory notes, one of the most important policy objectives of the bill is to facilitate the 'ethical use of animals for scientific purposes while ensuring that animal welfare is not compromised'. To achieve this, the bill makes a number of relatively minor amendments to the Animal Care and Protection Act, the ACPA. The main ones being to: firstly, allow persons other than veterinary surgeons to perform acts of veterinary science on animals used for scientific use purposes; secondly, align the definition of 'scientific purposes' with the scientific use code; and, thirdly, clarify that the scientific use register can be inspected by the public at the department's head office.

For the most part, all these changes are characterised in the bill's associated documentation as mostly minor and inconsequential changes. However, I found at least two changes the bill makes somewhat concerning. As mentioned, the explanatory notes identify one of the bill's primary objectives being facilitating the use of animals for scientific purposes in Queensland. According to my dictionary, facilitate means to make an action, or process, easy or easier. Overall, the bill's scientific use changes are more concerned with facilitating the use of animals in research than they are with offering protections for their ethical treatment.

Clause 18 amends section 48 of the act by replacing its current definition of 'scientific purposes' with that contained in the Australian code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes. Currently, the act defines 'scientific purposes' as follows—

- (1) An animal is used for "**scientific purposes**" if it is used—
- (a) in an activity performed to acquire, demonstrate or develop knowledge or a technique in a scientific discipline; or
- Examples of an activity for paragraph (a)—*
- diagnosis
  - environmental studies
  - field trials
  - producing biological products
  - product testing
  - research
  - Teaching.

The bill replaces this definition with that contained in the code, which defines 'scientific purposes' as—

All activities conducted with the aim of acquiring, developing or demonstrating knowledge or techniques in all areas of science, including teaching, field trials, environmental studies, research (including the creation and breeding of a new animal line where the impact on animal wellbeing is unknown or uncertain), diagnosis, product testing and the production of biological products.

The definition is virtually identical apart from one crucial addition—

... the creation and breeding of a new animal line where the impact on animal wellbeing is unknown or uncertain ...

Elsewhere the code states—

The creation and breeding of a new animal line, including genetically modified and cloned animals, where the impact of the genotype on animal wellbeing is unknown or uncertain is regarded as a scientific purpose. Persons responsible for animals involved in such projects are regarded as investigators.

My concern is the bill's amendment to the definition of 'scientific uses' or 'purposes' in the bill has been done to specifically facilitate the expanded use of genetic engineering and cloning of animals in Queensland. It will certainly have that effect, making it a significant change. It is one that deserved a lot more consideration in the committee process, particularly given the many ethical, biosecurity and animal welfare issues involved.

Another change is the amendment in clause 17 to omit section 47(a) of the act. This omission removes all restrictions on the supply of animals that have undergone a regulated surgical procedure. According to the act's definition, 'supply' has the meaning of 'giving or selling'. The bill's change will therefore facilitate the buying and selling of genetically modified and cloned animals in Queensland. Regulated surgical procedures are typically required for the production of genetically modified or gene-edited animals.

Further, the Queensland government has established a biotechnology code of ethics covering all areas of genetically modified organisms in Queensland. The code references the practice of xenotransplantation, also known as the creation of transgenic species. Under the code, researchers agree to—

... only use animals in xenotransplantation research if suitable alternative therapies are not available. We will make every effort to keep the number of animals used in xenotransplantation research to a minimum ...

Queensland's code already sanctions the use of xenotransplantation in Queensland. By omitting the prohibition in section 47(a) on the supply of animals that have undergone a regulated surgical procedure, it will also facilitate the commercial trade of transgenic animals here as well.

Sections 47 to 93 of the Animal Care and Protection Act 2001 contain the main legal protections afforded to animals used in experimental research in Queensland. The act has been the principal legislative framework for the protection of animals in this state since its commencement over 20 years ago. It took until 2020 for a review of that framework, despite the huge advances in medical and scientific research over the past two decades.

Australia is the fourth largest user of animals for scientific research in the world—due to the diversity we have—behind China, Japan and the US. No Australian state uses more animals for scientific research than Queensland. According to the AEC's annual reports, over 27 million animals were used for scientific purposes in Queensland between 2018 and 2021. Clearly, animal research is becoming a hugely profitable sector of the state's economy. It is also one of the least scrutinised.

It is vital that legislation keeps pace with contemporary medical and scientific standards and community expectations. Scientific practice and emerging technology should reflect societal values, especially where research may be regarded as ethically and environmentally contentious. The current mechanisms around the scientific use of animals in Queensland are woefully inadequate. They fail because the scientific researchers and their facilities appear to be mostly self-regulated. I could find no independent assessments, no evidence of governmental inspections or audits on the public record, and very little transparency or accountability on the part of the industry itself.

I am not disputing the importance of animal research in some instances or that it has not provided humanity with significant benefits over the years. What I am saying is that a proper review needs to be done on the utility and effectiveness of some of this research. Currently, research facilities provide limited details on any of the procedures they carry out on animals. Publishing this data would help go a long way towards satisfying community expectations on issues to do with animal welfare, biosecurity and other risks associated with the work.


From what I can see, the use of animals for scientific research has fallen by the wayside when it comes to many of the state's animal welfare laws. For example, the current bill introduces a requirement for CCTV cameras to be installed in abattoirs. Why hasn't the same requirement been made for Queensland's animal research facilities as well? Why has no independent inspectorate been set up to carry out regular inspections of these facilities, as happens with other animal related groups?



Earlier this year, New South Wales held an inquiry into the state's use of animals in medical research. It published a pretty damning report, along with many recommendations for changes to be made to New South Wales's outdated legislation. During the inquiry, senators were told that nearly three million genetically modified animals had been produced in New South Wales during 2019. This suggests that as many, or more, are being produced each year in Queensland as well. Currently the state's regulatory framework deals with GM animals as 'biotechnology', not 'living, breathing' creatures capable of pain and suffering. It is well known that some GM and cloned animals suffer from serious health problems for no other reason than their modified existence. It has most often been documented in GM animals with transgene expression of growth hormones. Currently there is nothing in Queensland's animal welfare legislation to deal with any of this, and that needs to change.

I refer back to my experience in the field taking care of feral animals, especially feral pigs. I will be talking to the minister today about a new pig trap that I have designed. It actually works. There are things that we do use in the field. Farmers have problems accessing different poisons and things that can control feral pig numbers. As members know, in the last couple of months here in Queensland we have had ongoing rain and numbers are growing out of proportion. I think I have caught 38 animals in the last couple of months at night-time in my area alone. That is not even scratching the surface of what is going on.

We do need to put more money forward. Last budget I talked with the minister and we looked at a \$106 million problem that was getting \$975,000—0.73 per cent of the cost of the damage is budgeted and allocated to controlling feral pig numbers. It is not good enough. I hope that has changed. I hope the minister has looked at that again. With the looming issues of foot-and-mouth disease in this state, there has to be some sort of overarching response from the government to control feral pig numbers.

 **Ms McMILLAN** (Mansfield—ALP) (12.33 pm): I rise to support the Animal Care and Protection Amendment Bill 2022. The member for Mirani's speech highlights what a diverse state we have in Queensland and how the issues that impact electorates such as the member for Mirani's versus my electorate of Mansfield are so different, and that is why this place is so important to debate such bills.

This legislation is so important in ensuring that the protection of the welfare of animals is improved. I am proud to be a part of a government that is so committed to ensuring that there are such high standards for animal welfare in our state. It has always been my belief that owning a pet or any animal comes with a duty of care and an immense responsibility. This bill will reinforce this duty of care with the extension of the existing breach of duty of care provisions. These provisions will apply in circumstances where a breach has resulted in the death, serious deformity, serious disablement or prolonged suffering of an animal. The extension will meet the same penalty as the existing provisions of 2,000 penalty units or three years imprisonment. These penalties and additional provisions are a reinforcement of the Palaszczuk government's commitment to the high standards for animal welfare.

I believe it is so important that our animals are well protected, especially given the unforgiving Queensland weather that we have all become so familiar with. Under the bill, enforcement powers of inspectors will be strengthened to improve animal welfare by allowing the inspectors to have limited entry to a place to provide relief to an animal given adverse weather conditions. Given the climate we live in where we can experience an incredibly hot and humid day and the next day be on a flood warning—something we have certainly seen recently—I believe that this is a very important amendment which will protect our animals.

The amendments presented in this bill have come from recommendations from the Queensland Audit Office report *Regulating animal welfare services*, report No. 6 of 2021-22, which will allow the strengthening of the appointment and accountability of RSPCA inspectors and the department's oversight of proceedings undertaken by the RSPCA.

I was recently joined by Minister Furner at Stackpole Street dog park in Wishart—a popular dog park within my electorate where often up to 30 dogs can gather on a Saturday and Sunday afternoon, with their owners, to have a play and for their owners to enjoy some food and drinks with other owners. It was wonderful to welcome the minister to my community to inform my constituents about this important legislation because, like me, the minister knows how vital it is to protect our animals including our domestic animals.


These animal welfare reforms that he has introduced—and I congratulate the minister—are the most significant this state has seen in more than 20 years. The legislation will introduce an amendment to the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1936 to allow researchers using animals for scientific purposes to perform procedures currently only able to be performed by a veterinary surgeon such as anaesthetics.

This will bring Queensland into line with other Australian jurisdictions but will also ensure that animal welfare will absolutely not be compromised as these researchers are already following the scientific use code and are overseen by an animal ethics committee.

Inhumane practices will be prohibited under this bill, including the firing of the leg of a horse and a dog. The bill will also prohibit the use of pig poison or yellow phosphorus. Both of these practices can lead to a long and painful death. There are much more humane alternatives available. By formally prohibiting these practices, the options will be limited and, therefore, more humane alternatives will be put in place.

I am a dog owner. I have a gorgeous two-year-old cavoodle. Her name is Coco and she is much loved by my community. In fact, I know that the Premier's mother's cat gets a lot of likes. I have to say that Coco often gets more likes than I do. She is an absolute angel. It breaks my heart to know that there are people out there who own and use prong collars on dogs. I am so glad that this legislation will prohibit such things from being used. They cause much pain and distress to dogs and absolutely compromise the welfare of dogs.

The Animal Care and Protection Amendment Bill is a crucial piece of legislation in ensuring the protections of not just a person's best friend but all animals in Queensland. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development) (12.38 pm): I rise in support of the Animal Care and Protection Amendment Bill, which builds on the groundbreaking work of the Beattie Labor government, which introduced the Animal Care and Protection Act in 2001, bringing in some of the strongest animal welfare laws in the country. This ushered in a new and much more proactive approach to animal care and protection by establishing the concept of a duty of care to animals, and it made Queensland a national leader in animal welfare legislation at the time of its introduction.

Of course, much has changed in the 20 years since and it was time for a review. It did not surprise me or anyone else in this House that there was an overwhelming response to the discussion paper that was put out by the State Development and Regional Industries Committee. In fact, I see they received 2,353 responses. It does not surprise me or anyone else, because we know that animals are members of our families. There is an instinctive response to the poor treatment of animals right across the board. We also know that even just for practical purposes they are integral to agricultural production and they provide invaluable assistance to individuals and services in detection, inspection and disability support. Many of us took part in the gathering that the minister for disabilities had out on the Speaker's Green just a couple of months ago when Vision Australia came with a number of those mighty animals that play such an important role in many people's lives.

This bill makes sure that legislation can keep pace with contemporary animal welfare standards and community expectations, which means better animal welfare in Queensland. We are passing legislation to crack down on inhumane treatment. The bill does many things, including: enhancing inspectors' powers; prohibiting the use on feral or pest animals of poisons that include pig poison; makes changes to provisions relating to the use of animals for scientific purposes; bans tail docking for cows; requires CCTV in knackeries; implements recommendations from the Martin inquiry into cruelty suffered by retired thoroughbred and standardbred horses; and introduces new penalties and a new offence that will apply to a person who commits an aggravated breach of duty of care.

Unfortunately, we do not have to do too much of a Google search to find some pretty horrific cases. I am sure the minister reads far too many confronting briefs containing stories that are really upsetting, which is the reason I know he is personally so passionate about this bill. I want to mention a couple of these, because I think it is important that, when we are debating this bill, we have in the front of our minds just how appallingly people can treat animals.

In 2020 there was a case in Toowoomba where 35 horses on one property were left to slowly starve to death. Horses witnessed their friends starve to death and were left to watch the bodies of their friends still remaining on the property slowly decompose. In 2021 the man was charged with offences under the Animal Care and Protection Act. He pleaded guilty but was only fined \$20,000 and restricted to owning horses, excluding the six already in his possession. I am sure that case comes to mind when we think about the new offences.


There was another terrible story just last week when a man in Fortitude Valley was witnessed beating a young puppy and dropping it from height. The puppy was immediately taken to the Wacol RSPCA for treatment and recovery and is now stated to be doing well. The man was charged with animal cruelty offences.

In 2021 a Rockhampton man was filmed repeatedly beating his dog, including with a shovel, as the defenceless puppy yelped in distress. Three dogs were subjected to nine months of abuse. In July this year that man was banned from owning animals for five years and ordered to pay more than \$13,000 in boarding and veterinary costs. These are just appalling stories. As I have said, we know that unfortunately there are far too many.

I want to give a shout-out to some of the mighty businesses in my electorate that go above and beyond in their care of animals. I want to mention the Bulimba Vet Surgery, the Cannon Hill Family Veterinary Surgery, the Morningside Veterinary Clinic and Greencross Vets Cannon Hill. I know they are not just businesses; they are not people who just do nine to five. They are there 24 hours so they can look after the animals that are in their care. I want to thank Judy Harbison and the team at Bulimba Vet Surgery in particular because they look after my cats, Toby and Frankie. I did hear the member for Mansfield talking about Facebook likes. I have not heard all of the speeches, but perhaps there will be more of that. I know that if my Facebook engagement is a bit low I just stick a photo of Frankie and Toby on there and that seems to do the trick. Even though they are excruciating when they bite through the iPhone charger or walk on my laptop and help me lose Word documents, they are like our family. For all of us they are such important beings in our lives. I want to thank everyone who is looking after animals all over this state and who I know will be so pleased to see this legislation come through.

I congratulate the committee on this excellent work. I am sure it may have been quite a difficult process to go through when hearing some of the stories. I want to congratulate the minister. As I said, I know that he is personally very passionate about this. I hope, Mr Deputy Speaker, that you will tolerate my also just mentioning Maud, who is one of my policy advisers. She is passionate about animals and was delighted to be doing all of the research for my speech. I want to give her a big shout-out for the work she does in her own backyard. I commend the bill to the House.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Hart): Before calling the member for Hinchinbrook, I remind all members that they must rise and seek the call if they wish to speak.

 **Mr DAMETTO** (Hinchinbrook—KAP) (12.45 pm): I rise to make my contribution to the Animal Care and Protection Amendment Bill 2022. The bill has been through the committee process. There were 1,495 submissions received in relation to this bill. The State Development and Regional Industries Committee considered the bill and recommended that it be passed. The bill was introduced in May 2022 and submissions closed 1 June 2022. The bill proposes to amend the Animal Care and Protection Act 2021, the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1936, the Racing Integrity Act 2016 and the Disability Services Act 2006.

The amendments to the Animal Care and Protection Act include a new offence for aggravated breaches of duty of care, with a maximum penalty of more than \$275,000 or three years imprisonment. It is great seeing some of those fines going up for those people who are being cruel to animals and doing the wrong thing. Animal cruelty needs to be stamped out in this state. A further amendment to the ACP Act includes the clarification of some inspector powers in relation to entry and compliance with animal welfare directions. We have some issues with this, especially how there has been a longstanding relationship between the state government, the department and the RSPCA, which I will get to further in my contribution.

There is also some clarification of minimum standards for making codes of practice under the act, including on the basis of scientific evidence. In addition, there is a new framework for cattle spraying and pregnancy testing by laypersons, which we think is great. In some places you can get the right people out there to do the job. Sometimes it has been difficult to undertake some of these roles without having a vet in place, so having those people able to do those jobs we see as a beneficial change to the act. A further amendment to the Animal Care and Protection Act requires dogs to be restrained in vehicles with an exemption for working dogs. The department reviewed the act early last year, and we are glad to see that those people with working dogs have been listened to. I acknowledge that the minister and departmental staff are doing some good work on that.

The KAP does have some issues with the next section, which is the use and possession of prong dog collars. We have heard from both sides of the House in relation to this matter. I have seen photographs of these prong dog collars. When the member for Traeger first brought the topic up with me they looked quite scary in the pictures, but when you have a go at actually wearing a prong dog collar you realise—guess what else looks scary? A bed of nails looks scary, but if you lay down on one of them you realise that when the pressure is spread across a large surface area it is just a sensation. It is not anything painful. The committee did do its job very well. They searched far and wide. I think there was one case in Belgium where a prong dog collar may have actually hurt the dog they were training it with. It is very interesting stuff.

There is a prohibition in the legislation on yellow phosphorus. Some people may not understand the feral pig problems we have in North Queensland and regional Queensland, but the Minister for the Environment would understand this very well. We have a huge pig problem not only in our agricultural sector but also in our national parks. The people who are out there trying to control this problem say they use a number of things—trapping, aerial shooting, hunting with dogs and, yes, baiting. Baiting is usually the last one they resort to when it comes to trying to control pigs. However, if one of those things is taken out of the equation, there is an opportunity for pig numbers to explode.

The KAP will be moving amendments to that part of the proposed legislation. We want to see at least a 12-month moratorium on the banning of yellow phosphorus. Lumpy skin disease and diseases like that are sitting on the edge of Indonesia right now waiting to come into Australia. Some people would understand how these diseases are spread and they would know that feral pigs are one of the ways. They would also know that they would absolutely decimate the cattle industry in Australia. I think we are being a bit premature trying to ban yellow phosphorus before we find a sustainable way to manage the pig problem. The bill also implements recommendations of the inquiry into animal cruelty in the thoroughbred horse industry in Queensland. There are some amendments to tighten up that legislation.

Currently, the Animal Care and Protection Act plays a vital role in Queensland, and getting this right is imperative. The KAP has a problem with the longstanding relationship between the department and the RSPCA, and I will outline why we have that issue. We basically have a third-party police force—that is, the RSPCA—that has the ability and the blessing of government to go out there and enforce the law and also prosecute. The issue with that is that there is ideology within this organisation that would like to stamp out a number of things that we do across Queensland with animals. We only have to go to the RSPCA website to see this. Remember that this organisation have been asked to work as a third-party police force for the department. They have ideologies which are noted on their Facebook page. They want the federal government to stop the live export of Australian sheep. They want to stop these live exports and they also have these inspectorate powers and the ability to prosecute.

There are some really good people at the RSPCA, but there are some people there working towards their self-interests and those of the ideologically driven charity. They are a charity and they are a lobby group, and they have been continuing to lobby for changes for a long time. I have even been sucked in by the RSPCA at some stage and have donated \$30 or \$40, but we have to look at the organisation as a whole. In Queensland alone, they turned over \$4 million last year, and \$500,000 of that came from the department. I encourage people to go through their website to understand why people have their hackles up, pun intended.


People were using pig dogs to control feral pigs when the first inquiry into the legislation came through, and for good reason. The minister's media release has a link to the RSPCA website saying that they will be working closely with the RSPCA, so you can understand why people have their hackles up. Their website states—

... hunting pigs with dogs ... does not have any significant effect in reducing the agricultural or environmental impacts—

Go and tell that to the pig hunters out there who are working with our farmers to reduce pig numbers. Those people are employed by councils and local government associations to control pigs. Anyone who loves the environment, loves agriculture and loves animals would understand the problem with feral pigs in this state. The RSPCA want to stop the use of hunting dogs. They want to stop hunting altogether, so people have a right to be concerned. The RSPCA website continues—

The RSPCA is opposed to recreational hunting, or the act of stalking or pursuing an animal and then killing it for sport, due to the inherent and inevitable pain and suffering caused.

A number of people have contacted our office over the last 12 months to two years with real concerns about how the RSPCA conduct themselves and how they have been extorting and harassing people. As an example, when Shane and Leichelle McMahon were running a pet store in Brisbane in 2017 the RSPCA went to their store and took 50 of their animals. After a long, drawn-out process that nearly sent this family business broke, they eventually took a fine to make the RSPCA go away. They paid \$1,750 after spending hundreds of thousands of dollars to defend themselves against this organisation that had an ideology of shutting down pet stores. We will be moving amendments to this. I look forward to talking on the topic later.

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Scenic Rim—LNP) (12.55 pm): As the shadow minister and other members of the LNP have noted, we do not oppose this bill but we do have some concerns and they have been foreshadowed in those speeches. I reflect on the contribution made by the member for Gympie in which he noted that good intentions in legislation often come with unintended outcomes, and perhaps not the

right outcomes. He said that many of the submissions to the bill noted the limited or failed consultation process for the government. That is a concern for people I represent, given there is a significant agricultural industry that relies on the management of animals, whether it is cattle, horses or other animals. Whilst I was happy to bring some concerns about this bill to the attention of the committee, I do not think there was a broadscale awareness out there in the community about the process along the entire way.

Having said that, I want to go directly to one of the issues of concern that we have, which is the ban of the yellow phosphorus pig poison. As other members have said, feral pigs are a massive problem across the length and breadth of Queensland, including in parts of the electorate I represent. In particular, they are a problem for national parks and the native wildlife and native plants in those parks. Those native plants are severely damaged by the plague of feral pigs across all parts of Queensland.

If you love national parks and you love our native wildlife, you should be able to come to a position where you support the use of the most cost-effective and efficient measures to reduce, if not eliminate, this scourge of feral pigs in our state. One of the negative elements of this bill is that the most targeted, efficient and cost-effective pig poison will be banned. I note that AgForce were not even properly consulted in relation to this. They obviously have concerns about feral pigs in the industries they represent. When it comes to supporting agriculture, they would have been the first organisation to consult if you were proposing a ban on such an effective poison to fix the feral pig problem.

When we talk about the failure to consult, we also cannot forget the provisions in this bill in relation to the prong collars. People were left wondering where those provisions in the bill came from, given there was no formal consultation about that before it was brought out in the bill, as I understand it. Serious concerns were raised about those provisions by a number of submitters, including some that I was able to put in touch with the committee.


I will touch on the amendment to section 17 and the new aggravated offence regarding a breach of a duty of care which results in the death, serious deformity, serious disablement or prolonged suffering of an animal. Reflecting on comments made by other members in relation to extenuating circumstances of primary producers, especially in times of natural disasters, and the fact that this provision effectively creates a reversal of the onus of proof in those circumstances for people working the land and working animals, it is not the way we should be treating primary producers and people who are working the land and making a living for people here in Queensland.

Debate, on motion of Mr Krause, adjourned.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.00 pm.

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### Housing and Homelessness

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (2.00 pm): After six weeks, today we finally received a report on the Queensland Housing Summit. There is not one thing in this report that will put a roof over the head of an extra vulnerable Queenslanders before Christmas. There is no sense of urgency whatsoever. You do not judge this government by another glossy brochure that they can put under their arm—you do not do that at all; you judge them by their actions. Over the last seven years, there has been a less than one per cent increase in the number of social housing bedrooms while at the same time there has been a 70 per cent increase in the number of people on the social housing waiting list. Their policy announcements have been a complete and utter failure. Let's just go through some of those announcements.


There was the grand announcement of Help to Home, where they have gone to the private sector, those that would normally invest in the private rental market, which is at record low vacancy rates—probably the worst vacancy rates in history—and encouraging them to go out of that market into the social housing market. How successful has that been? Their target was 1,000 homes over two years. Six months down the track, only 19 people have volunteered to be part of that scheme—an absolute failure.

Their next announcement was the granny flat announcement. There is no mention of the words 'granny flat' in this document. No! They had to change the name because they were embarrassed by that. There will not be one extra homeless person housed in a granny flat resulting from this announcement. It is all about the announcement, not about the action.

Then the absolute genius announcement they made this morning—I think they made it a week or two ago—is that they are going to have QBuild increased in size to build prefab homes for social housing and for government workers. I would get approached probably six times a week from Queensland owned, prefab home companies who say, 'We are here. We do it now. We can produce this.' But, no, this government have ignored these Queensland owned companies who are expert in the field to build another bureaucracy. Go to any school and talk about QBuild, they start rolling their eyes and shaking their heads. 'Fast-track' and 'QBuild' are two mutually exclusive terms. It is not about the announcement; it is about the action. This government is a fraud when it comes to dealing with the housing crisis.

(Time expired)


### Housing and Homelessness

 **Mr RUSSO** (Toohey—ALP) (2.03 pm): Many Australians experience events in their lifetime that may place them at risk of, or can result in, homelessness. Many specialist homelessness community services and not-for-profits have been watching, with trepidation, homelessness spiral out of control despite the best efforts to house people in appropriate properties with adequate support services in place. One of these groups is St Vincent De Paul. Members of local conferences have researched homelessness looking for solutions. I have been provided with a copy of a report prepared by four Vincentians who have permitted me to speak on its contents. I would like to thank Frank Ford, Narelle Bowden-Ford, Andrew Lock and Jim Lucey.

A key finding of the Vincentians' research into housing was that of all the groups forced into homelessness, currently two groups appear most vulnerable to homelessness—women over 55 and families impacted by domestic violence. The impact on women aged over 55 years was the centre of the Mercy Foundation report released in 2020, *Older women and homelessness*. This report found that that cohort of older women was the fastest growing group to experience homelessness in Australia with the figure almost double the growth rate within the homeless demographic. Sadly, research also shows that most of these women have never been homeless before, and many will move between staying with family or friends or house-sitting or even sleeping in their car. They are the hidden homeless. This group of women have suffered lifelong discrimination with their resultant financial and housing insecurity due to systemic factors such as lack of superannuation, working part-time or casually throughout their lives, taking time out of the workforce to care for family, bearing the brunt of the gender pay gap, an increasingly unaffordable private rental market, and age discrimination. A life event such as the death of a spouse, serious illness, divorce or no-grounds eviction can push a woman into homelessness. What can be done to help these vulnerable women now?

The project report by Frank and his colleagues looked into the impacts of four areas in their research and this ultimately influenced their proposal. They found that a study done in 2013 showed compelling differences in constructing stand-alone accommodation facilities and an alternative scattered site model, with the comparison done on projects where both programs opened at the same time. The construction of the stand-alone accommodation took four years to build in order to house 50 low-income families and 50 homeless individuals, at a cost of \$34 million. The scattered site model had a \$1.5 million budget with a three month start-up.

### Cross River Rail

 **Mr MINNIKIN** (Chatsworth—LNP) (2.06 pm): I noted today the drop of the Auditor-General's report No. 7 for 2022-23 titled *Major projects 2022*. What we have been saying for several years now about the Cross River Rail project is here in black and white. We have said we believe in the need for a Cross River Rail project, but it has to provide value for money for the people of Queensland and, very simply, it has to stack up. I would like to go through some of the key findings with this particular report.

The first thing it details is that it is a \$6.88 billion project, not \$5.4 billion, as has been sprouted by the member for Miller for years now. Straightaway the figure that we said from the budget two years ago is true—\$6.88 billion. However, other essential ingredients required—for example, trains and signalling—also have to be added to that figure. Stay tuned for the revised update on that.

I really want to dovetail in on the business case decision. The auditor had a look at the business cases supporting the CRR project. It looked at the original one finalised in September 2011, the one that was amended in 2016 and the one that was also done for 2017 with some last-minute changes. If we have a look at the business case, it was projected to be the one for 2016. The Auditor-General's report states—

The business case projected that the daily rail passenger usage in South East Queensland with the operation of CRR would increase by 103 per cent over the period from 2015 to 2026 (an average increase of 6.65 per cent per annum)—

in patronage, undermining the viability of the CCR. It states further—

The actual Queensland Rail Citytrain Network Passenger trips (pre-CRR) data shows the increase in passenger trips for the 4 years ... an average of 1.6 per cent ...


Let me repeat that. This was based on a benefit-cost ratio, assuming that you would actually have a 6.65 per cent increase in patronage. It is only at 1.6 per cent. It goes on to say effectively that with this particular project—it is here in the summary, on the first very page—

Any significant changes to the assumptions (a greater than 20 per cent increase in costs and 20 per cent decrease in benefits), or an extension to the delivery date of more than 2 years, may mean the expected costs exceed the benefits.

I repeat: expected costs exceed the benefits.

Here is the signature project of the Palaszczuk Labor government that they have been trumpeting for years which is going to actually cost more than the benefits that Queenslanders will receive. If you fail to plan, you plan to fail. We have said time and time again that this project is far over price and we are going to get less value for money.

### Pumicestone Electorate

 **Ms KING** (Pumicestone—ALP) (2.09 pm): Before I begin, I acknowledge the mayors in the gallery representing Queensland's resource communities and I wish them a very merry Christmas.

As we approach Christmas, I say that 2022 has been a big year for our Pumicestone communities and 2023 will be even better thanks to our Palaszczuk Labor government and our projects. I want to wish Caboolture locals a merry Christmas. Our Caboolture Hospital redevelopment is well underway. We are doubling the size of Caboolture Hospital with a new ED and a new clinical services building, delivering new services and 130 extra beds. I wish an extra warm Christmas greeting to the dedicated health workers at Caboolture Hospital, although many tell me that political attacks by the LNP grinch have cast a cloud over their Christmas.


Last weekend I visited the Abbey Museum for their medieval Christmas celebration, and 2023 looks bright for the Abbey Museum as they begin building their new cafe and art gallery with our \$2.1 million commitment. Congratulations to Lady Edith Cuffe, the 'Lady of Abbeystowe', on her retirement. I want to welcome new director Chloe to the role. Caboolture drivers will also see resurfacing of the D'Aguilar Highway beginning in the new year. Hopefully in the meantime Santa's sleigh will not get lost in the potholes that just keep popping up since the floods.

I give greetings to our Bribie Island locals this Christmas, who are watching the construction of our awesome Bribie Island satellite hospital with great excitement. Soon we will be announcing the full services for our Bribie satellite hospital including the long-hours minor accident and illness centre, mental health care, renal dialysis and much more. Health care closer to home is the best gift that our Bribie Island residents could receive.

I shared Christmas lunch with the Bribie Island Neighbourhood Centre recently. They had a great 2022 with our 81 per cent funding increase and they are looking forward to beginning construction of our new Bribie neighbourhood centre in 2023. The business case for a new Bribie Island bridge is well underway, with community consultation opening in time for Christmas. More very welcome Bribie Island Road upgrades are also in the works for 2023 and 2024. I will take this moment to note that in his first press conference after the 2020 election, the Leader of the Opposition said that he might be prepared to cut the Bribie Island bridge project.

I am wishing people in Ningi a fabulous festive season with new traffic lights at Regina Avenue under construction. This will be the last Christmas before Ningi locals have easier access to their homes and businesses via a much safer intersection, and they are delighted. Merry Christmas to people in Toorbul who have seen the Freeman Road intersection upgraded as they wished. I say happy Christmas to everyone in Beachmere who are looking forward to their new road beginning in 2023. I could not be more delighted to celebrate with them all.

### Queensland Health

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (2.12 pm): I will be blunt. It has been a horror year in the health portfolio. I take no pleasure in saying that—absolutely none. It has been a horror year and we need to be honest about it.

Our frontline health staff are exhausted and broken and many are considering walking away from their professions. That is a fact. They feel desperately hopeless and desperately sorry for the patients they treat, whether it is a Queenslanders who has phoned triple 0 for an ambulance and has been waiting

nine hours for it to arrive, whether it is a Queenslander who has waited eight hours on the hospital ramp, whether it is a Queenslander still in the ED waiting room after 12 hours, whether it is a Queenslander waiting years for elective surgery or whether it is a Queenslander waiting years just to get an appointment with a specialist. Our frontline staff have to respond to and comfort Queensland patients in these horrible circumstances each and every day. Queenslanders are suffering as a result and it is our frontline staff who are being left to pick up the pieces.


Time after time this year and last we have seen the Minister for Health's incompetence on full display. The minister has proven herself to be incapable of managing the health portfolio. Let's run through the failures just this year. Ambulance ramping hit record highs of 46 per cent this year and it is still at 44 per cent—impossibly high. The elective surgery waiting list has nearly doubled since Labor came into office. There are close to 60,000 people waiting for elective surgery. The minister seems incapable of addressing this problem. More than 270,000 patients are waiting for an appointment with a specialist. We learned that nearly 20 people died while they waited for an ambulance. One of those patients waited nine hours and one patient died while waiting in their driveway.

We have seen the atrocity that occurred at the Mackay Base Hospital, the greatest failure in patient safety in Queensland since the Jayant Patel saga. Those women were so horribly wronged, all while the minister was at the helm of the health department. It was all happening under her nose without her having the slightest idea despite it being raised with her for well over a year.

Then we had the absolute disaster that has occurred in the DNA lab. We do not know the full extent of the problems yet. However, it could turn out to be the greatest case of government maladministration in living memory, a miscarriage of justice with murderers and rapists walking free. This is what the police minister thought of it: pure politics. I say this to the minister: if having murderers and rapists walking free through our streets is the minister's version of 'pure politics', it is abundantly clear she is entirely unfit to hold the office she does.

The minister is in way over her head. Frontline staff know it. Respected stakeholder groups know it. We hear that even her colleagues know it. The Queensland public know it; they want her gone and in the Minister for Health's case, we have now arrived at that point. Time is up.

### Ipswich West Electorate

 **Mr MADDEN** (Ipswich West—ALP) (2.15 pm): When the Maddens and my mother's family, the McGuires, came to Australia from Ireland in the 1860s they settled in an area that is now the west of my electorate of Ipswich West. It includes towns like Amberley, Rosewood, Walloon, Karrabin, Haigslea, Thagoona, Mount Marrow, Grandchester, Ashwell, Tallegalla, Calvert, Minden and Marburg. Consequently, I would like to thank the Minister for Transport and Main Roads, Mark Bailey, for listening to me and providing over \$10 million in roadworks in this area. That included: retaining walls and road surfacing on Rosewood Marburg Road at Tallegalla; new road surfacing on Rosewood Marburg Road at Rosewood, on Ipswich Rosewood Road at Jeebropilly and on Karrabin Rosewood Road at Thagoona; long overdue repairs to the old Marburg railway line crossing of Karrabin Rosewood at Rosewood; as well as 60-kilometre-per-hour town entry treatments at Grandchester, Rosewood, Marburg, Walloon and Karrabin; and new road surfacing of the old Marburg railway line crossing at Karrabin.

Yet to be completed projects that I will continue to fight for include: the upgrade of the Cunningham Highway-Ipswich Rosewood Road intersection at Amberley, new road surfacing of Rosewood Marburg Road near the Tallegalla Cemetery, the Walloon to Karrabin section of Karrabin Rosewood Road and the proposed Warrego Highway-Haigslea Amberley Road intersection.


I would also like to thank the Minister for Education, Grace Grace, for funding of \$7 million for the Rosewood State High School for additional classrooms, \$250,000 for Rosewood State School to refurbish Block J and \$4.5 million for additional classrooms at Walloon State School. State schools at Marburg, Haigslea and Mount Marrow all received funding of between \$650,000 and \$800,000 for new amenities blocks. I would also like to acknowledge the principals of these schools including the state school principals: Russell Napier at Marburg, Andrew Sellick at Haigslea, Dallas Schmidt at Ashwell, Georgia O'Shea at Rosewood, Emma McBain at Mount Marrow and Lisa Noonan at Walloon, as well as Nicole Sherlock at Rosewood State High School.

Finally, I would like to thank the Minister for Police, Mark Ryan, for the funding of the proposed \$4 million Rosewood Police Station, where the officer in charge is Sergeant Travis Ehrich, as well as \$1.1 million for the new Rosewood Fire and Rescue Station, where the first officer is Captain Trevor Meier.



While I am on my feet, I would like to wish all the members of the House a safe and happy Christmas. I would also like to wish a very Merry Christmas to my electorate officer Lynne Anderson for her exemplary service at the Ipswich West electorate office. Lynne provides me with all I ask of my co-workers at the Ipswich West electorate office, which is loyalty and support.

### Water

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (2.18 pm): Water is the lifeblood of our land. It is the economic artery that bolsters agriculture, mining, industry and manufacturing. It develops our regions, creating jobs now and into the future. It supports the regional industries. The mayors who are up in the gallery know the importance of water because they support the resources regions and they also support the agricultural regions.

We know that it is only this side of the House that understands that water is so important. When the Burdekin Dam was completed in 1987, North Queensland had a population of around 105,000 people. I say to the minister that since then it has doubled. What has happened to the water storage of North Queensland? Absolutely nothing! Just like the mighty South Burnett and the mighty Granite Belt, North Queensland needs a water development plan, not a stagnating water plan that has been the same for the last 30 years.

The water development plan needs to include new water storage infrastructure. The dams that were supposedly committed to by this minister are no longer there because he says there is no business case. That is an absolute furphy. Even Townsville Enterprise are saying they have a business case; I have seen it. I have even told the minister that I will send him the business case. Hells Gates is a transformational water project that could transform North Queensland for the resources, agriculture and manufacturing industries—exactly what the population of North Queensland needs—yet we have a water minister with his head in the sand, saying that the project does not stack up.

**An opposition member** interjected.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I take that interjection: his head is underwater! How embarrassing is it for the incredible, mighty state that is Queensland that we are reliant upon agriculture, resources, manufacturing and industry, yet we have a minister who oversees a water department that just does not get it! He sits on his hands; he cannot advocate. He refuses to advocate for North Queensland. He refuses to advocate for the increasing population.


**Mr Butcher** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Martin): Member for Gladstone, I ask that you cease your interjections.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** Thank you for your protection, Mr Deputy Speaker. The Palaszczuk government needs to understand that water is vital—and not just Paradise Dam, which was an absolute debacle from the start. Let's hope that next year brings us a budget that delivers water.

*(Time expired)*

### Ferny Grove, Infrastructure

 **Hon. ML FURNER** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities) (2.21 pm): Like many others in this chamber, my electorate of Ferny Grove was heavily affected by the devastating rain events and flooding in February and March of this year. Sporting clubs went under, houses and businesses were damaged, roads were closed and projects were disrupted. If there is one thing that Queenslanders know, it is that after adversity we rebuild. I am proud to report that the affected clubs in my electorate have received grants of just under \$2 million to rebuild affected fields and replace damaged equipment and facilities. Norths Hockey, Ferny Grove Falcons AFL, West Mitchelton and West Arana Rugby League clubs, Keperra golf club, Westside football club and the Mitchelton Youth Club have all received funding to build back better than before.


Work on the landmark Ferny Grove Transit Oriented Development is continuing, with stage 1 due to be completed early in the New Year. Stage 1 will provide a massive increase to parking at the station and has already provided a cash injection to our community through hundreds of well-paid construction jobs. This project, like many others across the region, was also affected by the extraordinary weather events we experienced this year, but it is still on track to be completed by the year 2024.

Schools in my electorate continue to benefit from the record investment in education by this government. What a great education minister we have—the best in this parliament. From new and refurbished classrooms across the electorate to an entire revamp of the Mitchelton Special School,

students will be learning in the latest state-of-the-art facilities. I am pleased to report that the next round of construction is about to kick off on major upgrades across the electorate, from Patricks Road—which again featured in NAPLAN results—to Oakleigh, which will also see construction for a new sports and performing arts hall. This infrastructure is something that generations of Oakleigh families have wanted for their students at the school and is something that I promised to deliver at the 2020 election. Soon we will be breaking ground for that project and we will deliver on that promise.

I am pleased to report that, even though it has been a tough year for many people, we are rising above those challenges and the future of our community has never looked better. I join with many other colleagues in the chamber this afternoon in wishing those on both sides of the chamber a very merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year. I also wish the regional mayors from Central Queensland—many of whom I communicate with, time and time again, along with my ministerial colleagues—the very best for a prosperous New Year. They are salt-of-the-earth people who know our regions and know that they can rely upon the support of the Palaszczuk government. We deliver for them time and time again. We know the issues they face in their regions. That is why the Palaszczuk government is completely focused on delivering on their needs right across their sectors. We will continue that support throughout next year and into 2024.

### Forestry Industry

 **Mr PERRETT** (Gympie—LNP) (2.24 pm): This government is being defined by a litany of broken promises and integrity scandals. They have consequences. Broken promises and failed timber policies are driving up the price of housing construction and renovation. Labor's failed policies span years of successive Labor governments. Former premier Beattie signed the South East Queensland Regional Forest Agreement in 1999. He promised a long-term transition to a timber industry based on plantation timber. Labor promised that it would provide confidence and supply for the next 50 to 100 years. His primary industries minister Henry Palaszczuk promised 5,000 hectares and 10 million trees. Labor governments talk big but continually fail to deliver. In 2010, the Bligh-Fraser government sold off the \$1.3 billion Forestry Plantations Queensland for \$600 million in an asset sale—less than half its value.


Labor is not committed to long-term forest resource sustainability. The situation continues to deteriorate, because this government is only interested in PR, not delivery. That Australia faces a timber deficit of 250,000 house frames by 2035 represents a major sovereign capability gap in timber production. Timber supply needs to increase. We urgently need to grow our timber plantation estate. This month, a joint federal and state government landmark study found that state forests deliver better long-term social outcomes than if they were managed as national parks in south and central Queensland. I look forward to the agriculture minister's response.

Three years ago, the Premier announced with great fanfare a timber action plan. It took almost two years to finally appoint her major advisory body. We have not seen even one recommendation made. The promised comprehensive two-year study to identify sustainable options for future timber supply is a year overdue. We have seen nothing. Actions have consequences; inaction has consequences. This crisis is directly attributable to systemic failures by Labor governments. If Labor had implemented the commitments they made 20 years ago, we would not be in this situation today.

As we face a housing crisis, the government is unable to understand the contribution of its anti-forestry, anti-timber agenda. The result is that Queenslanders will continue to pay more for housing, rent and renovations. Sourcing tradespeople is notoriously difficult. This issue is exacerbated in rural and regional communities hit by floods. Repairs face months of delays.

In early October I wrote to the Deputy Premier requesting a commonsense 12-month extension to the disaster grant submission period. The inability to source contractors and tradespeople and to access areas which are waterlogged has made this urgent. I have followed up twice, seeking urgent action. Five weeks ago the Deputy Premier ignored the request, effectively refusing to listen to disaster affected businesses and agricultural producers. Only when journalists started asking questions, threatening their crafted public image, did the government act—less than three weeks before it expired. The three-month extension is welcomed but, given many businesses close over Christmas and the forecast wet summer, why isn't the extension longer?

### Coronavirus, Response

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (2.27 pm): On Monday night the TJ Ryan Foundation did an excellent presentation in the red chamber on the topic 'Plague, policy and people: a history of policy response to plague in Queensland'. I gave a brief speech outlining the government response to COVID

to put it into context. It was illuminating. There were many parallels between COVID and the plague outbreak in Queensland in 1900. Some 57 Queenslanders died at that time. As I said, it was very illuminating. The speech gave me a chance to highlight our outstanding response to the COVID pandemic.


At the pandemic's peak, over 1,000 beds in our public hospitals were occupied by COVID patients. Throughout the pandemic more than 8.6 million PCR tests were conducted and more than 12 million vaccinations were administered across 925 different vaccination locations. Since 13 December last year we have had more than 132,000 bed days occupied by COVID patients. Nearly 350,000 staff days have been lost due to isolation or quarantine since March this year, and over 493 public health directions have been issued.

The participants at the seminar were really impressed with what our Queensland Health staff had done in response to the pandemic. They were proud of what we had achieved and it made me think how different the approach of the Palaszczuk government is to that of the LNP. The Palaszczuk government lauds Queensland Health staff and supports those who have worked so hard in this pandemic, but the LNP always attacks and undermines our Queensland Health staff. The LNP called for the borders to be opened 63 times which would have placed intolerable—

**Ms Lauga:** Sixty-four times!

**Mr WHITING:** Sixty-four; I stand corrected. That would have placed intolerable pressure on our frontline staff. It constantly criticises our emergency department workers who are either working double shifts or triple shifts and it undermines our paramedics by continually talking about the timeliness of our ambulance response. Let us never forget that the LNP sacked 4,400 Queensland Health staff, including 1,800 Queensland nurses. Let us compare that with the Palaszczuk government. We have put on over 15,000 frontline staff since we came into government. We are employing over 9,000 more frontline health staff in this term. We are building three new hospitals whilst undertaking 11 refurbishments and building one new cancer centre, and we pay our nurses fairly given that the EBA has got up with over 90 per cent acceptance.

### Tallebudgera Connection Road, Koalas

 **Mrs GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (2.30 pm): Earlier this year I stood in this chamber and I warned this House of a dangerous stretch of Tallebudgera Connection Road that locals have taken to calling the 'devil's elbow'. It took crash after crash and a massive community campaign for the minister to even acknowledge this dangerous road. While we wait for this state government to take the action that it has promised to make this road safer, there has been yet another tragedy. Hernando Half Penny was a much loved member of our community. He was a valley local. He brought a smile to the faces of those who drove past his home on Tallebudgera Connection Road and he played a vital role in conservation efforts not just in our valley but right across Australia. Tragically, on 7 November 2022 Hernando's life was horrifically taken when he was run over while crossing Tallebudgera Connection Road.


The road is not well lit, it is prone to hooning and speeding and Hernando lost his precious life because of this road. So much more could have been done by this state government to have protected Hernando. However, I am not talking about a human life and I have intentionally framed my contribution this way not to trivialise the human cost of this road but because, to quote Wildcare representative and advocate Joanne Brierley, 'They always focus on the human aspect and they think if no humans get hurt they don't need to do anything.' Hernando was a Currumbin Wildlife Hospital research koala and I want to see this state government take action to fix this dangerous road not just for the human lives at risk but for Hernando. Hernando was one of 30 healthy research koalas vaccinated against chlamydia and released back into the wild. He is the 98th recorded koala death along Tallebudgera Connection Road since 2010.

**Mr Stevens** interjected.

**Mrs GERBER:** I take that interjection. Last week I joined the community on Tallebudgera Connection Road to discuss solutions. Our community wants to see this state government immediately implement measures along Tallebudgera Connection Road to keep them safe and our koalas safe. The wildlife flashing awareness monitors have been broken for months, but this state government has refused to fix them, saying there is no money in the budget. The whole road needs better lighting which would make it safer for road users as well as our koalas. The government should also consider some fencing along key areas to funnel the koalas—which are going to cross there regardless because koalas like living on the fringes—into safer areas to cross. This state government could be doing so much more

not just to protect our community on Tallebudgera Connection Road but to protect our koalas, which are endangered. How many more lives need to be lost on Tallebudgera Connection Road at 'devil's elbow' before this state government takes action?

### **Maryborough Fire and Emergency Services Complex**

 **Mr SAUNDERS** (Maryborough—ALP) (2.34 pm): 22 November in Maryborough was a red hot day. It was a great day. It was the opening of the Maryborough Fire and Emergency Services complex. It is so special because it is the first mass-produced timber fire complex in the state. It is absolutely brilliant. One of the good things about it—


**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SAUNDERS:** We hear the peanut gallery over there. Honestly, they have no idea about regional Queensland. That is why their numbers are so low in regional Queensland. For this fire complex the timber was grown locally, produced locally and put together by local tradespeople. It is a local fire complex. While I am on my feet I want to thank some people. The former treasurer and now Speaker of this place, the member for Mulgrave, Curtis Pitt, was there with me from the start. Police Commissioner Katarina Carroll when she was the QFES commissioner was absolutely supportive of this project. The current QFES minister in the House has been along for the ride from day one with me and with the QFES and Maryborough communities. I also want to thank the Treasurer.

One of the good things about this building is that we kept the old fire station that was built in 1951 which has the Maryborough bricks, the old banana bricks as we call them, and we have built the new fire station along with it, and it is absolutely tremendous. A lot of work went into it. Hutchies, the builders, were fantastic. Hyne Timber supplied all of the timber from the glulam factory in Maryborough that the Palaszczuk Labor government supported with grants to get it up and running. We had Katie Fowden from Hyne. We had the QBuild staff and the QFES staff. Everyone worked together. That is what happens when a government is committed to regional Queensland, committed to making sure that regional Queensland has the services it needs—not only the services but the buildings to go with those services. As a result, we have top firefighters in our region in a locally built timber fire station.

I also want to thank Adrian Massingham from the United Firefighters Union. He did a tremendous job working with QFES, QBuild, Hutchies and Hyne to ensure that we got the right outcome for the firefighters. I also want to thank Steve from the Together union. It was a collaborative effort—from the minister's office right through to everyone putting this fire station together. This is an example of what can be done when everyone works together. The result is a fire complex worth over \$14 million which is an iconic building in Maryborough city. The difference between us and the other side is that we build while they cut, they sack and they sell. Could members imagine that if they were in government we would not have our new fire complex? We only have this because of the Palaszczuk Labor government.

### **Minister for Education, Performance**


 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (2.37 pm): The Christmas season is fast approaching and the 2022 school year is coming to a close, and I know that all members of the House will wish all students all of the best for the holiday season. The final report cards for Queensland students are being sent home, but it is really the 2022 report card and performance of the Labor Minister for Education that I am most interested in, so let us have a recap of this year. There was absolute and utter chaos, confusion, panic and dysfunction when mixed messages from the Premier and the Labor Minister for Education saw school closures, with parents across South-East Queensland rushing to collect their children from school, and that was due to the poorly communicated emergency management advice at the time. In times of natural disaster we need clear, calm and consistent messaging. It is absolutely vital that is passed on.

Also throughout this year there has been no shortage of damning reports, official findings and examples of sheer incompetence which have highlighted how our education system in Queensland is continuing to suffer and being let down due to the poor oversight and administration and failures of the state Labor government. Let us have a look at that. The Labor state government's own budget papers this year revealed that not a single educational target across years 3, 5, 7 and 9 in reading, writing and numeracy was achieved, and that is in its own budget papers! Further, educational targets for Queensland's First Nations students were not met, with substantially lower outcomes being achieved in First Nations communities when compared to other students across Queensland. The state Labor government should be absolutely ashamed of this, yet we hear no comprehensive strategy to address the decline in these educational outcomes, particularly in First Nations communities.

This year's state budget estimates also underscored the questionable figures and accounting that the Labor state government communicates when it comes to the true nature of problematic teacher workforce capacity. As was revealed in a recent committee hearing, the department does not even ask teachers why they are leaving our education system when one would think that this metric would be important for the government.

The excuses and rubbery explanations from the Labor government regarding teacher workforce staffing and capacity is, frankly, embarrassing. Throughout the year our hardworking teachers and staff have continued to be let down by a state Labor government that has no comprehensive plan or realistic measurable targets to decrease the rising violence and disruption in our schools and, in turn, regain control of teacher and staff safety within our schools. The Queensland Auditor-General reported this year a cost blowout of more than \$23 million when it came to just two school infrastructure projects alone. This has all occurred under the Labor government. These are very deeply concerning failures that we are seeing here. Student outcomes are suffering and parents, teachers and staff have been abandoned by this Labor government. In the spirit of Christmas, I wish the Minister for Education all the best with her homework over the holiday period—I am happy to offer her tuition—as we look to a happy and healthy 2023.

### Ipswich, Health and Wellbeing


 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (2.40 pm): Creating a healthier Ipswich community is something I am passionate about and it is why I am pleased to acknowledge today the great work being done by a local health and wellness initiative in Ipswich called My Local Health. My Local Health was kickstarted last year by Camilla Thompson, a pharmacist and inspiring social entrepreneur who is driven to create better health, wellness and fitness outcomes for Ipswich. Camilla set up the My Local Health digital health directory website last year to connect local Ipswich people to health professionals and to get information and advice about various health, wellness and fitness topics. My Local Health also hosted its first sports expo in March this year and its first health and fitness expo last month. The sports expo and health and fitness expo will become regular events in Ipswich. I was proud to support them. It will allow local people to meet one-on-one with health and fitness providers all in the same place. There are opportunities to sign up to the local gym, talk to allied health professionals or join local sports clubs.

Ipswich has a proud sporting history and has an above average number of local sports clubs that nurture future sporting professionals and champions. Camilla from My Local Health understands this well and she has tapped into that local sentiment. However, while we certainly love our sport in Ipswich there is still a lot more we can do to help local people adopt healthier lifestyles and take up regular exercise. Ipswich's rate of obesity currently sits at 35 per cent. It is well above the state average which is 25 per cent. Our incidence of chronic disease in the community is also well above the state average. More people in Ipswich on average suffer from diabetes, cardio vascular disease, arthritis, asthma and mental health and behavioural problems. The end result is that most of West Moreton Health admissions are made up of people presenting with chronic disease conditions.

With our city's rapidly growing population, as well as our aging population, our local hospital and health services are under a lot of pressure. The need to expand Ipswich Hospital and invest more resources into Ipswich health services is something that I and the Palaszczuk government have recognised, with \$146.3 million committed over five years to carry out stage 1 of the Ipswich Hospital expansion and a further \$710 million committed for stage 2 which will deliver 200 additional hospital beds by 2027. The investment shows this government's commitment to delivering world-class hospital and health services for Ipswich that meet our unique health needs.

Private and community health providers also have an important role to play in helping to improve health outcomes for Ipswich people. Most importantly, individuals have a role to play. One way we can do this is by reaching out to the many fantastic free and affordable local health providers we are fortunate to have in Ipswich, such as My Local Health; the Ipswich Hospital Foundation, which provides great free exercise classes locally; Kambu Medical Centre; Neami National; and Stride Hub. All of these can empower us to take charge of our own health and support us along the way. I urge Ipswich people to take advantage of it.

### Youth Crime


 **Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (2.43 pm): In October the Premier announced the possible construction of another youth detention centre in the Cairns region. Not only is this a waste of money; it will do nothing to resolve the youth crime crisis. The state government continues to dodge and weave its way through dealing with youth crime and has clearly shown it has no idea. It believes that more of the same

approach is the remedy. Try telling that to the victims of homes that are ransacked, family members who are bashed or those who have had cars stolen and burnt. This clearly shows that doing the same thing over and over again does not work. Six months ago former police commissioner Atkinson handed down his report on youth justice to the government, which it then sat on and only recently released publicly. Why? Because they needed six months for their spin doctors to whip up an illusion that everything is fine—what youth crime issue? However, no amount of spin can hide the fact that youth offenders are being further criminalised by a broken youth justice system.

It is a simple fact that in 2022 youth are committing more serious and violent offences than ever before. Twenty-five per cent more committed serious offences while on bail, and offences leading to death or harm while on bail increased by 30 per cent. Ninety-five per cent of youth reoffend within the first 12 months after being released from detention centres. I have to say that again: 95 per cent of youths released from detention centres reoffend within the first 12 months. Constructing another youth detention centre is like building a university to secure a degree in criminality. To add further insult, youth are committing crimes to get into detention centres which costs Queensland \$1,500 a day. Then we send them straight back to the same community where the data shows they commit even more violent crimes.

KAP have long proposed stricter youth justice laws be put in place and an alternative sentencing model of relocation sentencing introduced. We have a policy. Relocation sentencing gives magistrates the power to get these youths out of town and send them to remote locations, teach them values, teach them skills such as driving and how to build cattle yards and cattle troughs, along with other proven workable programs. One can call it tough love, but we need stronger laws to act as a deterrent plus alternative options such as relocation sentencing, not weak policies that do not work in the real world.

### Thuringowa Electorate

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (2.46 pm): I would like to finish this final sitting week of the year updating the House and the very good people of Thuringowa on the achievements of the near \$200 million worth of election commitments in 2020 and what is going to happen in 2023. I will do this by way of a flyover of the electorate. I will start in the area of Heatley where \$12 million worth of school upgrades have been achieved at the secondary college. I am glad the education minister is here. The school community is very happy. The school is looking very modern for a 50-year-old school. Hats off to the team at Clontarf who recently graduated.

Heading past Heatley primary we pass some social housing that has just been built on Fulham Road. I was joined by the member for Mundingburra to look at that development. We will next head over to Thuringowa Drive in Kirwan where the Kirwan primary school is getting a \$2.8 million facelift. That will be kicking off in 2023. They are very excited.

I want to pay a special tribute to Ruth Stainbrook, who was the CEO of FEAT, Family Emergency Accommodation Townsville, for 32 years. She has just retired. I wish her well. They continue to look after vulnerable people in Thuringowa.

We will next fly up to Thuringowa and head right over the site of the new \$40 million Kirwan health campus, which I had a briefing on this week. I thank the health minister. It is looking great. The staff look forward to the sod turn in the New Year. Just to the right of that is the old 1300SMILES stadium. It is being redeveloped. I am glad the police minister is here. That will be the site of the new \$30 million Kirwan police facility and emergency services centre.


**Mr Mander:** You are going to take away the memory of my first game there!

**Mr HARPER:** I am glad you brought that up. I take that interjection. I am working with the CEO of the Cowboys and we are going to name some of the new wings in conjunction with the community and Cowboys. I have seen some initial drawings of the site.

Next we are going to fly over the \$235 million Townsville Ring Road stage 5. It has created 400 jobs and it is progressing well. I know everyone wants to know what is going on with Riverway Drive stage 2. It starts next year. There is a \$33 million water pipeline being funded by us and council so we can start on Riverway Drive stage 2. Stage 1 saw a \$50 million private investment in a new shopping centre and it recently won a state award for the best and most excellent plaza in the state. Well done, Geon! All of these projects are creating jobs for Thuringowa. I wish everyone a safe and happy holiday and I will see you in 2023.

*Tabled paper:* Document, undated, regarding Riverway Plaza [\[2035\]](#).

### Whitsunday Electorate, Department of Transport and Main Roads

 **Ms CAMM** (Whitsunday—LNP) (2.49 pm): I want to talk about consultation or, I should say, the lack of consultation by TMR and Minister Bailey's office, particularly in Central Queensland. On Sunday I had the privilege of meeting Chloe, an eight-year-old girl who was learning to surf at North Wall harbour with her dad, Todd. She had put a lot of effort into making a sign that said, 'Save our North Wall turtles'. I spent the morning with almost 300 residents from Mackay and my electorate of Whitsunday. We went onto the beach and, with all the manpower we had, spelt out a big 'no'. The community of Mackay will not see North Wall beach taken from the community and, more importantly, the over 128 long back turtle hatchlings that have nested there over the past three years, even though the minister's own department said publicly that there are no turtles on North Wall beach. That demonstrates a lack of consultation and how out of touch the minister and his department are.

I acknowledge the work of Mick Rowan, Mick Depinto and Kim Edwards and thank them for their advocacy. It was only when I attended that event with over 300 others that I learned that they have gone to the member for Mackay to seek her advocacy. It sure would have been great to see her on the beach at 7 am last Sunday.

I want to highlight some of the other challenges with TMR's lack of consultation. Madalyn and Bill Kingsbury have a home business on the Bruce Highway at Knobels Road. The upgrade at that intersection is atrocious. TMR project managers were advising people to make illegal U-turns because they have chosen to change the design and upgrades to the road with no consultation. On 10 November I wrote to Minister Bailey, asking him to investigate and intervene. Still I have received no response.

Finally, I have been speaking about the Shute Harbour boat ramp since I first entered this House. I acknowledge the advocacy of Adam Anderson, who founded the 12,000-strong 'Fishing in the Whitsundays' Facebook group. The boat ramp was upgraded at a cost of \$1.8 million, but without consultation or advice from the Whitsunday Regional Council and the department did not engage with the fishing community. There are crocodile warning signs. I table in the House this picture of the boat ramp.


*Tabled paper:* Photograph depicting a boat ramp [\[2036\]](#).

I have certainly written to the minister already on this matter. I would like to see some safety signage about stingers as it is now irukandji season. When the minister sees the design he will certainly know how dangerous it is.

I want to give a little shout-out to the Attorney-General, and I am pleased to see her here today, on behalf of the men of Mackay and the Whitsundays and those from Triple M. I was pleased that the Attorney-General trolled through my social media. The dads of Mackay and the Whitsundays are proud of their dadbods. We will not be shamed or lectured to by the Attorney-General. We are proud of our dadbods.

*(Time expired)*

### Kurwongbah Electorate, Schools

 **Mr KING** (Kurwongbah—ALP) (2.52 pm): I also have some positive news about education. Today I rise to sing the praises of schools across the Kurwongbah electorate and to thank all my local principals, school staff and P&C executives for the work that they do. Around six weeks ago I hosted two round tables—one for local school principals and another for P&C and P&F representatives. I want to thank Minister Grace for coming along to the principals' day. I have had outstanding feedback and I will put my hand up now to say that I am hoping the minister can come back next year for round 2.

I know our principals appreciated hearing firsthand about our Equity and Excellence strategy, which is a new vision for Queensland education to ensure every child has the opportunity to realise their full potential. We made the most of our chance to tell the minister about the biggest challenges schools are facing right now. The principals were happy to talk about support levels for students with high needs, staffing challenges, teacher safety, the cost of improving or expanding school facilities, the availability of tradies because of COVID, and car parking and road safety around schools, which is always a common theme. I also asked each principal to borrow from Lawnton State School's theme of 'Dream big' and tell us what they most wanted for their school community. The answers ranged from new facilities and classroom upgrades to partnerships with health support services, having kindies in schools and access to more data such as the reasons for student absence and its impact on learning.

We had four showcase award-winning schools in the room. A big congratulations goes to Burpengary State School—


**Mr Whiting:** Hear, hear!

**Mr KING:** I know the member for Bancroft particularly loves Burpengary State School—Jinibara State School, Narangba Valley State School and Lawnton State School. Ten out of the 13 schools across my electorate were represented by their principals and/or deputy principals on the day. Thanks to everyone who came along.

Parent representatives described a different set of challenges during our P&C and P&F round table, with availability of volunteers being the biggest issue in just about every school. I say to anyone who wants to get involved in a P&C or P&F to please volunteer some time. If you have a blue card then help out. It helps all of our kids' education. Other issues they talked about included the struggle to keep prices down, cultural changes and negativity on Facebook pages, which was a big issue for P&Cs and P&Fs. I am a big believer in the power of collaboration and it was awesome to hear parent representatives sharing their stories of what is or is not working for them in the way of uniform suppliers, tuckshop facilities and volunteer recruitment strategies. Early next year we are hoping to put together a 'come and try' day to encourage more parents, grandparents and citizens to get involved at school.

I am so proud of my local schools. I thank the Minister for Tourism, Innovation and Sport for recently coming to Burpengary State Secondary College to talk about inclusivity in sport. Last week, the Treasurer and I went to Narangba Valley State High School to look at TAFE training within schools. I look forward to inviting more ministers to Kurwongbah schools next year.

### Lansdown Eco-industrial Precinct

 **Mr WALKER** (Mundingburra—ALP) (2.55 pm): Today I rise to talk about the Lansdown Eco-industrial Precinct at Woodstock in Townsville. Recently, with the Mayor of Townsville, I had the opportunity to turn the first sod as the North Queensland Hydrogen Champion and on behalf of the Palaszczuk Labor government. That marked the start of the first hard infrastructure for the Lansdown Eco-industrial Precinct. It is another step forward in the Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan, which is a real plan for 70 per cent renewable energy by 2032 meaning affordable energy and good jobs.


Lansdown is the beneficiary of a \$76 million joint commitment by both the Palaszczuk state government and the Albanese federal government. I might add that it is fantastic to be able to finally work with a federal government that understands the need for affordable energy and good jobs for the future. In 2001, the site was put on the market by the then Howard Liberal National federal government, which was selling off the country's assets. At that time the mayor of Townsville was Tony Mooney AM and he organised for the Townsville City Council to purchase the former CSIRO site with the vision of it being a future industrial location. The rest is history.

Today, we can now move further into the green economy and the renewable energy space of the future, which includes solar, battery storage, hydrogen and all the new emerging technologies that make renewable energy more affordable and the norm as we move forward to meet the ever-growing demands for affordable energy. It also embraces the Palaszczuk Labor state government's Energy and Jobs Plan.

This is not only the right thing to do; it meets community expectations for a clean, green economy as well as a clean, green planet moving forward. The people of Queensland, especially our young people, are more educated and informed when it comes to caring for the environment. They demand clean, green industries, a bright energy future and affordable electricity. Renewable energy is the future that will meet the growing demands of industry to produce our electric vehicles, our homes, our computers and our phones. We know the demands will grow increasingly for more affordable energy.

Those opposite will continue to say, 'Just keep burning the coal.' We have not stepped away from coal. Coal will always play a vital role in steel manufacturing. We know that for some time coal will be part of the mix moving forward when it comes to making steel to build industry and the homes of the future. The Palaszczuk state government has invested over \$400 million on water security for the people of Townsville and the region. From that infrastructure another raw water pipeline will be built to the Lansdown Eco-industrial Precinct. In fact, the tenders have just been called for the 16-kilometre pipeline to the Lansdown site.

### Palaszczuk Labor Government, Resources Industries

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (2.58 pm): This tired and arrogant third-term Palaszczuk government has given up on governing in Queensland's best interests. We know there are integrity issues plaguing this government. We hear about a new scandal every day. For this reason, government service delivery falls by the wayside, industry suffers, uncertainty grows and Queenslanders pay more. The two ministers I shadow are perfect examples of this. Labor's resources minister talks a big game,



especially when there is an opportunity to be in the limelight and gain the attention of the media. He desperately tries to be relevant but in this House, around the cabinet table and when it counts the resources minister is ever so silent.

This is a minister who refused to speak against his own government's increase to coal royalties, making Queensland the highest taxing jurisdiction in the world. This minister refused to repair broken trade partnerships stemming from his own government's broken promises—broken promises which threaten the future investment in critical minerals exploration and important investment in renewables, considering the effect of the recent Land Court decision.

This minister, as part of the Labor government, refused to allow scrutiny of this government's own legislation, forcing confidentiality contracts on consultation for a bill that has the potential to again undermine confidence in Queensland's resources industry. This minister was forced to reintroduce legislation on mining safety which, two years later, was still poorly consulted on and poorly constructed and, most importantly, is not in the best interests of the safety of Queensland's mineworkers. This minister has failed to address workforce shortages and training and skills development requirements—common issues within the industry.

Labor's embattled energy minister is no different. I note that the CFMEU as recently as today has called on him to resign, calling into question his integrity. Media reports today also expose government owned corporations Powerlink and CS Energy threatening to withdraw membership from the Queensland Resources Council. The fact that these corporations would withdraw because the QRC is challenging the government's decision-making is astounding. Was this decision a captain's call by Labor's energy minister? We know that the government does not like negative publicity. Its members will do anything they can to deflect, distract and attack, but this is an issue of the Premier and her ministers' own making.


What we are seeing from Labor's energy minister distracts from what the government's priority should be: reliable, affordable and sustainable energy. Federal Labor has already said that electricity bills will rise by over 56 per cent. Today we are reminded in the *Courier-Mail* that the average household electricity bill will soar by more than \$800 over the next two years. Labor is more interested in public spats with industry and spin than in addressing these spiralling cost increases. Queenslanders deserve so much better than those opposite.

## LEGAL AFFAIRS AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

### Report, Motion to Take Note

Resumed from 10 November (see p. 3571) on motion of Mr Russo—

That the House take note of the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee Report No. 34, 57th Parliament, *Oversight of the Office of the Information Commissioner*, tabled on 9 September 2022.

 **Mr MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (3.02 pm): I rise to address the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee report No. 34 dealing with the oversight of the Office of the Information Commissioner. While the committee report is pretty generic, I would like to place on record my view of the right-to-information process in Queensland and the need for improvement, including in the Office of the Information Commissioner.

The right-to-information process in Queensland is more akin to pulling teeth with a pair of pliers than it is to openness and transparency. In my experience, it is clear that the Office of the Information Commissioner is not able to act effectively as it stands. Either by design, through chronic under-resourcing or because of a lack of desire, state government departments and the Office of the Information Commissioner preside over a system that makes the provision of information exceptionally time-consuming and complex and places an excessive weight on considerations that favour the non-release of information when the predominant consideration should be promoting good governance in the public interest.

I submitted an RTI request in April 2021—that is 19 months ago—and it still is not finalised. The request for critical information relating to the running of the Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service has hit roadblock after roadblock. It is this government's current process of delay tactics that is being used to hide crucial information from the public. By keeping these matters secret, it is preventing real change in our health system. The RTI request I submitted was prompted by approaches from doctors, nurses, health administrators and other Queensland Health staff, all of whom raised a toxic culture that existed within the Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service emanating from the then CEO, Naomi Dwyer, and the then chief operating officer, Karlyn Chettleburgh. The actions of both, it has been

reported to me and as supported by Queensland Health documents I have received, were completely unacceptable and resulted in adverse patient outcomes, and some of the people who approached me spoke of the impact of their actions on them personally, including resignations from Queensland Health and even serious mental health conditions.

When whistleblowers advised me that the Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service board were made aware of these issues but had not acted decisively, I submitted an RTI request. What I have experienced in response is an attempt to delay by the health service on the Sunshine Coast. Only when faced with advice that I would be making the media aware of their failure to meet legislative requirements under the RTI Act did they manage to miraculously find the resources to deal with my request. Even then, what I received was only part of the information.

Through the process, the Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service has managed multiple times to miraculously find 'missing documents'—missing documents, I might add, that provide damning evidence of the very issues I was seeking to address. Such documents were only identified when I made it clear to them that I was already aware of some of those specific documents I had asked for and that the fact they had not been identified until that time made it very clear that the Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service was, either deliberately or due to incompetence, not dealing with my RTI request in an appropriate manner. It hardly creates confidence. Even when those documents have been identified, I have had to fight tooth and nail to get anything released.

The response to my RTI request reeks of a cover-up by Queensland Health. The request was made after whistleblowers came to me seeking help. They made serious allegations of verbal abuse, physical abuse and harassment of medical staff and senior executives. Multiple complaints were made to the board. I find it very hard to believe that the current health minister or her predecessors were not aware of the toxic culture running through the veins of the Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service. If they did not know, perhaps that is even more concerning.

This information is critical because without accountability there can be no real change. The effect of the toxic culture created by the former CEO and the former chief operating officer has been a health service that is among the worst performing in the state. That is clear by the latest health data which was released a month late: ambulance ramping at Sunshine Coast University Hospital is at 44 per cent and elective surgery waits on the Sunshine Coast are at 43 per cent, the worst in the state.

It is clear that my RTI request has been deliberately thwarted. The only conclusion that can be reached about information being hidden in the manner it has been and RTI requests being met with obstacles and huge delays is that the state government is ashamed of what will be uncovered. This particular RTI request of mine is just one example of what is happening in government departments right across Queensland and how it is impacting the delivery of government services.

The Office of the Information Commissioner would be far more effective in helping members of the public and agencies in creating positive change if the Premier, her government, her ministers and ministerial staff would just back off and let them do their job. Queenslanders deserve an open and transparent government that governs in their interests and not in the interests of those opposite. The government should do better.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

### Report, Motion to Take Note



**Mr RUSSO** (Toohey—ALP) (3.07 pm): I move—

That the House take note of the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee Report No. 35, 57th Parliament, *Oversight of the Office of the Queensland Ombudsman*, tabled on 9 September 2022.

Under the Ombudsman Act 2001, the committee's functions are: to monitor and review the performance of the Ombudsman and of its functions; report to the Assembly on any matter concerning the Ombudsman, its function or the performance of the functions that the committee considers should be drawn to the Assembly's attention; examine each annual report tabled in the Assembly under the act and, if appropriate, to comment about any aspects of the report; and report to the Assembly any changes to the functions, structures and procedures of the Office of the Ombudsman the committee considers desirable for the more effective operation of the act.

As a committee we reviewed the Queensland Ombudsman's annual report for 2020-21, which was tabled on 27 September 2021, and held a public hearing with representatives from the Queensland Ombudsman on 9 May 2022. The committee's recommendation was that the Legislative Assembly note the contents of the report. In order to fulfil our oversight of the Queensland Ombudsman, we held a

public hearing where we met with representatives from the Office of the Queensland Ombudsman and heard evidence from Anthony Reilly, the Queensland Ombudsman; Ms Angela Pyke, Deputy Ombudsman; Ms Louise Rosemann, Principal Adviser, Public Interest Disclosure; and Ms Leanne Robertson, Director of Corporate Services.


During 2021, the Office of the Queensland Ombudsman received and investigated complaints about state government departments and statutory authorities, local councils and public universities. The 2020-21 annual report showed the Office of the Queensland Ombudsman received 10,758 inquiries of which 7,051 were treated as complaints and 1,066 were investigated. There were 3,857 premature complaints where the matter had not first been raised with the agency. In these matters, the office directly referred 630 complaints to the agency and provided referral advice for the remaining 3,227 complaints.

The Ombudsman explained how the office's administrative improvement program includes an integrated, multilayered strategy that provides a range of supports and resources for improving administrative processes. As part of this strategy, the *Good Decisions* video was released in October 2021 and has been viewed over 1,850 times as at 5 May 2022. The Good Decisions checklist was published in September 2021 and has been downloaded over 1,000 times as of May 2022.

The COVID-19 disruptions and restrictions contributed to a reduction in the number of training participants able to access training in this year, with 97 training sessions delivered to 1,718 public sector officers which, in comparison, is less than the training outcomes provided in recent years. In response to the limitations placed on face-to-face training, the office responded by redeveloping training services so they could be delivered online. The Ombudsman explained how regional engagement was enhanced through online training and that in many aspects online training was more accessible for people in regional areas. Online training provided an opportunity for participants to engage from across the state, which resulted in real benefits for organisations, especially those that are decentralised.

The office conducted five own initiative investigations and published the following: *Fire ants report: timeliness of responses to notifications of suspected fire ant activity*; and *Casebook 2020: helping agencies to improve decision-making*, a collection of investigative case studies. Case studies are published as a tool for shared learning that help build greater knowledge in agencies to improve decision-making and administrative processes.

During the reporting period there were 1,766 public interest disclosures reported, which was similar in number to the preceding year. PIDs resulting in corrupt conduct was the most commonly reported type of wrongdoing.

 **Mrs GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (3.12 pm): The Legal Affairs and Safety Committee has oversight responsibilities for the Office of the Queensland Ombudsman, whereby we monitor and review the performance of the Office of the Ombudsman and examine their annual report. At the outset, I thank Queensland Ombudsman Mr Anthony Reilly, Deputy Ombudsman Ms Angela Pyke, Director of Corporate Services Ms Leanne Robertson, and Principal Adviser, Public Interest Disclosures Ms Louise Rosemann for appearing before us back in May and providing a public update as well as answering a range of questions from us. I did also want to thank our committee secretariat for all the hard work they do as well as the other committee members.

The Ombudsman plays a vital role in maintaining accountability throughout the Queensland government. The Queensland Ombudsman independently investigates complaints about the actions and decisions of state government departments and agencies, including state schools and TAFEs, local councils and public universities, and, importantly, is one of the few ways that Queenslanders can have government decisions reviewed.

Some 10,758 contacts were made to the Office of the Queensland Ombudsman for advice, assistance or complaint resolution, noting that 2,553 of these contacts were outside the jurisdiction of the Ombudsman and as such referred to the appropriate agency. Of the total contacts made, 7,051 were treated as complaints and 1,066 were investigated. These numbers show a trend consistent with those contacts made in the prior financial year. I note a significant increase however in the number of contacts determined to involve a human rights element. In 2021 there were 2,159 contacts. This is up 779 cases since last year. That is quite significant.

The Queensland Ombudsman's annual report also noted that there were 22 service delivery complaints and that the complaints ranged from poor customer service to inaccurate information, unfair treatment or tone. The report also noted that there were five matters that were substantiated. Throughout the committee process I asked the Ombudsman and the Deputy Ombudsman to expand on those complaints. Acknowledging that this makes up only 0.05 per cent of all contacts, I want to touch on what those complaints related to. There were three pertaining to poor customer service, and

each of these complaints received an apology. Another pertained to unfair treatment due to a comment that could have been perceived as sarcastic, while the last one pertained to inaccurate information whereby irrelevant information was provided. It is also important to note that further questioning during the committee process determined that none of these complaints related to the Ombudsman directly.


I also turn to the Queensland Ombudsman's annual report which makes reference to the recent Coaldrake review report handed down, titled *Review of culture and accountability in the Queensland public sector*. The Coaldrake review undertook an examination of Queensland's integrity system and made a number of recommendations for improvement.

I will outline the recommendations that were of direct relevance to the Office of the Ombudsman. The Coaldrake review recommended establishing a single clearing house for complaints. It recommended reviewing public interest disclosure legislation. The Office of the Ombudsman has oversight over public interest disclosure legislation, also known as PID. It is recommended that the legislation be reviewed. The Coaldrake review also recommended enhancing the integrity bodies' independence by involvement of parliamentary committees in setting their budgets and contributing to key appointments.

On the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee we recently dealt with the legislation to establish the Inspector of Detention Services. Amongst the calls were for it to be independent and for the budget to be independently determined. The Coaldrake recommendation here aligns with some of the commentary that we have already heard in the committee through other processes.

Another recommendation in the Coaldrake review was providing the Ombudsman with the authority to investigate complaints against private organisations carrying out functions on behalf of the government. I look forward to seeing the state government work with the Queensland Ombudsman to implement these recommendations. To the credit of the Office of the Queensland Ombudsman, they have already implemented one of the Coaldrake reviews recommendations which was around their intake telephone messages. The Coaldrake review recommended that their intake telephone message—being the message service that customers get when they phone the Office of the Ombudsman—was longer than recommended in the review. The Office of the Queensland Ombudsman has reviewed that system and made those changes to their intake telephone system, which is commendable.

Lastly, I wanted to note that the Office of the Queensland Ombudsman suffered terribly during the February-March floods. They were flooded and many of the staff struggled and were unable to return to their premises for many months. I congratulate both the Ombudsman and the staff for working through that in the way they did and holding together the Office of the Ombudsman and still dealing with the workload during that time.

 **Mr HUNT** (Caloundra—ALP) (3.17 pm): I rise today to contribute briefly to the report of the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee related to the Office of the Queensland Ombudsman. The Legal Affairs and Safety Committee has oversight responsibilities for the Queensland Ombudsman. This report provides information regarding the performance of the Queensland Ombudsman of their functions under the Ombudsman Act 2021. The committee reviewed the Queensland Ombudsman's annual report 2020-21, which was tabled on 27 September 2021. The committee also held a public hearing with Queensland Ombudsman Mr Anthony Reilly and his staff on 9 May 2022.

The Office of the Queensland Ombudsman has oversight of the actions of Queensland government agencies, local councils and universities. The Ombudsman reported on a range of performance and service measures in its annual report, including investigating complaints, improved decision-making through engagement, training and advice and public interest disclosure oversight.

The statistics and data mentioned in the report, while not terribly gripping to read, are in fact extremely important and also encouraging as we consider the good work done by the office. For example, 10,758 contacts were made to the office for advice, assistance or complaint resolution. Impressively, the preliminary assessment of a complaint was completed in just a fraction over three days. Even more impressively, of the 190 recommendations handed down in investigations, 100 per cent of them were accepted by their respective agencies. The office has also recently established a new complaints handler network to build skills and knowledge across the sector in complaints handling. The Ombudsman advised—

The network meets quarterly with officers who are involved in complaints management in agencies being a part of the network and aims to improve complaints handling across agencies. The complaints handler network uses the same model as our successful public interest disclosure network, which is the same mode of operation.


That is indicative of an agile, responsive and highly effective public sector.

As we might expect, COVID did impact on the reporting period, and the training sessions delivered by the office were down from 151 to 97—still a respectable number by any measure given the circumstances and more so when we consider that 93 per cent of participants indicated that the training delivered by the office improved their decision-making capability. At the same time it was also pleasing to hear that the ‘Good decisions’ training video was viewed over 1,800 times in an eight-month period after its release in October 2021. Further, of the 164 internal review requests and the 180 that were finalised, the original decision was confirmed in 137 cases; reviews were withdrawn by the complainant or declined by the office in 30 cases; and decisions were not upheld in 13 cases.

Unfortunately, the Office was ‘very heavily impacted’ by the February and March floods due to the flooding of their building in Albert Street. The Ombudsman foreshadowed an impact in terms of timeliness—in particular, when the Ombudsman reports on the 2021-22 year due to the power being cut off for over a week and employees not being able to go into the office.

As a consequence of the very comprehensive report conducted by the office, the committee was able to focus its attention on a number of key areas including but not limited to: the management of complaints received about the office; the handling of premature investigation complaints by the office; the proposed new role of the Ombudsman as the Inspector of Detention Services and whether a commitment of funding had been made and the timing of the first strategic review of that same new role; and the powers and functions of the Ombudsman in relation to corrections and youth justice and whether the inspections are all announced, scheduled and planned inspections or unannounced.

I congratulate the office on the thoroughness of their report and the quality of information they were able to relay during the public hearing. On that note, I commend to the House the contents of this report.

 **Ms BOLTON** (Noosa—Ind) (3.22 pm): I rise to address the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee report No. 35 on the oversight of the Office of the Queensland Ombudsman, which was established in 1974 to investigate the administrative actions of Queensland government agencies, local councils and universities. The majority of investigations arise from complaints received from Queenslanders, with the Ombudsman also conducting its own-initiative investigations.

The Office of the Queensland Ombudsman strives to be an agent of positive change for fair and accountable public administration in Queensland. They do this in three ways: by investigating administrative actions; by helping agencies to improve their administrative practices through information, training and advice; and by oversighting the system of public interest disclosures. This role is crucially important, as most Queenslanders’ experience of government will be the day-to-day interactions they have with the Public Service and government agencies. That experience will colour their entire view of government, meaning the Ombudsman’s role is vital in ensuring those interactions are timely, effective and high quality.

As we have heard, the Ombudsman received 10,000 contacts and 6,000 complaints and, of those, over 1,000 were referred for investigation. From that, 180 recommendations were made to public sector agencies, 100 regarding individual cases and 80 on systematic issues, with 99 per cent of them accepted.

With the Ombudsman Act passed in 2001, 2021-22 represents the 20th anniversary of the Ombudsman undertaking their improvement function. In recognition, the Ombudsman undertook a review of 20 years of files on ways for the Public Service to improve, and this has been welcomed. They found as the most common causes of issues—and associated insights—were: first, comprehensively polices must address all relevant operational issues; second, performance information needs to be meaningful and utilised; third, good information and records management is fundamental; fourth, you need the right staff with the right knowledge and skills; and, fifth, good communication with stakeholders, clients and other agencies is vital. These may appear straightforward; however, as found, they are difficult to get right. Pursuing strategies such as providing reasons for decisions, using human-centred design and improving governance arrangements are key.


The Ombudsman also receive complaints about their own services ranging from poor customer service to inaccurate information, unfair treatment or tone. In the hearing the committee was told that last year five of these complaints were substantiated. From this, the issue arises of how these complaints are dealt with. None of the five substantiated cases involved the Ombudsman himself. However, the Ombudsman relayed how such complaints could be dealt with.

In the first instance, if it were a complaint that involved allegations of corruption then it would be appropriate to be referred to the Crime and Corruption Commission. If it were a minor matter and the Deputy Ombudsman had no conflict of interest, it would be referred there. For serious issues, or where the Deputy Ombudsman has a conflict, they should be referred to an independent assessor. The

Ombudsman stated that he would be happy if those cases were reported to the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee. At this time the committee does not have the power or capabilities to refer to an independent assessor or investigate themselves; hence, the importance of reviewing the committee system.

The Coaldrake report has recommended that the committees of parliament play a significant role in setting the budget and appointing personnel for the organisations for which they have oversight. I believe this issue of complaints review needs also to be incorporated into the role of the committee and should be considered as part of the government's response to the Coaldrake review.

Finally, I would like to thank our chair, the member for Toohey, Peter Russo; fellow committee members; and our secretariat staff for their work on this report. In addition, I thank the Office of the Queensland Ombudsman for the work undertaken every day in extenuating times including, as we heard, when their office was flooded. I commend the report to the House.

 **Ms BUSH** (Cooper—ALP) (3.26 pm): I rise to make a contribution to report No. 35, which is oversight of the Queensland Ombudsman. I do that in my capacity as a member on the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee. I start by thanking my parliamentary colleagues, particularly the chair, the member for Toohey; the secretariat; and the Parliamentary Service staff for the work they have contributed. I also acknowledge and thank the Queensland Ombudsman, Anthony Reilly, and the Deputy Ombudsman, Angela Pyke, for their attendance and contributions to the report.

The Queensland Ombudsman's office does not need any introduction or explaining in this House. Obviously their objective is to create a fair and accountable Public Service. All of us here would know the value of that service. Certainly I have referred constituents through to their office for help with resolving complaints against government departments. It is really reassuring to know that they are there. I think it is also really important to have the level of oversight through a parliamentary committee for their services.

We reviewed their performance both through the annual report and through a public hearing. In summary, there was nothing particularly contentious about the reporting period for the office. In the reporting period in terms of their complaints and investigations, the office received 10,758 contacts, of which around two-thirds were treated as complaints and a little over 1,000 were investigated. They are similar numbers to the reporting period prior, which I was also involved in.

The timeliness of the complaints and investigations was also of a high standard. The average time to complete the preliminary assessments of complaints was 3.2 days, compared to a target of 10 days. The proportion of investigations completed within the target time frame was 84 per cent, which is down slightly from 89 per cent but still within what I thought to be a reasonable threshold. Outcomes from investigations were also consistent with the reporting period prior, resulting in a rectification action of 14 per cent. In both years 100 per cent of recommendations were accepted by the relevant agencies.


What I would like to do instead in my contribution is talk to some of the statutory functions and powers that they have around conducting their own investigations. In this reporting period, the Queensland Ombudsman's office initiated five investigations and published two reports.

The first was the fire ants report, which was an investigation into the timeliness of responses to notifications of suspected fire ant activity—which I read—which was fantastic. They also published their second casebook, which reports on a selection of investigation outcomes. The casebook is really intended to help the Public Service particularly uplift some of their own investigation and complaints handling processes. I am not going to use it as a prop, but this is it here. It is a fantastic resource for all members to have a look at. There are a number of case studies here around the accessibility of complaint systems and local resolution. There is one in particular that I would like to share with the House. The casebook was discussed as part of the annual report and part of the public hearing, so I consider it to be relevant. I think it does a really great job of highlighting the importance of the Queensland Ombudsman's office, and in the time I have left I will try to explain it.

Emily was an 18-year-old and had previously been identified as a child needing care under the department of child safety. She was not living with her parents, but she had approached the department to try and assist her in resolving the situation and returning home. The department had given her a list of services to help her live independently. Emily did not believe that was the outcome she wanted so she made a complaint to the department. They resolved that it was out of scope.

Emily went to the Queensland Ombudsman's office and they investigated her complaint. They found that the complaint was within scope because the Queensland Ombudsman's office had also completed an investigation some years prior into the whole of the child safety complaints process and made a number of recommendations in relation to how to improve those complaints processes. As part

of that complaint investigation by the Ombudsman's office the department of child safety had strengthened some of their complaints systems. This was another opportunity for the Queensland Ombudsman's office to come back and remind the department of this new complaints system. This was a fantastic outcome both for the proactive investigation work they do and the reminder work they do with departments in helping clients access those complaints systems. I thought that was a great example to use. I commend the report to the House.

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Scenic Rim—LNP) (3.31 pm): Many other members have put on the record lots of facts and figures about the Ombudsman and I will not go through all of them again. I would like to say thank you to the Ombudsman and to all the staff who work in the Ombudsman's office because it is a busy office. As others have said, there have been quite a number of complaints this year in the review period that we looked at, but I note that a good percentage of those have been resolved. So thank you to the Ombudsman and to all of the staff for the work they do.

I just want to touch on a couple of points; firstly, the public interest disclosure regime and the small increase in the number of PIDs the Ombudsman took carriage of in the 2021 year. There was a small increase of 1.3 per cent compared to the previous year. The review of the public interest disclosure regime in Queensland is something that the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee touched on in our report tabled a year ago tomorrow in relation to the Logan City Council. Some of the issues that arose in that matter certainly related to the PID regime. Professor Coaldrake also recommended that there be a review of that public interest disclosure legislation. I look forward to seeing that come to its conclusion, hopefully in the not-too-distant future, because there are some things that could be improved upon. I think that is widely agreed across the spectrum.

I also want to touch on the *Fire ants report: an investigation into the timeliness of responses to notifications of suspected fire ant activity*. I commend the member for Cooper for reading that report. It was an interesting read. It highlighted some of the issues about not only timeliness but also the efficiency of the DAF-run fire ant program. Following that Ombudsman report and following a number of requests from myself and other members of the LNP, and possibly members of the public as well, the Auditor-General has now also taken up that cause and is reviewing the fire ant program's efficiency and efficacy. I still have concerns dating back to the Ombudsman's report relating to issues they raised about efficiency and timeliness, the slippage of zones, community consent and acceptance of helicopter usage in that baiting program, and various other matters as well. I look forward to seeing what the Auditor-General says about that following on from the Ombudsman's report.

Going back to the Coaldrake review, recommendation No. 12 states—

Integrity bodies' independence be enhanced by involvement of parliamentary committees in setting their budgets and contributing to key appointments.

That is an interesting recommendation and one that should be acted upon in the not-too-distant future because there are a number of consultation provisions—

**Mr Power** interjected.


**Mr KRAUSE:** I have no confidence that it will be acted on in the near future. There are a number of consultation provisions when it comes to statutory offices like the Ombudsman, the Information Commissioner and the Right to Information Commissioner, but the reality is that all of those appointments still remain, if not in form, in substance in the hands of the minister. Unless that changes in legislation so that in substance they are put into the hands of not just the government but also other members of this parliament then that reform will not have been fully implemented. We know the Premier said they were going to adopt the Coaldrake reforms lock, stock and barrel. I think it was Mike Ahern who said that would be done in relation to the Fitzgerald report back in 1989. Mike Ahern kept his word. I hope this Premier keeps her word when it comes to these recommendations as well.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

## COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

### Report, Motion to Take Note

 **Mr BROWN** (Capalaba—ALP) (3.36 pm): I move—

That the House take note of the Committee of the Legislative Assembly Report No. 32, 57th Parliament, *Report on the 2022 budget estimates process*, tabled on 12 October 2022.

What a wonderful process it was again this year. I commend the Labor chairs for doing such a fantastic job yet again. I note that it was a good year because there is not one report in the media about estimates this year because it ran so smoothly and so thoroughly. It does take two to tango and I want to congratulate the opposition for, in most cases, staying within the standing orders and ensuring that the chairs did not have to interrupt them by ruling so often. That is why we had a free-flowing estimates process. As the estimates report shows, the chairs of the committees made sure—probably too much—that those opposite had plenty of time. I note that they clearly had more time to ask their questions. They clearly asked more questions than government members. I might have to have a chat to them because I think it was a bit unfair to the government backbenchers. They did not get enough of an opportunity to ask the ministers, DGs and departments questions about their portfolios.

This report is full of numbers and graphs. It does show that it was a process that was fair and open, and time was afforded to those opposite to canvass the departments and the ministers themselves. As I said, there was less offending from those opposite, which allowed the estimates process this year to flow more freely and openly than in previous years. I also congratulate the opposition for sticking within the standing orders in most cases, meaning that the chairs did not have to rule as often during that process.

**Mr Boothman** interjected.


**Mr BROWN:** I will not take those interjections. I would like to commend the chairs for the work they did during that process. I would also like to congratulate the opposition for sticking within the standing orders.

**Mr Krause:** That is the third time.

**Mr BROWN:** I do want to congratulate you and I want to ram home this point—that when you stick within the standing orders, the process is more free flowing and it is easy. The media like it and they do not report about it. There was not one report about the estimates process on this occasion. It was all about the business of estimates.

**Ms Pugh:** Hear, hear! That's great to see.

**Mr BROWN:** I will take that interjection. It was great to see that it was more free flowing. The numbers in this report show that the opposition got plenty of time. I think the opposition could have given a bit more time to the crossbench because I feel they missed out. I will leave that to the opposition to figure out the times they give to the crossbench. After seeing the performance of the members for Maiwar and South Brisbane this week, I can understand why the opposition limit their time during estimates as well. I completely understand that. With that, I commend this report to the House.

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (3.40 pm): I rise to address report No. 32 of the Committee of the Legislative Assembly titled *Report on the 2022 budget estimates process*. To be blunt, it is a pretty vanilla report.

**Mr Power:** Pardon?

**Mr POWELL:** It is a vanilla report. It is not offensive, there is not a lot in it. I am sorry, Deputy Clerk. I have offended, have I? I apologise for that.

As the member for Capalaba said, there are a lot of numbers here. In essence, it provides the quantitative analysis in tabular and graphical form of what occurred in this year's budget process and compares that with previous budgets. As I was always taught during my science degree, it is important to look at not only quantitative analysis but also qualitative analysis. If we stuck to just the quantitative analysis and referred to some of the comments the member for Capalaba just made, then we would note that in the estimates hearings that we often hear those opposite go on and on and on about—the 2014 estimates hearings—those opposite got more time than any opposition had to question a government of the day. They whinge and whinge, yet according to this report it is quite glaringly clear that they never had it better than in that system in 2014.

Therefore, let me look at the qualitative analysis of what occurred at the estimates. We heard the member for Capalaba say that the opposition behaved themselves this year. It is fair to say that some of the chairs behaved themselves a bit more this year too, but that did not stop a high-level protection racket continuing, it did not prevent lines of questioning being interrupted and it did not stop arbitrary time limits being put on that meant that if shadow ministers had a line of questioning it was not pulled up. I think we need to go to the heart of what is going on here, and I refer to some comments from the Clerk himself during our estimates hearing about our committee process. Members have to remember that back in 2011 there was a review of our parliamentary committees and there were two aspects to that. The first was around how we review legislation, and the Clerk said—



I think the legislative process has improved dramatically as a result of the parliamentary committee system—


The second part was around ensuring that the government is accountable, that the government is held to account. The Clerk mentioned that that aspect in particular still has some way to go. The proposal from the Clerk is that we desperately need to review our committee system. He made some comments specifically about the estimates process. He said—

I do not think ... the estimates process that we are having is working as well as what was envisaged it would in 2011 and in some respects the system that was in place prior to 2011 may in fact be better because things may have gotten even worse in terms of the overall estimates process.

Whilst this report can say what it says, underlying that is the fact that the Clerk himself is saying that potentially our estimates processes have gotten worse than they were before the committee system was reviewed. The Clerk mentioned that potentially this was something the Committee of the Legislative Assembly could look at. The LNP opposition have put on the table a number of ways that we think the estimates process could be reviewed. We did that back in December 2020, but we have not heard anything from the government. There has been no discussion to my knowledge at the CLA.

The Leader of the House has the opportunity to bring forward these kinds of improvements, to have that conversation, to even call for a review of our committee process, as the Clerk has called for. When the Leader of the House cannot even issue a parliamentary sitting calendar for a subsequent year and it is 1 December—she cannot get the simple things right—obviously calling for a review into the committee process is a lot more complex. I note that the Leader of the House is also the Minister for Health and cannot seem to run hospitals, cannot ensure that ambulance ramping is not occurring, cannot ensure there are no doctors undertaking malpractice in our hospitals and cannot ensure that patients are kept safe. What we clearly have in the Leader of the House is an inability to do anything, to fix anything, to put forward any proposals—whether it be our committee process, our estimates hearings, the parliamentary sitting calendar or the department that she is responsible for.

It is one thing to discuss a report that presents quantitative analysis of an estimates hearing; it is another to drill down and look at the process and realise it is broken and in need of repair. The LNP are ready to repair it.

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (3.45 pm): Whilst I for once agree with the member for Glass House that the report is relatively inoffensive and non-controversial, I cannot say that about his other comments. It is disappointing that he would get up and be so critical—

**Mr Krause:** So surprising!


**Ms PEASE:** It is not surprising really—talk about whingefest; that is all we hear from that side. In the *Report on the 2022 budget estimates process*, we actually did a review of the budget process. As in previous years, the estimates hearings were reported live on parliamentary TV and were streamed. I would like to thank all of the staff who worked on that day and in the preparation work during the lead-up to the estimates hearings. A lot of work goes into that, as we can imagine. A lot of public servants do a lot of work, as do the parliamentary staff, because a lot of people get involved in the estimates process. I want to acknowledge that work, whether it be the Hansard reporters, the PA people, the IT people or the parliamentary secretariat. They do a lot of work in that area.

I would like to disagree slightly with my friend and colleague the member for Capalaba. He said that it was not controversial and that the opposition behaved themselves during the parliamentary estimates hearings. In my committee and in many of the others I listened to, their behaviour was of the usual poor standard. They spent their time casting aspersions on public servants. It was a disgrace, but that is what they do. They pick on our hardworking public servants who stand up and work on behalf of the Public Service. It is all good and well to ask questions about what they do, but it is actually not appropriate to cast aspersions on their personality or what they have done in their life. It was a disgrace. All of those people over there know what I am talking about because we pulled them up each and every time. They talk about a protection racket; there was no protection racket. What we were doing was looking after our public servants and protecting them from the disgraceful behaviour of those opposite.

Their behaviour was not surprising. We expect nothing less from them because they have got nothing to deliver, apart from casting aspersions on hardworking public servants. They do it all of the time. If they cannot sack them, they will cast aspersions on them. We know that is what they do. They sacked 14,000 members of the Public Service. If they cannot do that, they will muddy the waters and make them look bad. It is a disgrace. They come in here and do the same; they try to pick on someone else. It is very disappointing.

Let me talk about the times. I can talk about the numbers and bore the House with that. The length of the committee process was 54.45 hours. The government questioning went for 19 hours in total, yet the non-government questioning went for 29 hours and 43 minutes. Most of that questioning was picking on public servants and casting aspersions on them. There were 1,233 questions, which is pretty amazing. The total number of government questions was 298. Therefore, of the 1,233 questions, 298 were put by the government and 935 were put by the opposition and non-government members. That is three times the number.

I would like to acknowledge the work of the chairs because they did do really well. It is a difficult time. They have to juggle many things: ensuring the standing orders are adhered to and ensuring the appropriate treatment of the people who are brought into the committees as 'special envoys' because the members of committees do not very often get a chance to ask a question of people like that—if they do, it is like, 'Whacko, we've got a question!'—but generally it is people who are wheeled in and pushed forward to answer questions. The chairs have to manage all that and make sure all the paperwork is in leading up to the estimates hearings. It is a really interesting process because you know there is a set menu; they know what they have to do, they come in and follow the plan. I commend the report to the House.

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (3.50 pm): It appears that the only thing that happens at these estimates now is the Labor members protect the ministers. They protect the ministers because they do not trust that the ministers will be able to answer questions. They protect the ministers because they do not think the ministers know how to answer the questions. There were no attacks on public servants; there were attacks on ministers for not knowing their responsibility in their departments. There were attacks on ministers for not being up-front with the estimates process. There were attacks on other Labor Party committee members because they were protecting the ministers.

A minister ought not have the protection of the chair or Labor Party members. They go on about the estimates in 2014 where they said it was cut down to two days. Okay, we changed it, but then you look at the time when ministers were actually in the chair, in the firing line, and it was 10 hours. I remember sitting there for two days straight, a minimum 10 hours—10 hours of full questions. I do not think I have ever told this story, but I remember what happened and I know why Labor wanted to change it so dramatically and why they do it now. I remember sitting there, seeing the then opposition leader, Ms Palaszczuk, struggling to keep up. I was giving very short answers, yeses and noes. I saw her struggling to keep up, so I text messaged—

**Ms Farmer** interjected.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Here we go. Here is the protection racket of the then opposition leader, on cue. I texted one of our members at the time saying, 'Stop asking Dorothy Dixers. Just give all the time to the Labor Party.' Anyway, the chair went to the LNP and the LNP member said, 'No, we are okay; we are comfortable. Give it all to the Labor Party. Give them more time.' It went back to then opposition leader Palaszczuk and she said, 'No, it is the LNP's time.' I said, 'No, we are giving it to the Labor Party.' The then opposition leader, Ms Palaszczuk, had no questions ready to go. She could not think on her feet to ask questions to me at the time to keep the time going. I have never seen an opposition leader plead for the government Dorothy Dixers to continue and for the government to have more Dorothy Dixers.


Look at the health committee which had about six hours. Divide that by two, because there was also the environment portfolio, to get three hours for each. So you have the health minister there for three hours. Then you take the three hours, divide it by two—the LNP and crossbench would have got about an hour and a half out of that. Take the crossbench out of that and we would have had maybe an hour if we were lucky. Considering the health crisis we have at the moment, an hour to interrogate the health minister is not enough. Then you take all the deliberate interruptions from Labor Party members on the committee and the time goes down even further. It is not a democratic system we have at the moment. They deliberately run down the clock. They deliberately hide the minister. I can understand why they would want to hide and protect health minister D'Ath because she had a lot of answers to give that day, but unfortunately time did not permit it.

Look at the issues we have seen this week. I cannot wait for estimates next year when we prosecute the issue of personal conflicts of interests, putting belongings into sheds then giving health department leases for vaccine clinics. I cannot wait for estimates next year when the opposition should be afforded more time because the health minister has a lot of explaining to do. However, as I suspect will happen, health minister D'Ath will not be at estimates next year in the health portfolio. She will not be in the health portfolio—

**Mr Powell** interjected.


**Mr BLEIJIE:** I take the interjection. Member for Glass House, the Premier did not actually quite say that. The Premier said this morning that the health minister will be the health minister. Guess what—of course the health minister is going to be the health minister. What she did not say was who would be filling the role of health minister. She did not say that health minister D'Ath is going to be the health minister at the start of next year. It is clear the health minister has had her time. It is clear that the Labor Party backbench are over the health minister. It is clear that the Christmas present that the Labor Party want the Premier to give the Labor backbenchers is a new health minister. It is clear that Queenslanders have lost confidence in Yvette D'Ath to manage the health portfolio. It is absolutely clear she is out of her depth and does not want the protection of the government members because she has lost the confidence of the Labor Party for her to manage the health portfolio.

*(Time expired)*

 **Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (3.55 pm): I rise to speak on the report on the 2022 budget estimates process as a member of the Committee of the Legislative Assembly. I acknowledge the members of the committee and their hard work and dedication throughout the year and the CLA's role in supporting governance within the parliament. I also acknowledge some of the things the CLA has done, particularly in terms of securing an extra staff allowance and the CLA's assistance in finally securing the rightful provision of full-time parliamentary staff officers to each crossbench member which has been lobbied for for over 30 years. This previously was at the discretion of the government but is now being placed in the hands of the Queensland Independent Remuneration Tribunal. This helps to ensure parity and equality for the opposition, Independents and minor parties.

The current estimates process needs to be overhauled. For example, the estimates process in the Victorian parliament is solely for the opposition and crossbenchers to hold the government of the day to account. However, here in Queensland it is just another tool used by state governments to control the narrative. The current estimates process heavily favours the government and it is difficult to justify flying thousands of kilometres to Brisbane to barely get a couple of minutes to ask very important questions during the estimates hearings. This is because the time is not allocated evenly amongst MPs, with the government receiving a large slice of the time. This gives no real value to the estimates process which has become a back-slapping exercise and a non-event.

I have raised previously a number of areas that can be tidied up to ensure better transparency and efficiency to ensure equality across all members of the House which includes allowing only the opposition and crossbench members the exclusive right to ask questions of the government and hold them to account; allowing questions from non-government members to be submitted prior to the hearings so that the hearings can be dedicated to follow-up questions; transforming the process to allow a free flowing of questions to the minister and senior bureaucrats without the severe time allocation that reduces the ability of the non-government members to continue a line of questioning; and removing up-front ministerial statements as ministers already get a chance to tell the committee how good their government is when answering questions during estimates. Thank you for the opportunity to address these issues.

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (3.58 pm): I rise to talk to this report. I agree with what the member for Capalaba has said. The estimates process was free flowing. I do think the LNP is starting to get how this operates in a modern society. The No. 1 rule obviously is to stick to the standing orders. It is not that hard. We say it every time: no imputations, no allegations and no hypotheticals. It is really not that hard. It is in the standing orders. However, I do think, despite their difficulties, that they are starting to get what it actually means. I want to compliment them on that.


I do take issue with one thing that the member for Glass House said—and the member for Kawana intimated the same. He called it a 'protection racket'. I want to signal that when we return to this process next year I am not going to be accepting use of the term 'protection racket'. I am going to call it out because what they are accusing me of is running an illegal criminal exercise. I am just saying please do not use that term in my hearings. I am going to rule it out of order because it breaches standing orders. I thought a bit more instruction might be useful for them.

I also want to say to them: beware of the call for a review of this system because they do not come to this with clean hands. Dare I say if we did review the system, the LNP would have to work harder.

Debate, on motion of Mr Whiting, adjourned.

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENT


### Queensland Housing Summit: Outcomes Report

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Alger—ALP) (Minister for Communities and Housing, Minister for Digital Economy and Minister for the Arts) (4.00 pm): I refer to the *Queensland Housing Summit: outcomes report* that the Premier and Minister for the Olympics tabled earlier today. I am advised that due to an inadvertent production issue that version was missing some text. So that the complete version of the report is on the parliamentary record, I now table a replacement version of the *Queensland Housing Summit: outcomes report*.

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Government: Report titled 'Queensland Housing Summit: Outcomes Report'—November 2022 [[2037](#)].

## COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

### Portfolio Committees, Reporting Dates and Referral of Auditor-General's Reports

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (4.00 pm): I seek to advise the House of the determinations made by the Committee of the Legislative Assembly at its meeting today. The committee has resolved, pursuant to standing order 136, that the State Development and Regional Industries Committee report on the Local Government Electoral and Other Legislation (Expenditure Caps) Amendment Bill by 24 February 2023; the Health and Environment Committee report on the Health and Other Legislation Amendment Bill by 24 February 2023; the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee report on the Monitoring of Places of Detention (Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture) Bill by 24 February 2023; the Community Support and Services Committee report on the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Jack's Law) Amendment Bill by 17 February 2023; the Economics and Governance Committee report on the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill by 17 February 2023; and the Education, Employment and Training Committee report on the Corrective Services (Emerging Technologies and Security) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill by 10 February 2023.


The committee has resolved, pursuant to standing order 194B, that the Auditor-General's report 6 of 2022-23 titled *Managing workforce agility in the Queensland public sector* be referred to the Economics and Governance Committee and Auditor-General's report 7 of 2022-23 titled *Major projects 2022* be referred to the State Development and Regional Industries Committee.

## ANIMAL CARE AND PROTECTION AMENDMENT BILL

### Second Reading

Resumed from p. 3859, on motion of Mr Furner—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Scenic Rim—LNP) (4.02 pm), continuing: Michael Guerin said the reverse onus of proof that is being created through this bill will lead to an extremely emotionally and physically trying situation. That refers to the fact that we need to have a clear answer from the minister about whether graziers will be subject to that type of obligation in these circumstances.


In relation to the monitoring of abattoirs, the bill makes a number of changes. Concerns have been raised about the extent to which those changes may be extended in the fullness of time. I want to touch on those concerns as well.

In the electorate I represent there is a small abattoir in Beaudesert. In addition to being a significant local employer, it carries out work that is not otherwise done in the marketplace. Most of the abattoirs in the South-East Queensland region are very large and do not do this type of bespoke work for smaller producers and retailers. That abattoir, Highchester, is fulfilling a very important place in the market. I know for a fact that the compliance obligations that business already works under place a huge cost impost on it and that affects its competitiveness with the rest of the abattoir market, which is dominated by multinational firms.

Given that there has been evidence given and submissions made around the confusion created by definitions and whether the additional monitoring requirements in relation to thoroughbreds and standardbred horses could in the future be expanded to other species, I hope that the minister and the department are able to give a clear answer in due course as to their full extent. I hope they will give an

assurance that they will not be extended to other species at this point or in the future. There is so much compliance already in that space, not just in Beaudesert but also in other parts of rural and regional Queensland.

Those types of small businesses are important. Not everybody has the ability to send their product to large-scale abattoirs and we need to maintain those small businesses in the future. I will finish my contribution there. We support the bill with some reservations. Hopefully we can get some clarity from the minister in his second reading reply.

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (4.05 pm): I rise to support the Animal Care and Protection Amendment Bill. The bill provides the main legislative framework for animal welfare in Queensland. The Palaszczuk government takes animal welfare very seriously. We have a zero tolerance policy to animal cruelty and neglect and we are committed to addressing and preventing it right across the state. That is why the government engaged in the first significant review of the Animal Care and Protection Act in two decades. We want to ensure it keeps pace with contemporary animal and livestock welfare standards and practices and reflects significant changes in community expectation.

During the public consultation phase of the review in 2021, more than 2,300 people had their say, which demonstrates just how much Queenslanders love their animals. That is no surprise to me. We saw the same in 2019 in my own electorate of McConnel following shocking reports of dog baiting around Newstead. In response to those instances I held community meetings with officers of the Fortitude Valley Police Station and local veterinarian Dr Nic. These meetings were very well attended and demonstrated how deeply local people feel about the wellbeing of their animals. It was heartening at the time to see residents coming together to protect our furry friends from this heinous behaviour. The camaraderie amongst all the dog owners and the information provided on that day were excellent. I know that a lot of people were very appreciative of the opportunity to discuss their concerns and have information provided to them.

The strong public feedback received during the review of the Animal Care and Protection Amendment Bill has resulted in a suite of amendments, which includes a new offence of aggravated breaches of the duty of care with a maximum penalty of more than \$287,000, or three years imprisonment; clarification of some inspector powers in relation to entry and compliance with animal welfare directions; clarification of minimum standards for making codes of practice under the act including on the basis of scientific evidence; clarification of the scientific use of animals including alignment of the scientific use provisions to the Australian scientific use code; new framework for cattle spaying and pregnancy testing by laypersons; a requirement for dogs to be restrained on vehicles with an exemption for working dogs; prohibition on the use and possession of prong dog collars; and prohibition on the use of yellow phosphorus pig poison.

While this bill does a great job in strengthening and modernising general animal welfare standards in Queensland, as racing minister I am pleased to see it deliver a further six recommendations of the Martin inquiry. In October 2019 the ABC 7.30 *Report* aired a story about the wastage of retired racehorses. The story raised issues about the treatment of horses at a Queensland abattoir and contained footage that was simply abhorrent. Just as we did with the greyhound racing industry commission of inquiry in 2015, the Palaszczuk government acted swiftly. We commissioned an independent inquiry into the management of retired racehorses led by retired District Court Justice Terry Martin SC. The Martin inquiry also looked at the regulatory and oversight arrangements for abattoirs and knackeries and the transport of horses to those facilities.

The Martin inquiry made 55 recommendations which revolved around systems, policies and procedures which affect the way that the harness and thoroughbred industries operate in Queensland. It had a particular focus on the care, tracking and administration of thoroughbred and standardbred horses after their racing careers. In response, the government either fully supported, in part supported or supported in principle all 55 recommendations and provided \$6 million to support their implementation. Of the \$6 million, \$1.4 million was allocated to the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission for additional resources to enforce animal welfare compliance and to deliver a targeted education program over the four years from 2020-21.


The Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, Racing Queensland and the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission hold either individual or joint responsibility for implementing the Martin inquiry recommendations. I can update the House on the current implementation status of the 55 recommendations: 35 have been completed—and they were probably the most important ones; six more will be completed once this bill is passed; and 13 are in progress. One has not yet commenced because it is contingent on the completion of another recommendation.

The bill before the House legislates the implementation of six Martin inquiry recommendations. Three of those are to amend the Racing Integrity Act 2016 to ensure the jurisdiction and powers of QRIC over horses retired from racing but still in the care of a registered racing participant; to extend the purpose of licensing schemes to ensure the responsible breeding of horses for racing; and to improve the ability to administer the off-the-track racecourse rehoming scheme through requiring a supplier of horses to a slaughter establishment to provide horse identification data, the name of the supplier and the date the horse was supplied to the establishment and requiring the owner of the slaughter establishment to provide a report to QRIC on the identification of horses, the name of the supplier and the date horses were supplied to the establishment on a monthly basis.

These are steps in the right direction in terms of tracking and ensuring owners and trainers know their responsibility when it comes to retired animals. A lot of these recommendations are in line with the federal report on the racing industry titled *The most important participant*. Queensland is way ahead of any other state in implementing these measures. When I speak with the Thoroughbred Breeders Queensland Association's Basil Nolan—a good friend and an outstanding participant in the industry—he always comments on how far advanced Queensland is. In a way, the Martin inquiry is what led these changes.

The other three Martin inquiry recommendations that this bill implements are to the Animal Care and Protection Act: to require slaughter establishments to record closed circuit television footage at all critical animal welfare points in an establishment where horses are present and to make recordings available to inspectors; to require advance notification to Biosecurity Queensland of the arrival of horses at a slaughter establishment; and to provide powers for inspectors to enter a slaughter establishment where horses are present without consent or a warrant, but only during regular business hours.

The Palaszczuk government's response to the Martin inquiry reflects our strong commitment to ensuring all racing animals are afforded high standards of care during and after their racing careers because, after all, they are the most important part. This bill makes great strides in delivering on that commitment. It updates and strengthens the state's welfare provisions for all animals whether they are racing animals, domestic pets or livestock on a farm. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (4.13 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Animal Care and Protection Amendment Bill. The Queensland Greens welcome any reform that will further the wellbeing of life, including animals, and we support the modernisation of animal welfare law as set out in this bill.

Animal welfare advocates have for years been asking for more prohibitions on inhumane practices. I am glad to see that this bill acts on at least some of those calls. Banning the use of poisons that include carbon disulphide and phosphorous, marketed as CSSP, will stop the massive amounts of unintentional animal deaths and unnecessary suffering caused by using these poisons in pig baiting. By banning the use of prong collars, this bill reaffirms the common knowledge, I believe, that if you want a good dog you have to treat them with love and respect, not react with pain and punishment.

While the Greens welcome these positive steps, there are a lot of gaps in this legislation that will mean that the unnecessary suffering of animals continues in our communities. For example, as was pointed out by the Animal Welfare League in its submission, our current laws mean that veterinarians can be charged with breaking the law if they desex a stray cat and residents can be fined by local governments for feeding strays. It stands against reason to continue criminalising actions that could actually improve the welfare of animals. This bill was an opportunity to consider striking these provisions from our animal welfare laws, but it fails to do so.

It was also an opportunity to enforce welfare standards at animal entertainment venues and events like rodeos. While rodeos are an important social and cultural event for many people in our state, they should protect the animals, spectators and workers involved and meet community standards. For the life of me, I cannot understand why the government would explicitly exclude the rodeo code of practice from these reforms, instead focusing solely on the non-binding animal welfare standards and guidelines for rodeos. Those guidelines for rodeos are wholly inadequate and do not address issues such as misropings or injuries sustained by calves that trip and fall over. In recent years, tens of thousands of people have made their opposition to calf roping clear and, in consultation on these reforms, several animal welfare organisations, including the RSPCA, have highlighted the significant distress and pain that animals experience during some rodeo events like calf roping or rope-and-tie. The ACT, Victoria and South Australia have already banned, or effectively banned, calf roping. It is just not good enough for Queensland to lag behind on this issue.

The review of the act also excluded any consideration of mandatory shade and shelter requirements for animals in Queensland, despite this being an issue of concern to a number of advocates in this area. It is hardly surprising, given the minister's clear ideological attachment to shark nets, that the review of the Animal Care and Protection Act completely skipped over the exemptions for animals caught in shark nets and drumlines. We have just come off the worst recorded season yet for whale entanglements in Queensland shark nets. At least 15 whales were entangled this season, and that is despite the department's own Shark Control Program Scientific Working Group recommending that nets be removed for the whale migration season.

**Mr FURNER:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order relating to relevance. The matter before the House is to do with the Animal Care and Protection Act; it has nothing to do with the Shark Control Program under the Fisheries Act.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Krause): That is a valid point of order. It is a different piece of legislation, as I understand. Whilst you have made observations about what is not in the bill, I ask you to please remain relevant to the long title of the bill relating to the Animal Care and Protection Act.

**Mr BERKMAN:** Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. What I will do, at the very least, is take a moment to table the cover page of a change.org petition that has now garnered more than 125,000 signatures. I have avoided tabling the entire petition that now runs to more than 2,700 pages. I will not encumber the Table Office with the requirement to keep those 2,700 pages indefinitely, but I will table the cover sheet to show those 125,090 signatories who have called on this government to end 85 years of shark culling and to remove the nets and drumlines in Queensland's waters.

**Mr FURNER:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Not having seen the document that the member has tabled yet, no doubt you made it clear in your previous ruling that this bill is specific to the Animal Care and Protection Act and has nothing to do with the Shark Control Program, which is administered under the Fisheries Act. I consider it appropriate to rule that out of order.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. I will take some advice. Member for Maiwar, I have taken some advice and, in line with my previous ruling about relevance, I will ask you to refrain from further references to the provisions of another act. Also based on the advice I have received, the document is unable to be tabled as it is not relevant to the debate before us here today. You have time on the clock and if you could keep your comments relevant that would be appreciated.

**Mr BERKMAN:** Indeed; thanks, Mr Deputy Speaker. As so many other members have in this debate, I refer to some of the earlier comments by the member for Moggill and reflect on the value that our pets bring to our everyday lives. When I met and moved in with my wife I was lucky to adopt a cat known affectionately as Bixby—a delightful Persian grumpy cat. He now only has one eye because our fantastic vet had to remove one that he was suffering a bit of pain from recently. I note as well that the member for South Brisbane is the proud owner of an adopted greyhound named Buddy. I make these observations not because they bear any relevance to the bill whatsoever but simply to make the point that no-one gives a damn when we are carrying on with these kinds of ridiculous and inane—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Maiwar, that is unparliamentary language and I ask you to withdraw that word and to refrain from using it again.

**Mr BERKMAN:** I withdraw. I note that the minister remains seated. He is comfortable on his leather over there. He has taken no effort to get up and object to the relevance or the irrelevance of any observations about the pets in our lives. The sensitivity of this government to its failed Shark Control Program—

**Mr FURNER:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take great offence to the language the member has directed in relation to the manner in which I care for animals as a dog lover and an animal lover, and I ask him to withdraw.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Maiwar, the minister has taken personal offence and I ask that you withdraw.

**Mr BERKMAN:** Naturally I withdraw.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you.

**Mr BERKMAN:** With the four minutes I have left I could continue to regale the House with stories about Bixby and what a useless cat he is. In a contest with any one of the geckos around the house he is likely to come off second best; he is really not a hunter. But again I am literally allowed to stand here and the minister is going to continue to sit opposite. It does not matter how irrelevant the commentary becomes about my cat and geckos and his surgery; we are not going to hear a word of objection from the minister about any of that, but the Shark Control Program is such—

**Ms KING:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I put it to you that the member's comments are reflecting on the ruling of the chair made previously.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Pumicestone, thank you. The advice I have received from the Clerk is that indeed you do have a point of order. Member for Maiwar, you still have time to go to be relevant to the bill and you are welcome to resume your contribution. Please refrain from commenting on the issue of relevance, especially in terms of how I have ruled. You have also made comments which indicate that you consider that some of the things that you are saying are irrelevant to the bill. If that is the case you should not be saying them, but you do have three minutes and 29 seconds to go.

**Mr BERKMAN:** Thanks, Mr Deputy Speaker. I think the point has been made well enough. With that, I will conclude my comments on this bill.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr BERKMAN:** I would take the interjections, but I cannot quite—

**Mr Smith** interjected.

**Mr BERKMAN:** Christ! You would hope that this bloke is a better performer in his electorate than he is in the House!

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Maiwar, would you please withdraw that unparliamentary language?


**Mr BERKMAN:** I withdraw. In the name of my Lord Jesus Christ, I hope he is an even better—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Maiwar, would you withdraw that unparliamentary language?

**Mr BERKMAN:** I withdraw.

**Government members:** Sit him down!

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Maiwar, you are warned under the standing orders. Member for Maiwar, I ask you to resume your seat.

 **Mr McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (4.24 pm): Queensland already has some of the strongest animal welfare laws in the country, but we wanted to make sure that our existing framework was totally up to date, current and in line with community expectations. The bill that is before the House at the moment is as a result of an election commitment that we made to review the Animal Care and Protection Act and it has resulted in this framework to modernise animal welfare laws in Queensland that will reflect the changes in contemporary science and technology and community expectations. They are the biggest reforms of animal welfare laws in Queensland in more than two decades. This is a bill for a modern Queensland and it is a bill that goes to a matter of great feeling for many members in this House and certainly many members of our communities.

We have heard from a number of members what their animals—their pets—mean to them, their families and their lives. Some have shared their own personal stories of animals and how they have had to care for them. I want to acknowledge the many animal lovers and pet owners in the Bundamba community as well as the people who look after and provide care to the animals in Bundamba and right across Queensland—our vets and our volunteers who give up their time to care for animals that need help or are in distress. Whether they are birds or whether they are cats, dogs or any type of animal, these dedicated people who give care to animals are deserving of our acknowledgement and our thanks.

I want to express my support for the banning of prong collars on dogs. I do want to acknowledge the submissions and the representations that were made on these collars being kept. Indeed, some members of the opposition and in the Katter party have restated their desire to see these collars maintained in their contributions to this debate and also in the committee report to this bill. However, it is very clear that the community has said that it overwhelmingly rejects the use of prong collars and that it considers the use of these collars to be an inhumane practice and that they do not need to be used. These collars have the potential to cause fear and pain, and that cannot surely be in the interests of a dog's welfare. The collars are designed to train or restrain animals by injuring them and the fact is that there are better ways to train our family pets.

A number of groups also raised concerns about the use of prong collars, including Dogs Queensland. The explanatory notes to this bill outline very clearly that if used incorrectly prong collars can cause physical injuries including bruising, scratching and punctures of the skin to a dog and over time this can lead to scar tissue developing on the dog and in some cases, albeit rare, prong collars have been associated with spinal cord injuries and other very severe injuries. This needs to be put on the record again.



These collars are already prohibited in Victoria. I am of the understanding that Tasmania is looking to take action on these collars as well. I note the differences in the type of political government in those jurisdictions. I find it disappointing that the LNP are looking to support the retention of these collars. They do say that if you want a friend in politics get a dog. I have to say I feel very sorry for the dogs of the LNP whose owners would want to keep open the option of fitting them with these prong collars. So much for a dog being your best friend. I find it quite astounding. There are probably one or two members of this place who might be their own best friend, but that is another issue. The time has come to stop being medieval on our animals. That is why these new amendments that are contained in this bill will ban these collars as well as other inhumane practices like the firing of a horse or dog's legs as a means of treating injuries.


The bill will increase penalties for those who mistreat and neglect animals. There is no room for cruelty and neglect. The new enforcement powers and penalties, such as the new offence of aggravated circumstance, will penalise those who have disregard for our animal friends. Importantly, this bill also implements the recommendations of the Queensland Audit Office to strengthen oversight of the RSPCA Queensland in providing inspectorate services for the state. The bill also improves the delivery of services and how powers are exercised and gives greater clarity and accountability of inspectors. This is a significant step forward in enhancing accountability and public confidence in the delivery of these important inspectorate services.

I note that the LNP members in their contributions to this debate have called into question the consultation that was undertaken in relation to this bill; in fact, going so far in their statement of reservations to say that it was clear that the government had not consulted with stakeholders and that this raised serious concerns in the wake of the Coaldrake review into culture and accountability. Allow me to retort. There was a huge response to the 2021 review, which included the Animal Care and Protection Act discussion paper, with 2,353 responses received. There were 1,495 submitters to the committee inquiry into this bill, which are listed from pages 69 to 89 in the committee report document. That is 20 pages of submitters that are listed in the very same report that the LNP has written about a lack of consultation in. It is quite extraordinary. Has the LNP actually read the committee report? Possibly not. Despite being the best resourced opposition in the country, they are, without doubt, the laziest so it would not surprise me.

I would urge the LNP to show some integrity, to let the sunshine in and actually start to do some work and take some notice of the evidence and hard work of the members of the community and organisations that have done their work to freely participate in consultations on this bill. Do not ignore 20 pages worth of submitters by pretending it did not happen. This legislation will improve the lives of animals across Queensland without too many extra regulations for everyday Queenslanders to worry about. For those who look after their animals there will not be big changes. I commend the bill to the House.

**Mr O'Connor:** Mr Deputy Speaker?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Krause): Member for Bonney, you were pretty quick to rise there. Please wait until the time expires in the future.

 **Mr O'CONNOR** (Bonney—LNP) (4.34 pm): Like other members have, from the outset I will declare for transparency that I am the proud furfather of two of the best boys ever—that is, Aston and Teddy.

**Mr BERKMAN:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I fail to see the relevance of the member for Bonney's pets to the debate on this bill.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Maiwar, there is no point of order. The member has just begun his speech and there is no point of order at this point. I would also caution you that you are on a warning against the making of frivolous points of order.

**Mr O'CONNOR:** Poor Aston and Teddy. The member for Maiwar will not rise to a point of order on this: I would like to acknowledge the work of Animal Welfare League Queensland which we are very proud to have based in our part of the Gold Coast in Coombabah. That is where I adopted Aston from. I encourage everyone to consider adopting—especially this Christmas. This weekend the Animal Welfare League is running its 'Home for Christmas campaign' where for two days only dog adoptions will go from \$400 to just \$99 and cat adoptions, for whoever prefers those over dogs, will go from \$180 to \$30. I encourage all Gold Coasters to get down to the Animal Welfare League this weekend.

Overall the LNP does not oppose this legislation because it does include necessary updates to animal welfare laws in Queensland. Again we saw a flawed consultation process. Regardless of what views people might have on these changes, for some stakeholders to find out about this coming in through a post on the Premier's Facebook page is not good enough. It was well highlighted by the members for Lockyer and Burleigh in their statement of reservations.

One of the aims of this bill is to better facilitate the ethical use of animals for scientific purposes while ensuring animal welfare is not compromised. This is essential for so much of the future industries and innovation economy our state needs to grow. The bill will allow for people other than veterinary surgeons to perform veterinary science on animals used in research as long as they are undertaken in accordance with the NHMRC's Australian Code for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes. These will be things like using anaesthetic or surgical procedures. It aligns Queensland's laws with other states and territories. It has come here in response to these issues being raised by researchers themselves because they believed it was undermining their ability to undertake cutting-edge research in our state.

Addressing concerns about animal welfare potentially being compromised, the department advised that many research institutions have animal welfare officers to assess the competency of staff who will be undertaking these procedures. I have seen this myself on many occasions on many of my visits to labs, including when I studied biomedical science at the University of Queensland.

**Mr Mickelberg:** You have a science degree?

**Mr O'CONNOR:** I do have a science degree, thank you, member for Buderim. I remember some of the experiments. I think we used lidocaine on frogs legs. More recently, I visited the Queensland Brain Institute as the shadow innovation minister and I saw the mouse models that they use to research Alzheimer's disease and the groundbreaking treatments that they are developing. They ran me through the ethical processes and approvals they have to breed and use these genetically modified mice. I can say from what I saw that it is extremely rigorous and thorough and it is, rightly, heavily regulated.


I acknowledge and respect the concerns raised by Animal Welfare League Queensland and others who believe that non-veterinarians undertaking these procedures is not appropriate, but I believe, given how costly and rigorous using animal models is, our research facilities are not using them where they can avoid it. This would simply not make sense from both a cost or an ethics perspective. With the extraordinary ability of computer models these days, I have every faith our researchers are not using animal models unless they absolutely have to.

The bill also increases the scientific use registration to up to four years instead of the current fixed three-year term. There is an alignment of the definition of 'scientific purpose' between acts and some other measures around notifications and registers. There are good provisions in the bill around the legal duty of care that people in charge of animals have in order to meet their duties in appropriate ways. This relates to things like the new offence of an aggravated breach of duty of care with the large penalty currently applied to cruelty offences; allowing inspectors to enter premises to provide relief or protection; the clarification of the meaning of 'unreasonable abandonment' to make it clear that the responsibility is not forfeited even when someone such as a neighbour has offered to look after the animal; and stopping dogs from travelling in the back of a ute or trailer without being secured. On that last point, as the shadow minister and member for Gympie raised in his contribution, having a dog unsecured in the back of a ute is already an offence under the Transport Operations (Road Use Management—Vehicle Standards and Safety) Regulation and I would welcome clarification from the minister on the necessity of that inclusion. Of course, we do support making it clear that this will not apply to working dogs that are helping to move livestock.

The RSPCA made a good suggestion to the committee about increasing the penalty for the despicable practice of dog fighting. They described the horrendous preparation that goes into those fights, which can commonly go for four or five hours before death. A maximum penalty for dog fighting that better reflects the seriousness of this inhumane practice is worth looking into to more effectively deter people from even thinking about doing it. The bill introduces new offences to stop inhumane practices such as the firing or blistering of a horse or dog—which is the application of heat, cold or a chemical to the animal's leg to cause tissue damage or scarring to the tendons or ligaments—and the use of prong collars or other prescribed restraints. I urge the minister to better consult with stakeholders in future because clearly that issue was raised by many people throughout the committee process.

The LNP will be opposing only clause 16, which would make it an offence to poison feral or pest animals with a product containing carbon disulfide and phosphorus such as CSSP or yellow phosphorous. The member for Warrego raised some excellent concerns and I hope that the minister addresses those questions in his summing-up. I agree that as many viable options as possible should

be on the table to eliminate pigs and this is one of the most cost-effective poisons available. Across the state I have not met a landholder whose property borders a national park who does not have issues with feral pigs. The issue was raised with me as recently as a couple of weeks ago during our shadow cabinet listening tour to Longreach where a landholder specifically raised the ban on yellow phosphorous and their annoyance with it. I will leave my contribution there and reiterate my support for the best possible measures to improve animal welfare in our state and to do all we can to stop animal cruelty.

 **Mr MARTIN** (Stretton—ALP) (4.42 pm): I rise to support the bill, but before I make my contribution on the bill I want to address some of the Katter party amendments circulated by the member for Hinchinbrook. In particular, I bring members' attention to amendment No. 11, which requires inspectors to declare any ideological beliefs they hold, including whether or not they are a vegetarian. I have to say that I was a little surprised when I saw that amendment.

**Ms Bush:** Two-and-a-half million vegetarians.

**Mr MARTIN:** I take that interjection; there are 2½ million vegetarians in Australia and there are a lot of vegetarians in Queensland. I think that is an outrageous and unjustified attack on vegetarians in my community. It is discrimination.

In all seriousness, while I am not a vegetarian I do represent a very multicultural community and fantastic contributors to my community include people of the Buddhist faith, Hindus and Hare Krishnas. Recently at parliament we had people from the BAPS Hindu temple. My friend Janesh and I celebrated Diwali, which included a beautiful vegetarian feast. I attended the DJJS temple in Drewvale. I want to recognise the Chung Tian Temple, the Tzu Chi Foundation and the Buddhist Light International Association which are all made up of fantastic people. Some Buddhists are vegetarian but not all and some Hindus are vegetarian but not all; however, they all do fantastic work in our community. They work in many different jobs. They are lawyers, doctors, public servants and, no doubt, some of them would be inspectors.

I do not understand why the Katter party thinks it is acceptable that a vegetarian or a vegan has to declare that they are just to work as an inspector. That is unfair. I think it is an outrageous attack. I will always stand up for all of the people of my community, including the vegans, the vegetarians and, of course, the carnivores.

**A government member:** Pescetarians.

**Mr MARTIN:** And the pescetarians.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Krause): Come back to the bill, please, member for Stretton.

**Mr MARTIN:** I acknowledge the good work of the Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and his efforts in developing the Animal Care and Protection Amendment Bill. Whether it is cats, dogs, birds, horses or even pet sharks, Queenslanders love their animals. For many of us, animals are considered to be part of the family. We all support high animal welfare standards and know that there should be strong laws in place to protect them. That is why the Palaszczuk government is committed to providing legislation that protects the welfare of all animals and meets community expectations. Animals are a key cog in our economy. They are integral to agriculture production, they provide valuable assistance to both individuals and service delivery, and they are involved in sport and recreational activities. In times like these, when public health and safety is paramount, animals have played a key role in quarantine, detection and inspection duties.

The Animal Care and Protection Act has provided a strong framework for animal welfare in Queensland since 2001, but after 20 years it was time for a review. In 2020 the Palaszczuk government committed to a review with the intent of modernising Queensland's animal welfare legislation to reflect contemporary attitudes and expectations towards the treatment of animals. A number of key stakeholders engaged in the review, including the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. Between April and May 2021, Queenslanders had their opportunity to provide feedback to the review through the release of a discussion paper for public comment. There was a massive response with 2,353 Queenslanders having their say. More than half of those responses came from regional and rural Queensland, and there was representation from a wide variety of interest groups including agriculture, animal welfare and advocacy, veterinary professionals, recreation and entertainment, education and research and, of course, compliance enforcement and many more. As a result of the community feedback, the consultation outcomes paper was released in December 2021. The paper provided a summary of all of the responses from across the state and helped us to shape the framework for this new legislation.

The legislation amends the Animal Care and Protection Act 2001, the Racing Integrity Act 2016, the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1936, the Animal Care and Protection Regulation 2012 and the Veterinary Surgeons Regulation 2016. The overarching policy objectives of the bill are to facilitate the ethical use of animals for scientific purposes whilst ensuring that animal welfare is not compromised; strengthen the enforcement powers to address risk to animal welfare by clarifying or prescribing new offences to prohibit inhumane practices; provide for an approved cattle procedures accreditation scheme to enable a person to gain accreditation to perform a prescribed procedure on an animal; and clarify and remove redundant provisions.

The bill will also implement recommendations of the independent inquiry into animal cruelty and the management of retired thoroughbred and standardbred racehorses, also known as the Martin inquiry; implement recommendations of the Queensland Audit Office report titled *Regulating animal welfare services*; and make minor amendments to the Disability Services Act. In November 2019, unacceptable animal cruelty towards retired racehorses was reported by the ABC's 7.30 program. After that report, the Palaszczuk Labor government acted swiftly by establishing the Martin inquiry. The inquiry made a number of recommendations that were all supported by the Palaszczuk Labor government.

This bill amends the Animal Care and Protection Act and includes the requirement for all livestock slaughter facilities to use closed circuit television equipment in all critical animal handling and processing areas. This will ensure that there is clear surveillance of the movement of animals from arrival to slaughter. Requirements for the CCTV equipment's use and signage as well as the storage and retention of recordings are also included in the bill.

Inspectors will also be given the power to enter a livestock processing facility and remain there while horses are being unloaded, kept and processed. Furthermore, it will require a livestock slaughter facility owner to give the chief executive officer notice of the arrival of any horses at the facility no later than two business days before the horses arrive at the facility. An inspector may enter a livestock slaughter facility without consent, but this power may only be exercised during regular business hours when horses are being processed.

In relation to the amendments to the Racing Integrity Act, the bill extends the functions of the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission to protect the welfare of retired racehorses, clarifies that a standard for a licensing scheme for a code of racing can be made for horses and imposes reporting and recording obligations on suppliers and owners of a livestock slaughter facility. This will enable the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission to access information to verify whether retirement and rehoming information has been reported correctly. Overall, the amendments will ensure the greater protection and welfare of retired racehorses.


Situations such as those reported in late 2019 where a number of horses died after prolonged neglect will be covered by new, harsher penalties. The bill introduces a new offence that applies to any person who commits an aggravated breach of their duty of care. It will apply in circumstances where the breach results in the death, serious disability, serious deformity or prolonged suffering of an animal. The offences carry a maximum penalty of three years imprisonment, which recognises that an animal suffers significant pain and distress when it dies from malnutrition, dehydration, neglect or injuries. This penalty aligns with the maximum penalty under the act for animal cruelty. It will ensure that our animal welfare legislation meets community expectations.

Procedures such as firing or blistering of horses and dogs have also been prohibited. There is no scientific evidence that this provides any benefit. The procedure has long been considered by veterinarians and horse owners to cause unnecessary pain. Its prohibition matches that in other jurisdictions. For clarification, rodeos are not classified as prohibited events, but the conduct of rodeos will be subject to the code of practice which commenced earlier this year.

Banning the use of prong dog collars is something that has received widespread support across the community. Possession and use of prong collars without reasonable excuse will be prohibited. The welfare of dogs being transported has also been protected. Amendments will make it clear that dogs must be appropriately secured on the backs of trays and trailers except when assisting with the movement of livestock. There are no restrictions that would impact the use of dogs for livestock management, but protections will ensure that all dogs are being transported safely and securely.

The bill will also clarify provisions related to the abandonment of an animal by removing any doubt that the person in charge of the animal remains responsible even in circumstances where another person is temporarily providing for the animal food and water. In terms of enforcement powers for inspectors, the bill will allow inspectors to enter a facility without consent to provide relief to animals

that are impacted by adverse weather conditions or animals that are aggressive. It extends existing powers of entry to provide food or water or to disentangle an animal. By doing this, the delay in responding to urgent situations is removed. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mrs GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (4.52 pm): The Animal Care and Protection Amendment Bill received a whopping 1,495 submissions to the committee, with a significant proportion raising concerns with the banning of pig poison and prong collars. That is where I will focus the majority of my contribution today. Before I get to the substance of prong collars, I do want to put it on the record that I strongly condemn animal cruelty and that anyone found guilty of animal cruelty should have the book thrown at them.

Over the past few months the media has been saturated with reports that Queensland is currently facing one of the largest biosecurity threats in modern history. We have the looming threats of foot-and-mouth disease and lumpy skin disease. An outbreak of these would have detrimental and wide-reaching effects to our great state. Protecting our biosecurity is not just important to those in the regions or farmers or producers; it can impact every item on every plate right across the state. In August we had 13 fewer biosecurity officers in Queensland than we did when the government came to power. An additional five positions were left vacant.

It is incredibly important that all options be on the table as we fight to protect our agricultural industries and the livelihoods of rural and regional communities. Instead, this bill proposes a ban on the use of a poison which means that products such as CSSP pig poison will be banned. I confess that when this bill first came on the *Notice Paper* and I read the submissions that this was an issue I did have to do some research to formulate my position on it and exactly what the word 'poison' might mean not only for the pigs but also for our wildlife. I was shocked to learn that banning pig poison will mean that feral pigs will be able to spread devastating diseases even more rapidly if an outbreak does occur. One expert in feral animal management across Queensland, Darren Marshall, told the ABC earlier this year—

... it will be 'virtually impossible' to stop the spread of disease if control methods are limited. It would be absolutely detrimental if these toxins are taken away, because other control methods just do not kill enough feral pigs ...

Feral pigs are a real threat to our wildlife and to our agriculture industry. They spread invasive plants, degrade soil and water and prey on natural species. They damage crops and livestock and they carry diseases. This threat is widespread. In the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries's correspondence to the committee, it estimated that there are 24 million feral pigs across Australia. That is 24 million opportunities for feral pigs to cause irreparable damage. It defies logic that, at a time when Queensland is facing such a large biosecurity challenge, those opposite want to ban one of the most common ways landholders manage pests and feral animals. Quite frankly, I think it shows a bit of ignorance on the part of the Labor government to the very real effects that this will have on primary producers and the ability for farmers right across the state to put food on their kids' plates. This is frightening. I am very grateful that our shadow minister for agriculture is in fact a primary producer and informs our policy positions. I think that is why the LNP is able to stand up for our farmers and our primary producers in the way we are.

In its submission to the committee AgForce, a peak organisation representing Queensland's \$7.8 billion cane, cattle, grain and sheep wool producers, raised a concerning point: no public consultation has occurred regarding this proposed amendment to the act. It went on to note that during the May 2021 discussion paper phase AgForce was advised that a particular toxin used for feral pigs was of concern to the government yet AgForce could not or would not be advised which particular toxin it was; nor was AgForce provided with any explanation of why the toxin was of concern. This blatant circumvention of transparency and public consultation is fitting of a tired, third-term Labor government that has, quite frankly, lost touch with everyday Queenslanders. It was on 12 May 2022 that AgForce finally became aware of what the concerning toxin was.

**Mr McDonald** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Krause): Member for Lockyer, if you are going to interject, return to your seat, please.

**Mrs GERBER:** That was only because of a media release issued by the minister. To make matters worse, we found out that the research the government is relying on to ban the pig poison in New South Wales is research from 2011. While other states, including New South Wales, have banned pig poison, the government is neglecting to acknowledge that those states do not have the massive livestock industry that we have in Queensland. Instead of this blanket ban, the government should be

working with Queensland industry to investigate and properly understand the threat from feral pigs when it comes to spreading exotic diseases and our capacity to control feral pigs with or without pig poison. Only then, after a thorough, comprehensive review has taken place, should the government redress this issue.

As this clause stands, I cannot in all good conscience support it. For me, that is not the only concerning part of this bill. This bill also proposes to prohibit the use of prong collars because, according to the explanatory notes, they are designed to pierce an animal's skin. This is fundamentally incorrect.

I took it upon myself to obtain some firsthand experience with a prong collar to formulate my position on them. When you first look at this device it is deceptive and you would think that it looks like it could hurt. When you investigate how it is worn—

**Ms Pease:** Would you wear one?

**Mrs GERBER:** I put one on my skin and investigated how it is worn. I found that it is a levered device that applies communication to both sides of the neck. It has a larynx plate on the neck so the dog cannot choke. I fitted one to my skin to see what it feels like. It does not penetrate and pierce the skin. It is not a choking device.

A number of submitters also noted the use of prong collars on dogs used by people with a disability. These people made submissions that it is vital to ensure that direct communication is maintained with the dog and them. This includes people who are vision-impaired.


Recently, I had a very informative conversation with a police officer from the Dog Squad. Police officers in the Dog Squad regularly use prong collars not just to train their dogs but to keep a clear line of communication between them and their dog in a crowded, heightened stress situation. The officer told me that because it provides a clear communication method with the dog, it allows the dog to perceive the handler's impulses without the dog being jerked by the chain and without a detrimental impact on the dog. Let us remember that these handlers love their dogs. They would never do anything that would harm them. What they are concerned about with the outright banning of prong collars is it will take away a method of communication with their animals. It makes it better for the handler to communicate with their dog and for the dog to do their job. These are working dogs. They have a role to play in the community which they need to do.

Of the nearly 1,500 submissions, an overwhelming number of dog trainers and pet owners supported the use of prong collars by trained people. Let's get real: these people love their animals; they are not out to be cruel to animals. Australia's top dog trainer, Steve Courtney, has said that the banning of prong collars would result in more dogs being put down and an increase in humans being killed in vicious attacks. Mr Courtney went on to say—

Not one expert trainer experienced in the use of prong collars was consulted in proposing this ban.

Another dog trainer, Catherine Grant, stated that she had had a client come to her after their beloved dog was going to be put down. The use of a prong collar in training that dog to be a safe and better dog saved that dog from being put down. As it stands, this element of the legislation needs to go back to government to be reviewed.

I cannot support the element of the legislation that bans pig poisoning because I stand up for our farmers, agriculture industry and primary producers.

 **Mr SKELTON** (Nicklin—ALP) (5.02 pm): I rise to support the Animal Care and Protection Amendment Bill 2022. Firstly, I thank the department, committee members, the secretariat and the many submitters to this bill. I thank all members who have contributed to the debate because obviously it is a very important bill which tries to strike a balance between looking after animal welfare and looking after people's livelihoods.

Queenslanders deserve a government that respects and upholds the sanctity of life. The Animal Care and Protection Amendment Bill 2022 will ensure that Queensland's legislative framework for the protection and care of animals continues to reflect both the advances in animal welfare science and the change in community expectations towards animal welfare. This amendment is another notable example of the Palaszczuk Labor government taking action to improve the lives of all Queenslanders, including animals great and small.

For the following reasons, I will support this bill. One of the purposes of the bill is to facilitate the ethical use of animals for scientific purposes. In the wake of the pandemic, we have undoubtedly come to know the importance of conducting scientific research. Although some might consider it unfortunate,

it is still the case that scientific progress and innovation will occasionally require research to be conducted on animals. The bill seeks to reconcile this fact with community expectations that animal experimentation be conducted ethically and with paramount regard for the animal's welfare.

This bill will achieve this by allowing for the use of animals for scientific purposes by persons other than veterinary surgeons, if in accordance with the scientific use code. This will broaden the scope of access to animal research without compromising the animal's welfare or dignity. The chief executive will be empowered to decide the term of scientific use registration up to a maximum of four years rather than the current fixed three-year term. These flexibility amendments mean that the chief executive can grant registration on terms more appropriate to the circumstances of the applicant. Further, holders of these registrations will be required to notify the chief executive of any changes in circumstances relating to their original application. Presently, 'scientific use' is defined within the act; however, the bill will amend this so that scientific use falls within the meaning of the scientific use code, which is published by the National Health and Medical Research Council. As the code is published by our nation's top medical research body, we as a government can be certain that the code is fit for the purpose of upholding animal welfare.

The bill also reflects the community's expectation that animal cruelty is to be punished by strengthening enforcement powers. The bill creates an offence for aggravated breach of a duty of care over an animal, which can attract a fine of 200 penalty units or three years imprisonment. This is representative of our government's zero tolerance stance against animal cruelty. Neglect and cruelty towards animals must be punished, and this bill will deliver that outcome.

Inspectors will also be granted further powers pertaining to enforcement and the welfare of animals subject to inspection. Inspectors will be empowered to enter a place and provide relief to an animal suffering in harsh conditions, where the person in charge of the said animal is not present at the place. Under the current legislative scheme, inspectors are only able to give animal welfare directions to a person in charge of an animal. This bill will expand the class of people to whom such a direction can be issued to anyone who has an obligation to comply with a code of practice requirements. This addresses the significant gap in the existing scheme where the person who has an obligation to comply with a code of practice requirement is not also the person in charge within the meaning of section 12.

At the time of its passing, the Labor government's Animal Care and Protection Act represented a much needed update to an antiquated piece of legislation that was well on the verge of its 20th birthday at the time of its repeal. Since 2001, significant advances have been made in our understanding of animal welfare, and as such there are certain practices this bill will outlaw, representing a growing understanding of the needs of animals.

One such amendment will ban the use of firing or blistering horses and dogs. This process involves pressing a hot iron to the skin above a tendon injury with the heat ostensibly contributing to the healing of the affected tendon. This method is both ineffective and unconscionably cruel, and as such I am pleased to say that this practice will be unequivocally banned under this bill.

Other unsafe and outdated practices that will be banned under the bill include the use of prong collars—an implement designed to dig into or pinch an animal's neck and cause them pain and fear, ostensibly for the purpose of discipline. I would advise any member in this House to not try one of them at home. The idea of it is disgraceful.

Other unsafe and outdated practices include: the possession or use of netting which drastically increases the risk of wildlife becoming entangled and suffering horrific injury and death; the use of poisons on feral or pest animals that contain carbon disulphide—an attractant that can lure native wildlife and domestic animals, as well as pests, and phosphorus, which causes severe, prolonged pain in affected animals before they eventually succumb to the poison; and transporting unsecured dogs in vehicle trays or trailers which risks them falling out and suffering severe injury or death.

Recognising the substantial lapse of time since the Animal Care and Protection Act was originally passed in 2001, this bill also seeks to clarify its existing provisions, as well as removing redundant and displaced ones. This will be achieved by stating that the codes of practice, such as the abovementioned scientific use code, are based on good practice and scientific knowledge. The importance of this cannot be understated. Any legislative framework purporting to prevent animal cruelty is redundant if it is not informed by contemporary scientific knowledge and accepted industry standards of practice.


The bill will also amend section 11 of the act so that the definition of 'animal' includes all species of the class Cephalopoda as animals, rather than prescribing them by regulation, as it currently is under subsection (1)(d). Expanding the definition in this way enables the bill to better achieve its purpose of protecting all animals.

The bill creates an offence exemption for veterinary surgeons who may be required to euthanise sick and injured animals whose pain and suffering would otherwise be prolonged or exacerbated by the extended journey to another place, such as to the RSPCA, to be euthanised if the owner cannot be readily located. By allowing this exemption, veterinarians who find themselves in these situations will be able to act in the best interests of the animal.

The Animal Care and Protection Amendment Bill is the Labor government's answer to the need for informed and modernised animal welfare laws. The bill will ensure that the use of animals for scientific purposes is done ethically and responsibly, with the welfare of the animals being held paramount. It will facilitate scientific use of animals by allowing a broader range of people to perform acts of veterinary science on animals, providing it is within the scope of the scientific use code. It will increase the discretionary power of the chief executive and imposes stricter requirements on scientific use registration holders.

The bill will also strengthen enforcement powers to address risks to animal welfare by clarifying or prescribing new offences such as a new aggravated breach of duty care offence and by granting inspectors the power to enter a place and assist an animal in need. The bill will also prohibit inhumane practices such as the use of the CSSP pig poison on pests or feral animals, the blistering of the legs of dogs and horses, and the use of prong collars. The bill will also provide for an approved cattle procedures accreditation scheme to enable a person to gain accreditation to perform a cattle procedure, simultaneously allowing more people to be qualified to treat their cattle with any ailments whilst still ensuring they are qualified. I commend the bill to the House.

*(Time expired)*

 **Mr MILLAR** (Gregory—LNP) (5.12 pm): I rise to speak to this bill because of a deep concern with the provisions concerning feral animal control, specifically feral pigs. This bill has been titled in a way that implies that it is all about the care of domestic animals. Indeed, that is how Labor have promoted it on social and mainstream media. Who doesn't love pets? We all love pets. Who doesn't think that those guilty of cruelty to animals should be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law? I believe that it is a sleight of hand to find buried in this cuddly bill a clause outlawing the use of pig poison, or yellow phosphorus, as it is called.

The size of Queensland physically, and the range of ecosystems it encompasses, means that we have multiple, large reservoirs of feral animals—wild dogs, wild cats, wild goats and especially feral pigs. This is simply not the same as other states either in scale or spread. To be frank, for decades we have only attempted to manage the population levels because eradication seems to be the impossible dream.

Drought can suppress numbers for a time, but then inevitably the weather turns and you get a run of La Nina years, as we are currently experiencing. I can guarantee that this triple La Nina will make populations of feral animals skyrocket. The current wet weather will be reflected in the population upswings of feral pig numbers. Landholders will certainly be preparing to deal with this, if they are not already in parts of the state. At such a time it is devastating that the government is choosing to remove their most effective tool without anything comparable to replace it.

Feral pigs do an enormous amount of environmental and agricultural damage. This is why management of feral pigs is an ongoing issue in Queensland. As bad as it is, damage to the Queensland environment is not the only problem these feral populations create. An even graver problem is that they constitute a reservoir population for a range of serious, exotic diseases including foot-and-mouth disease, lumpy skin disease and Japanese encephalitis, to list a few. If we had the funding for more research, I am sure we would identify more diseases for which they are a carrier.

The urgent point is that the three diseases I have named are all clear and present dangers to Queensland, as we speak. As a northern state with a sea border and as a major livestock producer, we stand at great risk of these disease incursions. We are the front line. Minister Furner's federal counterpart, Senator Murray Watt, tells us he is doing everything he can to halt foot-and-mouth disease in Indonesia, as he should. Foot-and-mouth disease would have a devastating consequence. It is difficult to exaggerate how severe an incursion could be. It could send our livestock industry to the wall, see us lose hard-won markets and lose our herds and see our rural communities wither.

I would expect the minister for agriculture to do everything he can to help the federal minister and to have the preparations for defending our livestock industry well in hand in case of the worst. We are in the direct firing line of this battle, as the minister knows. One key preparation is reducing the dangerous reservoir population of feral pigs. We need to make a strong effort anyway due to the wet. Foot-and-mouth disease makes it imperative. I am calling on the minister for agriculture and also the



Minister for the Environment, Minister Scanlon, to get on board and make sure that we have the weapons and the resources to be able to deal with this. I say Minister Scanlon because the Queensland government does have a responsibility to manage the issue of national parks, but the effort is never as great as it could be right now.

National parks only constitute a small fraction of the Queensland landscape. Consequently, the greater part of the practical management of these feral pig populations largely falls to local landholders, rather than government. Yellow phosphorus, or CSSP pig poison, as it is more commonly known, is one of the most successful methods landholders use in eradicating pests like feral pigs on their properties.


It defies logic that, at a time when Queensland is facing one of the biggest biosecurity challenges in modern history, and facing the context of a triple La Nina, Labor want to ban one of the most effective, accessible and widely used ways landholders can manage the threat. To remove this tool from the toolbox before doing any research on potential replacements, without in anyway having investigated our capacity to manage feral pigs without CSSP pig poison, is extremely irresponsible and sets us up for a potential disaster of a scale previously unseen.

To say the move brings us into line with other states is just a cop-out. Queensland is uniquely different to other states because of our geography, because of our population distribution patterns, because of our location on the north-east corner of the continent, because of the number of ecosystems we encompass and because of the sheer physical size. Once again, Labor is trying to govern Queensland as if it were Victoria. My own electorate of Gregory is roughly the combined size of Victoria and Tasmania! That is how big just one electorate in this parliament is—Victoria and Tasmania combined.

Solutions to problems in Queensland often have to be similarly unique. The Queensland government should not ban CSSP until the impact of the ban and the impacts and effectiveness of potential replacements have been properly investigated and assessed by the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries. Furthermore, when the investigation is complete, agricultural industry stakeholders and Biosecurity Queensland must be properly briefed and must agree that we have the capability to control feral pigs without CSSP. Only then should a ban be legislated. It would be ideal if the department could also undertake investigations to better understand the threat of exotic diseases constituted by these reservoir populations.

In the current circumstances, like my LNP colleagues, I will be voting against clause 16, the proposed amendment that seeks to ban the use of CSSP pig poison; however, we will not be opposing the rest of the bill. I urge members to consider the serious impacts of banning this important tool for regional and remote Queensland. We have lumpy skin disease and foot-and-mouth disease on our doorstep. We must have the tools to control that. Our beef industry is worth billions of dollars to our economy. If you get lumpy skin disease carried by pigs or foot-and-mouth disease carried by pigs, we will have a major problem. Right now our beef producers are dealing with a number of circumstances. They have high prices but they have high input costs at the moment, so anybody who thinks that beef producers are making loads of money is simply wrong. Carting cattle from Winton down into Dinmore costs a lot of money, and if an exotic disease comes into our beef industry it will be devastating.

I implore the minister to have another look at this. Minister, please go back to the department. Go back to the experts and try and find an alternative if you want to legislate against this important tool for us. It is important that we have the appropriate tools to cut down our feral pig population in regional Queensland. As the member for Gregory, I have seen firsthand the devastation of not only feral pigs but also dogs. We have made some very good progress when it comes to wild dogs, and I congratulate the government on the wild dog fencing, but feral pigs are out of control. We have had three years of La Nina. It is only going to be a matter of time before the population explodes. We need to control those numbers in national parks. I call on the Minister for the Environment to get in control of national parks when it comes to pig populations. It is imperative.

 **Mr TANTARI** (Hervey Bay—ALP) (5.21 pm): I rise in support of the Animal Care and Protection Amendment Bill 2022. The bill has been drafted by the Palaszczuk government to ensure that the framework for animal welfare in this state is contemporary, compassionate and consistent with today's societal expectations regarding the care and treatment of animals. The Animal Care and Protection Act 2001 has been the principal legislative framework for animal welfare since its commencement over 20 years ago. Since that time there have been significant advances in animal welfare science which have led to a better understanding of animal biology and behaviour, which in turn has assisted in developing improved animal husbandry practices and in general has reduced risk to the welfare of all animals.

The bill acknowledged the great awareness of animal welfare requirements influencing community expectations which demand more humane care in the use of animals, including livestock. During April of last year the government released a discussion paper titled 'Review of the Animal Care and Protection Act 2001'. The broad tenure of the submissions received during this consultation process was that the current legislative framework is generally appropriate; however, they noted that it required updating to reflect contemporary standards and to address several other identified issues.

The Martin inquiry, an independent inquiry commissioned by the government into the management of retired racehorses, delivered its report in January 2020. In response, the government supported each of the recommendations either in part or in full. Although the government's commitment to implementing the recommendations was not part of the review of the act, the commitments given relate to animal welfare and are appropriate to be included in this bill, which provides for more effective monitoring of the welfare of retired racehorses.

Further, the Queensland Audit Office commenced an audit in March 2021 to assess the effectiveness of the department's oversight of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals—which we know as the RSPCA—to deliver services and exercise powers under the act, and a report titled *Regulating animal welfare services* was tabled in November 2021. All of these reports have been considered and their recommendations and actions included in this bill.

As stated in the explanatory notes, the main policy objectives of the Animal Care and Protection Amendment Bill 2022 are—

The main policy objective of the Bill is to modernise animal welfare laws to reflect contemporary science, community attitudes, and expectations by:

- facilitating the ethical use of animals for scientific purposes while ensuring that animal welfare is not compromised
- *strengthening enforcement powers* to address risks to animal welfare ...
- prohibiting inhumane practices ...
- providing for an approved cattle procedures ...
- clarifying the law and removing redundant provisions ...

With regard to strengthening enforcement powers, amongst other changes the bill amends the act to strengthen powers to reduce risks to animals' welfare by introducing new offences such as aggravated breach of duty of care. The powers are further strengthened by clarifying the meaning of 'unreasonable abandonment' to remove any doubt that the person in charge of an animal remains responsible.

With regard to prohibiting inhumane practices, the bill amends the act and introduces new offences which will prohibit: the inhumane practice of firing or blistering a horse or dog, which are painful and ineffective methods of treating tendon injuries; and possessing or using a prong collar which is designed to bruise or pierce an animal's skin or other prescribed restraint on an animal.

One of the more contentious issues raised in this bill is the banning of prong collars. In my electorate of Hervey Bay constituents have made representations to me regarding this matter. I have witnessed firsthand when dogs have been restrained by this device, and I must say that, having observed the animals with their carers, they look on the outside to be under no duress. But first appearances can be deceiving, and this is where the arguments put forward by submitters to the State Development and Regional Industries committee hearings start to fall away.

The opposing view to the ban says there is no damage done to the animal in wearing these collars. This is where I ask: but how do you really know? I know this may sound absurd because we know it to be true, but can we hear the evidence of affected animals? The answer is no. Why is that? Because they cannot give it. This is why we as human beings need to approach these matters by trying to understand that these living creatures deserve to be treated with the respect and dignity that we afford each other as humans. To say that somehow we know what an animal is feeling based on preconceived perceptions during observations so that we can alleviate our own emotional positioning on why we are constraining an animal with a device is again a conceited position adopted from a sense of human superiority. Do we allow prong collars on human beings to control their actions? Of course we do not. This would be abhorrent to us all, so why do we believe it is okay for animals?

I understand that professional trainers believe that prong collars are an essential tool for the training of dogs who have behavioural issues, but surely before the introduction of these collars animal trainers used other techniques that were less invasive. The point of view of those who support the use of prong collars is not supported by RSPCA Queensland, Dogs Queensland, Pet Industry Association

of Australia, the Australian Alliance for Animals, Pet Professional Guild Australia, and many other groups and organisations. As well, over 150 individuals also outlined their support for the proposed ban.


In its report the committee acknowledged, and has considered, the various views presented by inquiry stakeholders on the banning of prong collars. On balance, the committee was satisfied that the prohibition of prong collars is appropriate. The committee has recommended that the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries work with their colleagues in the Australian government as appropriate in relation to the prohibition of the importation of dog collars that incorporate protrusions designed to puncture or bruise an animal's skin.

I am also pleased to see that the bill will introduce a new aggravated breach of duty of care offence in situations that result in the death or prolonged suffering of an animal. The offence will attract a significant penalty, and so it should. A penalty of 2,000 penalty units, or three years imprisonment, should hopefully deter this sort of behaviour. There is nothing minor about situations that result in the death, serious deformity, serious disablement or prolonged suffering of an animal. Treating animals in any way other than with care and respect should be punished hard. It is about stamping out this cruelty and undoubtedly reflects the community's attitude towards this behaviour.

In its dissenting report the opposition said there was not enough consultation on this bill. There were nearly 2,353 responses from the discussion paper that was released and stakeholder meetings and 1,495 written submissions on the proposed legislation. How much more consultation was needed?

Before I finish, I want to recognise the great work done by all veterinarians, veterinary nurses, animal rescue volunteers and animal carers throughout this state, in particular in my electorate of Hervey Bay, for their compassion, service and care to our animal friends. These individuals show extraordinary commitment by working all hours, be that weekends or public holidays, to ensure animals are given humane care, fed, rescued or cared for after accidents. They are the unsung heroes of animal care and compassion. They are the ones who deal with extraordinary situations of cruelty and trauma felt by animals and humans alike. I want to thank them all. Without you, the world would be a darker place for animals.

I congratulate the committee for the work on the bill, led by the chair, the member for Bancroft. They undertook extensive consultation and research to bring in legislation that goes a long way towards ensuring that our animal friends are treated with compassion. To Benny, Pagan, Cuffy, Merlin, Coota and all the animals and creatures we love, this legislation is about and for you. It goes a step further towards ensuring that animals are given the respect and compassion deserved of precious living creatures. I support the bill before the House.

 **Mr LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (5.30 pm): I rise to speak on the Animal Care and Protection Amendment Bill 2022. I want to thank the State Development and Regional Industries Committee for their report. I want to thank the shadow minister for agriculture, the honourable member for Gympie, for his contribution. I thank other members for their contributions.

The bill proposes to amend the following acts: the Animal Care and Protection Act 2001, the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1936, the Racing Integrity Act 2016 and the Disability Services Act 2006. The purpose and policy objectives of this bill are: to strengthen enforcement powers to address risks to animal welfare by clarifying or prescribing new offences; and to prohibit inhumane practices, such as the firing or blistering of the legs of dogs and horses, the use of prong collars and the use of certain poisons on pest animals. Further, this bill intends to clarify legislation and remove redundant provisions.

Queenslanders support high animal welfare standards and feel there should be strong legislation to protect the welfare of animals. The proposed amendments aim to address the following: facilitate the ethical use of animals for scientific purposes whilst protecting their welfare; and strengthen enforcement powers to address risks to animal welfare by clarifying or prescribing new offences. Furthermore, as I have already mentioned, the bill proposes to: prohibit inhumane practices; create an approved accreditation scheme which will allow a non-veterinarian to perform certain procedures on cattle; clarify legislation and remove redundant provisions; and implement recommendations from the Martin inquiry.

Whilst the opposition, as we have heard already today, will not be opposing the majority of the bill, we will be voting against clause 16 of the bill. That amendment proposed the ban on carbon disulfide and phosphorus, or CSSP pig poison. Queensland is currently facing one of the largest biosecurity threats in modern history, with threats of foot-and-mouth disease, lumpy skin disease and Japanese encephalitis. All options must be on the table as we fight to protect our agricultural industries from these destructive diseases and protect the livelihoods of rural and regional communities.

CSSP pig poison is one of the most successful methods landholders can use to eradicate pests such as feral pigs. AgForce stated in its submission that governments and landholders require every available tool to manage feral populations, especially in the event of an exotic animal disease outbreak. I table an article from the ABC written in June this year titled 'Queensland proposal to ban CSSP will drive up feral pig numbers, critics say'.

*Tabled paper:* Article from ABC News, dated 13 July 2022, titled 'Queensland proposal to ban CSSP will drive up feral pig numbers, critics say' [2038].

The article states—

Amid the growing risk of diseases like foot-and-mouth and African swine fever spreading to Australia, concerns have been raised about the impact feral pig populations have in spreading viruses.

The article goes on to quote Darren Marshall, an expert in feral animal management across Queensland, who said it will be 'virtually impossible' to stop the spread of disease if control methods are limited. According to the experts, there will be more problems than solutions resulting from the banning of CSSP. The article states—

It would be absolutely detrimental if these toxins are taken away, because our other control methods just do not kill enough feral pigs.

With foot-and-mouth disease and African swine fever on our doorstep, the stark reality of the bill being accepted in its current form must be faced. If our feral pig population contracts these diseases, the diseases will spread much faster than they would without them. The use of products such as CSSP and 1080 are widely accepted to be the most effective. Without access to CSSP, which is readily available to landowners at this time, and with a dwindling stockpile of 1080, there is a growing gap in options for controlling pig numbers. From the article, I quote Mr Marshall again—


Feral pigs breed prolifically and if landholders don't have the tools they need to keep a lid on these animals, they really explode.

The article goes on to quote the member for Warrego, Ann Leahy, who further establishes that the threat feral pigs pose to agricultural industries should not be underestimated. She said that there are two threats that the banning of CSSP would enable to come to fruition. The first is the threat to human health and the second is the threat to the biosecurity of our red meat industries. Labor's ignorance mean they do not understand the pressure primary producers are under to control feral animals. The ban is coming into place too quickly. It will make it extremely difficult for primary producers to keep the feral pig population at bay.

The opposition's second point of reservation is with the confusion created in the community concerning which prong collars were being banned. The bill's intention to improve clarity clearly went out the window. The explanatory notes state that prong collars are designed to bruise or pierce an animal's skin. The committee received 1,495 submissions on the bill, with a significant portion of these raising concerns with the banning of prong collars. The LNP believes the alternative is to provide a more sensible policy approach to enhancing the welfare of animals and recommends as such. As shadow minister for disabilities though, I note that members of the disability community use prong collars to gain confidence and have clearer communication with their assistance dogs. Professional Dog Trainers of Australia said that these are the groups that would lose out if collars were banned.

Since this bill was introduced, the Premier and those on the opposite side have taken every chance to make use of photo ops—posing with cute domestic animals and exploiting opportunities such as Dogs in Politics Day on 23 September to produce an endless array of social media content to project to Queensland that this bill is centred solely around our domestic pets. This could not be further from the truth of the main elements of the Animal Care and Protection Amendment Bill.

The opposition will always stand against animal cruelty and in support of industries which are the backbone of the Queensland economy. Banning CSSP sends a strong signal of ignorance with regard to landowners facing feral pig infestations. The LNP supports everyday, honest Queenslanders.

 **Ms BOYD** (Pine Rivers—ALP) (5.36 pm): In the winter of 2018 my flock of beloved backyard chooks got an unexpected new resident hen. Our home embraced her and so did our Pine Rivers community, voting to name her Hennifer Lopez. Yes, Hansard, that is Hennifer with an 'H'. She was a placid and calm hen who quickly settled in to my little brood of chickens. Hennifer Lopez was a rescue and she was in pretty bad shape when she came to us. She was discovered in the yard of a vacated rental home with no food or water. She was locked inside a coop for an unidentifiable period of time with the rotting carcass of a possum. She was left abandoned.

I think it is fair to say that not many of us have the stomach to dwell for long on what mistreated animals go through. There is something profoundly disturbing and sickening to consider what the consequence of inhumane treatment is, to consider what it would be like in those circumstances.

Community attitudes and expectations on animal welfare are developed and ever developing. We need to clarify the law so a neighbour opening a door and putting out some food or water to Hennifer is not a loophole for the reckless actions of her previous owners abandoning her to go unpunished. To that end, I absolutely welcome the clarification of the meaning of 'unreasonable abandonment', ensuring that there are penalties for this kind of action.

The question familiarised by Patti Page of 'How much is that doggy in the window?' is no longer the key question. A modern-day equivalent would be, 'Can we care for that doggy in the window?' Care is paramount. We need to keep strengthening provisions to ensure the humane treatment of animals. This bill moves forward on a number of protections. Some of these, frankly, during my lifetime were not on our radar as inhumane or cause for much concern amongst many in our community, let alone considered dangerous. I recall many dogs I encountered, particularly through my childhood, who for aesthetic purposes had their tails docked. Further protections are included in this legislation to ensure that, when an animal changes hands and that animal's tail is docked, it needs to have and pass along the signed veterinary surgeon's certificate stating that the procedure was done in the interests of the animal's welfare.

My miniature Roman nose bull terrier, Cassius, used to love it when we would take him for a spin in the tray of our Ford ute. He used to love it so much that on the two occasions when the gate was accidentally left opened, he could be located sleeping under the ute, just waiting for his next ride. This legislation will see a new section to the act to prohibit the transportation of an unsecured dog travelling on the tray of a vehicle or in a trailer attached to the vehicle, or for a dog whose body other than its head is able to protrude from an open window. We know that, from RSPCA statistics, thousands of dogs die or are injured each year while unsecured on the tray of a vehicle or in a trailer attached to a vehicle, so this is an essential move for the welfare of our dogs. This bill also implements recommendations of the Queensland Audit Office to strengthen oversight of the RSPCA Queensland in providing inspectorate services for the state. This is a significant step towards enhancing accountability and public confidence in the delivery of these important services.

I note the report particularly acknowledges a submission from Mrs Leichelle McMahon, who is a business owner in my electorate and who has raised concerns regarding her treatment through the current framework. I welcome that the committee has taken the time to duly consider these concerns and make recommendations through the committee reporting process.

Finally in my contribution, I turn to the topic of prong collars for dogs. I have followed this debate with real interest. The LNP, through the committee report, are representing a position that they are fine to use, and they then reference federal rules, yet then propose to limit the use of prong collars to only professional trainers and owners who have been trained in the use of the collar. Are they only safe to use when owners are trained? Or are they only safe when they are a particular brand? Or should we just not act at all because we are handballing this to the feds? Granted, their statement of reservation is even more peculiar than usual and you really do need to do some brain gymnastics to get to the flip-flop of something they are trying to land, but let's be real: their position is a total flop. If they are proposing the government ban is overreach, how is their proposal through the statement of reservation also not a ban? Their proposal by its very nature concedes that there is a need to act. They themselves propose action too and then in the same breath criticise the government for doing so.

My current rescue dog is a ridgeback x staffy and she weighs about 30 kilograms. Mabel is a sweet dog, but she is playful and a puppy at heart. From the time my daughter has been aware in her pram that the lead is helping guide walking our dog, she has always wanted to hold the lead. I, of course, do not allow her. There is a question that arises through this debate that requires some responsible logic and common sense. I do not allow my daughter, now aged three, to control a 30-kilogram dog because it is not appropriate and she would not be able to. I would not fit a prong collar to that dog to better facilitate that ability for my daughter.


Logic needs to come into this debate as well when the opposition reference instances in their statement of reservation that just defy logic, much like Evie controlling Mabel. You do not need a prong collar to control your dog; you need a dog that you are able to control. I do not buy into the argument that using a prong collar is the only training or control situation that allows you to mitigate risk. I have not seen a single example that you can apply that logic to that stacks up. Further, I would turn promptly and leave the company of any training professional who advised me that the use of a prong collar was the best or the only way to train an animal. I am certain that the majority of Queenslanders would do the same. Our logical considerations in our mind weigh up the environmental exposure factors.

Let's go back to our children. Is it a comparable argument that through my daughter's schooling I will allow her educators to cane her because they are qualified? Absolutely not. The point I am trying to make here is that there are plenty of other alternatives to train and control our dogs. Understandably, the instances of prong collars are already very limited. Their efficacy in the minds of many is even more limited. Fundamentally, as a society, we appreciate that the use of pain for conditioning or control, quite frankly, is completely inappropriate without qualification and that we see this being universally stamped out.

I take the time to congratulate not just my friend but the farmers' friend, the member for Ferny Grove and the minister for agriculture. I have seen his affinity with, and love for, animals. There was a redistribution to our electoral boundaries. Through the Samford RDA, Riding for the Disabled, we co-sponsored for a time, until I took over the sponsorship, a beautiful horse, Charlie Bun. I know, through talking with the minister, just how much he is a lover of horses. In fact, Charlie famously made a Christmas card with the minister—I love the photo and I know locals do, too—sending seasonal's greetings. I know how much he cares for animals across the state. I want to back in the wonderful work that he and the committee have done through this bill.

**Mrs McMahon:** Neigh, neigh, neigh.

**Ms BOYD:** Neigh, neigh, neigh. I take that interjection from the member for Macalister. Humans have such a wonderful affinity with animals. Many of us have the enormous pleasure and responsibility to care for them. It is incumbent upon us to ensure when we take on that responsibility that it is not on a whim and that we are in fact matched with and able to control and care for that animal safely and humanely. The vast majority of us understand the weight of that responsibility. For others, there needs to be legislative change and penalties applied as the community attitude and expectation of animal welfare continues to progress. It is for these reasons that I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (5.45 pm): I rise to contribute to the Animal Care and Protection Amendment Bill 2022. Firstly, I would like to thank the State Development and Regional Industries Committee for approving my substitution into the committee for their visit to western Queensland. We went to the Roma saleyards and Western Meat Exports in Charleville and had meetings with the Balonne and Maranoa councils. Two of my parliamentary colleagues were there with me—the member for Ipswich West and the member for Lockyer—and we were joined by the member for Warrego in Roma, where we held an incredible meeting with quite a large group of local producers, AgForce representatives and local council representatives. They were real people with real concerns around this bill. I really do want to thank the committee for enabling me to do that. I note that the other two government members were not able to attend. That was disappointing. It would have been wonderful for more people to get into the Roma saleyards to see what an incredible and amazing facility it is.

I also want to give a big shout-out and thanks to the member for Gympie, who is someone who actually understands and will live with the impacts of this bill. I do not say that lightly. We all know here that the member for Gympie is a primary producer—a cattle baron, we like to call him in my part of the world. This bill is important for primary producers across Queensland because it amends various sections of several acts. However, the contribution that I want to concentrate on today is principally around the banning of SAP. I know that members are referring to it as CSSP poison, but for the continuance of my speech I will refer to it as SAP because that is what primary producers refer to it as. We know that this poison is a poison for pest and feral animals—

**Mr Stevens:** It works.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I will take that interjection from the member for Mermaid Beach; it does work, but it works mainly on feral pigs. In that meeting I referred to earlier we heard firsthand accounts that the issue around banning it right now is the lack of alternative. We know that there are members in this House who might think there is already an alternative with 1080. I know, being a beef producer's daughter and having lived on the land, that is just simply not available in the way those members think. SAP right now is a preventive for the feral pig population; we need to understand that.

This is a concerning change which has been rolled out as part of a bill masked quite simply—and I have been listening to some of the contributions about fluffy dogs—under the title of animal welfare. We on this side of the House believe that it is immensely important that we concentrate on animal welfare. That is why in the last term both the shadow minister for agriculture at the time and myself as leader introduced many reforms. We had animals trapped in hot cars—the hot dog policy. We had the dog baiting policy and the dogfighting policy. We also talked about the inspectorate powers because we do understand the importance of animal welfare on this side of the House.

I want to also note that I am a proud patron of the Nanango Kennel Club. I know that Andy, one of our hardworking security officers, actually volunteers for the RSPCA. He often drives out to Kingaroy and visits with Bonny at the RSPCA in Kingaroy when they are doing dog transfers.

I return to the bill. This is a perfect example of a Labor government that has absolutely no idea about the actual day-to-day problems facing not just cattle producers but all regional Queenslanders. The agriculture and livestock industry is the backbone of the entire Nanango electorate and the issue of feral pigs affects my community as a whole. The flooding events of this year have created perfect conditions for feral pigs to breed and numbers are on the rise. They breed extremely quickly, only second to rabbits. They cause enormous environmental damage to our land and they can destroy a crop overnight. The damage they cause can severely impact agricultural production and capabilities.

Right now what is top of mind for most producers is the fact that feral pigs carry disease. Surely with the serious biosecurity threats of foot-and-mouth disease, lumpy skin disease, African swine fever and Japanese encephalitis we cannot let our guard down. Yet here we have a bill in the middle of all these biosecurity issues that we keep talking about that will ban one of the tools producers and land managers so desperately need to keep these feral pests under control. I simply do not understand the timing of this bill. Therefore, I support AgForce's submission to the bill in relation to SAP poison. They note that we need every available tool to manage feral populations, especially in the event of an outbreak of exotic animal disease.

It is widely accepted that poison baiting is one of the most economical and effective ways to control feral pigs on a broad scale. As an example from my patch, in September the South Burnett Regional Council coordinated a feral animal baiting program. Councillor Scott Henschen, who is responsible for the natural resources management portfolio, reported on the success and the importance of this program. He stated—


A Coordinated Baiting Program was completed with 77 landowners throughout the South Burnett.

There were 2,492 pig baits distributed over 52,150 hectares and 205 different land parcels.

Not only does a coordinated program provide a greater degree of control across a more extensive area for both pigs and wild dogs, there are additional positive environmental benefits achieved through the control of feral cats and foxes that wreak havoc on our unique native wildlife.

That is what Councillor Scott Henschen said. Again I say it defies logic that, at a time when Queensland is facing one of the biggest biosecurity challenges in modern history, those opposite want to ban one of the most common and, importantly, the most effective way to control feral pigs, which we know carry these diseases and pests. The LNP opposition has recommended that, rather than banning this important product, the department should work with industry to understand the threat from feral pigs to spread exotic diseases and our capability to control feral pigs with or without SAP.

Again, I plead with the government to listen to the very experienced shadow minister, who actually understands this issue, has listened, like the members of the subcommittee—I stand corrected—who went out and listened to those landholders about the detrimental impact of banning this product which is so widely used in rural and regional Queensland. I note that many members in this House understand the need to control those feral pests. I was very pleased to hear that some of the city-based members from both sides of the House actually understand the need to control feral pests. That is why every single landholder and council needs every single tool at their disposal. That is why I urge this House to support the shadow minister's amendment to this bill.

 **Hon. LM LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (5.54 pm): I rise today to speak in support of the Animal Care and Protection Amendment Bill. The bill includes provisions designed to modernise, clarify and reinforce Queensland's animal welfare framework. I will seek to keep my contribution fairly brief in the hope that there may be a few minutes for other members.

This review is timely, as the current act has been operating for 20 years without a significant review. In that time animals have of course continued to be deeply valued members of our families, but the public view and acceptance of certain practices such as prong collars and docking has changed and moved on.

The bill will strengthen the framework of the act, importantly introduce new penalties, enhance inspectors' powers and implement recommendations from the Martin inquiry and the recent audit by the Queensland Audit Office on regulating animal welfare services. The recommendations from the Martin inquiry, including requiring abattoirs to use CCTV at all animal handling and processing areas, providing inspectors with the power to visit a livestock facility and requiring a livestock facility to give two days notice to the chief executive, are important.

The bill will also expand on the Racing Integrity Act and the function of the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission to include the management of retired horses. This is incredibly important because the graphic footage that was released by the ABC 7.30 program in 2019 was deeply disturbing. As a member of this House who represents numerous thoroughbred strappers, trainers and avid horse riders, of which I am also one, I can say that the moves in this bill to safeguard animal welfare are necessary and they are welcomed.

The bill also makes several changes to improve the wellbeing of dogs. Tail docking and debarking procedures will be deregulated. Clause 12 legislates that a person will not be able to sell or give away a dog that has had a debarking procedure unless they also have a signed certificate from a vet stating that the operation was performed in accordance with the act. Animal shelters and pounds will be required to provide a certificate indicating that the dog was debarked before coming into their possession. Clause 9 prohibits a person other than a vet from docking a dog's tail, and a vet may also do so if they deem it is in the dog's best interest.


With regard to prohibiting the use of prong collars—and there has been some commentary in the House from those opposite with which I strongly disagree, particularly the member for Currumbin—they are designed so that when a dog pulls on a lead the collar is tightened and metal prongs dig into the dog's neck. These forms of collars are used to train a dog using negative reinforcement. The RSPCA has called on the government to ban the use of these collars and their importation is currently banned, as we know, under Commonwealth legislation.

As the owner of a large-breed herding dog that has high drive and guarding instincts, I know how vital obedience training is to ensure the welfare of the dog and, in my case, my children's safety and that of the community. As anyone knows from my social media account, I have a large GSD; he is always willing to test the pack structure in our home. He is 70 per cent of my weight. That is a significant, powerful animal; I appreciate that. However, control has to come with training, technique and mutual respect but never cruelty.

As noted in the committee report, the department stated that if aversive methods are required to control a dog's behaviour it is reasonable to question whether the dog is suitable for that person. I strongly support the prohibition of such aversive measures. People should not need them.

The bill also introduces a new offence that will apply to a person who commits an aggravated breach of duty of care, prohibits the transportation of unsecured dogs on the back of the tray of a vehicle—and we see this all too often; it is cruel; it is a risk; it is wrong—also prohibits the firing or blistering of the leg of a dog or horse.

Our government is committed to preventing cruelty to animals, ensuring Queensland's animal welfare system is equipped to respond to community concerns. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (5.59 pm): I rise to speak to the Animal Care and Protection Amendment Bill. There were 1,495 submissions to the bill, which shows how controversial and emotionally charged this bill is to Queenslanders. I support some of the measures in this bill and also wholeheartedly support legislation that protects animals from intentional neglect, abuse and harm.


However, we often see legislation presented to the House that makes things worse for Queenslanders, and this legislation is an example. The bill is not based on evidence but instead has a warped sense of appearing to do the right thing. It is purely politically motivated and is aimed at securing support from inner-city Greens voters who have no idea about this legislation and how it will affect rural and regional Queensland.

Since I was first elected I have advocated for stronger measures to combat Queensland's biggest environmental vandal: the feral pig. Yesterday I heard the minister for agriculture say that there are alternatives to yellow phosphorous poisons that combat feral pigs in ground and aerial shooting programs.

Debate, on motion of Mr Knuth, adjourned.

## ADJOURNMENT

### Sunshine Coast

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (6.00 pm): As we enter the festive season, I wish everybody in the Kawana electorate a very merry and safe Christmas. As we know, many people in my electorate are still suffering because of the cost-of-living crisis, energy and fuel price rises and the housing crisis. I have been raising the issue of the housing crisis for many years



and, unfortunately, I do not think what the Premier and government announced today will ease the housing crisis. I want to give a shout-out to our community groups that will be helping the less fortunate in our community over the festive season, particularly Gateway Care. Gateway Care provides mental health support for many our community who are suffering because of the cost-of-living crisis.

I reflect on the sad news that NightQuarter have announced that they are closing down on the Sunshine Coast, taking with it many jobs in the live entertainment industry. I thank Ian and Michelle for bringing NightQuarter to the Sunshine Coast. Unfortunately, due to lockdowns and restrictions, their business was not able to flourish again after COVID. It is very unfortunate to see NightQuarter closing down and the loss of an element of live entertainment on the Sunshine Coast.


I call on the government, as we approach the new year, to address the issue of youth crime. I am sick and tired of seeing people's homes broken into and cars stolen. The government are not holding young offenders accountable for their actions. I again plead with the government to get on top of the youth crime crisis and to hold young people accountable for their actions. We have a huge hooning issue on the Sunshine Coast. I am asking the government to invest in CCTV cameras at our hotspots. There are so many roads I have written to the government about, pleading with them to put CCTV cameras in so that we can catch these criminals in stolen cars. They are refusing to do it, saying that it is a council issue. Council are not doing it, so I call on the government to get on board.

I again call on the state government to fund the Sunshine Coast heavy passenger rail from Beerwah to Caloundra and from Kawana to Maroochydore. We need this heavy passenger rail. We are now nine years away from the Olympics, and the government still have not committed the 50 per cent funding for heavy passenger rail, despite the fact the federal government have committed their 50 per cent funding.

I thank Kawana Waters State College, which recently held its community food festival. What a great community event it was. I was so pleased to get up on the stage with Rickie and the band and be Elvis. They did not want the member for Kawana; they wanted Elvis Presley. I was so happy to sing not only one song but to do a medley of Elvis songs, including *Blue Suede Shoes*. I absolutely loved it so I thank Rickie for giving me the opportunity. I say to Rickie, 'Thank you. Thank you very much.'

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Bush): Member, that is borderline unparliamentary!

### **Redcliffe Electorate, Pedestrian Safety**

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (6.03 pm): I rise to talk about an important project happening in my electorate—that is, the building of a pedestrian overpass to join the Clontarf Beach State High School with the Education land fields across the road. I am aware that the federal member, Luke Howarth, has today been in Canberra playing politics with this particular project, talking about the trees and koalas, which are important to our community, but failing to talk about why it is being built—for the safety of the students.


Luke Howarth is one of these people whom, depending on whom you talk to, you will hear different answers from. He tells people what they want to hear. While he is in Canberra complaining, he should instead be in Clontarf talking to the P&C and the students who put this proposal forward because of the death of Caitlin Hanrick. Thousands of people in Redcliffe will remember the day that Caitlin was struck and killed by a speeding car that ran a red light while she crossed four lanes of traffic between the two campuses of Redcliffe State High School. Redcliffe remembers. We remember the sirens and the helicopters flying overhead. I remember the coronial inquest and the principal, Shona McKinlay, having to give evidence.

This Sunday, 6 December, is the anniversary of Caitlin's death. She was 13 years old. From that coronial inquest there was a recommendation to ensure that, under the school safety guidelines, there is progressive installation of overpasses at state schools where they have campuses separated by busy roads. That is what Clontarf Beach State High School has. It does not have buildings, but it has fields that the kids use. The school has said that it would be utilising those fields more often if the students could cross safely. There are 22,000 cars a day going past that school. I had a mother contact me in recent weeks. Her daughter, who normally walks with her younger brother, had to jump out of the way of a vehicle that almost hit her. While we were standing there filming that clip with her, we caught a vehicle running a red light.

Luke Howarth has not mentioned the students once. He plays politics and says that this is the state government's fault—except it was approved by Barnaby Joyce. It had to be a shovel-ready project that was 80 per cent funded by the feds and it was done under the Morrison government with Barnaby as the relevant minister. Luke Howarth has taken no responsibility for that. Conveniently, it is all a state

issue. He fails to say that, while 53 trees have been cut down—12 large trees and 41 small trees—in their place 265 trees are being planted, including 40 mature trees for koalas in a place that is a safer corridor. He needs to stop lying to the people of Redcliffe.

### Surfers Paradise, Road Safety

 **Mr LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (6.06 pm): I extend my condolences to the family of the victim of the fatal motorbike accident on Bundall Road last week and to all those involved, including the occupants of the other vehicle involved. This was an unfortunate consequence of concerns I have spoken about time and time again. Twice in the House I called for additional speed cameras on Bundall Road prior to this devastating accident. Unfortunately, because there are no houses on the 500-metre stretch from Fremar Street to the Monaco Street bridge, people take it as a free pass to drive at more than 60 kilometres per hour in both directions, even though it is a narrow, six-lane road. When they are coming from the Monaco Street bridge, because it is on a decline they speed straight past the PCYC. I have seen this on many occasions.

Despite the effort of locals who have called an e-petition to the Queensland parliament and my calls of action through the media, the state Labor government has refused to take the appropriate measures to minimise reckless driving throughout the Surfers Paradise electorate, both in this part and on the coastal roads through the Gold Coast Highway from Main Beach through to Broadbeach. What more will it take for the government to realise how much critical changes are needed? We cannot afford to waste time when the lives of Queenslanders are at risk. I table both of my contributions, from 4 September 2019 and 3 December 2020, in which I called for these cameras to be installed and for action to be taken.

*Tabled paper:* Extracts, dated 4 September 2019 and 3 December 2020, from the *Record of Proceedings*, Queensland Parliament, page 2666 and pages 440 and 441 respectively [2039].

I also want to speak about a transport matter—that is, taxidriver misconduct. As taxidrivers make a desperate scramble to keep up with rideshare technology, members within the industry have resorted to breaking the law. The trend of taxi price gouging has arisen and, once again, the government is asleep at the wheel. I table a CabCharge receipt of mine from a trip for which the driver refused to put the meter on.

*Tabled paper:* Photograph depicting a taxi trip fare breakdown on the Gold Coast [2040].


As I shared with Nine Gold Coast News, the taxidriver charged me \$60 plus a booking fee to travel from the turf club to Broadbeach. The driver was trying to take punters at the races for more than a ride—an overpriced trip with no meter on. I table an article from the *Courier-Mail* dated 3 November 2022 titled ‘Taxi drivers “exploiting” revellers with “astronomical” upfront fares’.

*Tabled paper:* Article from the *Courier-Mail*, dated 3 November 2022, titled ‘Taxi drivers “exploiting” revellers with “astronomical” upfront fares’ [2041].

Complaints are surging across Brisbane and the Gold Coast about taxidrivers refusing to use their meters and demanding passengers agree to a fare price up-front.

The Taxi Council and Department of Transport and Main Roads are aware of an increasing trend where cab drivers demand passengers agree to a fare price up-front or tell them to get out of the car. Labor has taken its foot off the gas, however, and is cruising amidst such despicable allegations. I call on the Minister for Transport and Main Roads to raise this concerning issue with the Gold Coast taxi company 13cabs. Labor must act now and investigate whether meters are not being used, drivers are being properly advised of their responsibilities and inquiries sent to the ATO to discern if tax evasion is occurring.

### Redlands Electorate


 **Ms RICHARDS** (Redlands—ALP) (6.09 pm): Madam Deputy Speaker Bush, in the last adjournment series for 2022 I take this opportunity to wish you, everybody in this chamber and everybody in my Redlands community a very merry Christmas. The member for Kawana showed us a couple of his moves. I thought about singing my last contribution tonight and I discussed that with my mum and she said, ‘Oh my God, Kim! Do not do that. Nobody needs to hear that. That is for very special occasions only,’ so I will not sing my last adjournment speech for 2022.

I take this opportunity to say what an amazing year this has been in the Redlands. It has been absolutely incredible, particularly in the education space. I am extraordinarily proud of the projects I have had the opportunity to deliver. For many of us in this chamber Friday was the five-year anniversary of our election to this place, and in that time in the education space I have seen the transformation of every single school. Together with the Minister for the Environment, we fought very hard for air

conditioning in all of our schools in South-East Queensland. I say this to all of the students who are enjoying the air conditioning in what was the hotter part of earlier this week and what will be hot when we come back in the new year: I am so proud of the work that we did to fight for that. That was a really huge win for South-East Queensland schools. I am so proud of the work that we did at the high school in the library and in the hall expansion. There is also an \$11 million STEM, hospitality and robotics building underway that will open in the New Year, so I am very excited about that. I have spoken about Redland District Special School many times in this place. When we talk about the legacy that we leave behind five years on, that legacy for me is something that will be on the top of the pops in my most proud list because that delivers an amazing outcome with these amazing classrooms and art classrooms. I am very proud of that.

We have delivered something at all of our schools. My island community really is a unique part of South-East Queensland in that over 10,000 people live on islands. It is complicated, but over on our islands we delivered the KindyLinQ program, which is still being delivered today. It is amazing. This year we brought kindergarten to the Russell Island State School. I had the chance to meet with my principal last week and she said, 'Kim, you will not believe the transition that those kindergarten students are making to prep.' That changes lives. That changes futures and destinies. I am so extraordinarily proud of all of the work that we have done in the education space. In the health space I cannot begin to talk about the satellite hospital that will service those islands and our growing community. I think about all of the things that I have delivered in five years and legacy is absolutely everything in this place. Five years on I know—whether I am here for another two years or another 10 years—that I am so proud of everything I have delivered for my Redlands community.


### **Edmonds, Ms M; Gregory Electorate, Drought**

 **Mr MILLAR** (Gregory—LNP) (6.12 pm): Madam Deputy Speaker Bush, first of all with your indulgence, I want to give a shout-out to Margaret, who leaves us tomorrow. She has been an absolutely wonderful woman and an absolutely wonderful presence around this House and made our jobs a little bit easier as our second home here in Parliament House. I wish her all of the very best. I wish she was not going.

Today is the first day of summer—even though you would not believe it if you went outside as it is like Melbourne in winter at the moment—but for my constituents in Gregory we may finally see the end of the epic drought. I am encouraged that the Blackall-Tambo shire is now officially drought free. However, drought declarations still remain in place for every other Gregory shire. This includes Boulia, Diamantina, Winton, Longreach, Barcoo, Barcaldine, Central Highlands and the Woorabinda shires which are still fully drought-declared. With continued rains, hopefully this will change over the summer. I want to remind property owners in my electorate that if they feel their property is still drought-affected but their shire is declared drought-free they can still apply for an individual drought property status. Property owners should also be aware that when the drought declaration is lifted in their area there are transport subsidies available to assist with the costs of bringing stock home from agistment and the costs of restocking. This has been an epic drought. It has lasted over 10 years in Western Queensland. We were ground zero. It began in Western Queensland and it will not be truly over until we can officially claim drought-free status.

People are more hopeful than they have been in the past, so just around the corner in 2023 will see us rebuilding. I want to take the opportunity to say how proud I am of the people of Gregory for the stoic way they have endured and are determined in the way that they look at rebuilding now. We are determined to ensure that we rebuild in a way that makes our agricultural businesses, our towns and our communities more drought resilient when we face the next drought. Agriculture, as members know, is the foundational pillar of our local economies in Gregory. Drought does not just affect livestock producers; it affects the work of businesses and the agricultural supply chain. I also want to take this opportunity to give a shout-out to the Western Queensland Drought Appeal. It has been fantastic. When I was elected in 2015 we were looking to find some way to get money to people who were struggling in the drought. I thank the Westpac bank and everybody involved. With a little bit of bias here, my EO Nicki Heslin in the Longreach office has been an absolute guiding light in making sure that this works. Nicki, thank you so much. We have been able to distribute millions of dollars to 17 western shires. I wish everybody a merry Christmas.

### **Morayfield Electorate, Flood Recovery**

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (6.15 pm): Queensland is well known as the most natural disaster impacted state in the nation. We are a very resilient population because of that, but not withstanding

that we continue to refine our systems and encourage resilience in community. Part of encouraging resilience in community is how we respond after the event with the recovery, with the rebuilding. I am very pleased to see that our government has kept its commitment to community and sporting organisations right across the state, including in the Morayfield state electorate, around providing support for recovery and resilience following this year's major flood event.

I wanted to particularly highlight the funding that has been provided just recently for local sporting organisations in the Morayfield electorate to help them further their recovery, to build back better and to ensure they have facilities that are appropriate for the sports they support in the community. The Burpengary Equestrian Centre is receiving over \$175,000 to help rebuild its facilities. In addition, Caboolture Little Athletics is getting over \$260,000 to help with its surface reworks, and I know that a lot of that money will go towards its long jump pit and improving that following the impacts of this year's disaster events. The Caboolture BMX Club, which is on the banks of the Caboolture River—a very scenic location for a BMX track—is receiving over \$110,000 to help with its resurfacing works. Caboolture Netball is getting over \$70,000, Caboolture Tennis \$140,000 and Caboolture Golf Club over \$730,000, all to assist with rebuilding their facilities.

That is a very vivid example of the commitment of the Palaszczuk Labor government to supporting communities—understanding that sporting organisations connect people in community and build stronger communities. That is a key aspect of resilience. It is not just about the physical infrastructure; it is about the social supports and the community supports that go along with those opportunities these sporting organisations provide our communities. I wanted to not only acknowledge the contribution of the government towards these sporting organisations but also thank those sporting organisations for what they do in the community—bringing people together, providing opportunities for kids to be active and supporting one another through times of natural disaster, because it is an opportunity for people to come together and support one another.

I wish all members of the House and all community members in the Morayfield state electorate a very happy Christmas and I look forward to seeing everyone next year.

### Hill Electorate, Projects



**Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (6.19 pm): I would like to raise a number of projects in my electorate that I have previously raised. Unfortunately, I will not be able to cover everything in the short amount of time that I have. I would like to acknowledge the Minister for Racing and thank her for funding for three race clubs in my electorate: Innisfail, Atherton and Mount Garnet. I have contacted the committee and they are stoked. We are very appreciative of that.

Castor Park at Mourilyan is the central sporting hub in the region used for junior and senior soccer, Little Athletics and various schools. The area around and in the grounds has become a major safety issue, with lack of car parking and lighting to meet the increased demand. Two applications were submitted to the Resources Community Infrastructure Fund seeking \$705,000 to upgrade the facility; however, both were unsuccessful. The state government has stated publicly that regional Queensland would not miss out ahead of the 2032 Olympics. This is a perfect opportunity to put this commitment into action.

While on sporting infrastructure, Innisfail Bowls Club will turn 100 next year. This is an iconic club overlooking the Innisfail Johnstone River. Some significant work was recently completed to stop this incredible piece of history from collapsing into the river. However, in a region where the heat and humidity are significant, the bowls club still needs a shade cover over the green to protect many users from the extreme heat and dangerous sun.


The community in Kurrimine Beach has been calling for a safe access boat ramp for decades. After several meetings with TMR, community leaders, local council and the minister we are almost over the line with the final funding needed to begin construction on this valuable piece of infrastructure for the entire Far North.

The Innisfail-Japoon-Silkwood road is a major regional connector, transporting farm machinery, refrigerated trucks, caravans, local traffic and also school buses, which leads to Queensland's No. 1 tourist attraction, Paronella Park. While I acknowledge some effort has been put towards fixing sections of this road, it is nowhere near an acceptable standard.

There has been some great work on the Palmerston Highway, however, it is now time to fix that bad section between Henrietta and Goolagin creeks and the bus drop-off at Stoters Hill. Significant works have been underway on the Atherton to Mareeba road, however, the work has not catered for overtaking lanes which is a priority to reduce safety risks and congestion along this well-travelled main

route. I also raised last sitting week the need to widen and fully seal the Upper Barron Road, Ootan Road and Herberton to Irvinebank roads. I call on the government to fund these priority projects which will bring great benefits to the region.

### Stretton Electorate


 **Mr MARTIN** (Stretton—ALP) (6.22 pm): It has been another big year in the Stretton electorate. Our community has had a huge win in this year's Queensland budget with funding for the new satellite hospital in Eight Mile Plains. This new facility will be a place locals can go to be treated for minor illnesses and injuries and also provide important services like dialysis, radiation therapy and even chemo. It will take pressure off our major hospitals and allow locals to access better health care closer to home. It is located perfectly halfway between the QEII Hospital and the Logan Hospital, right next to the RACQ building on Levington Road. I am thrilled to say that construction work is well underway on the site. I recently attended the sod turning ceremony with the health minister, the minister for public works and also my colleagues the member for Toohey and the member for Mansfield. Each of our communities will see a massive benefit from the new satellite hospital and I look forward to seeing construction of the facility progressing. There will be over 100 jobs during the construction phase and plenty of ongoing local secure jobs for nurses, doctors and health staff when it opens. I know there are already a large number of healthcare workers who are keen on the opportunity to work closer to home.

Locals in my area are also very excited about the removal of the Kuraby level crossing. I fought for this with my community and I am thrilled we were able to secure a commitment to deliver it. The level crossing removal and upgrade to Kuraby station will be great for both public transport users and also for the mums and dads who do the school pick-ups and drop-offs at Kuraby State School. It will allow the expansion of the rail network to make it easier for people to get to work.

I am also pleased to report that upgrades on the Beaudesert Road and Illaweena Street intersection are progressing well. The Stretton community is a growing community and road upgrades have become necessary to ensure that people can get where they are going quicker, easier and more safely. This is certainly the case for Stretton Gardens Retirement Estate residents and Stretton State College students, who received brand new bus stops this year. Now there are more public transport options for our young students and senior residents. It means that senior residents from Stretton Gardens do not have to walk 800 metres uphill; they get a bus directly out the front of their facility. I know they are very happy about this.

This year we also delivered on our commitments to air-condition every classroom in every state school and deliver funding for an additional 2,200 hospital beds and announced a record \$1.6 billion funding for mental health services over five years. We have also established a new \$2 billion Housing Investment Fund to deliver more affordable housing for Queenslanders. That comes on top of a record spend in public housing. I am proud to be part of a government that is delivering for Queenslanders and I look forward to our continued progress in 2023. I would like to wish all residents of Stretton a merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

### Callide Electorate, Maternity Services

 **Mr HEAD** (Callide—LNP) (6.25 pm): The electorate of Callide remains without any maternity wards across 14 hospitals. Gladstone, which is the next closest maternity ward, remains on bypass. This is the result of a government that governs for themselves and not for everyday Queenslanders. They try to blame staff shortages. Tell me this: were staff shortages the problem in the 1990s when they closed a number of maternity wards across Queensland? What about in the 2000s when they closed Moura, Jandowae, Miles, Taroom, Gayndah, Monto and Mundubbera, and more recently when they closed Chinchilla for a second time? This is the legacy of Labor governments in Queensland. They get up and find excuses left, right and centre.


I can tell members now that the patience of mothers in Queensland is wearing thin. Apparently staff shortages have been on the horizon for a very long time. If so, then the minister can come in here and spell out what the Labor government has been doing for the last eight years. This government sat on their hands and chose to close maternity services in local communities. The result of this is that mothers are having to risk giving birth on the side of major highways. This is the reality for two incredible mothers I have spoken about previously.

The Labor Party will try to spin the mistruth that they are good for Queensland when it comes to health. The facts and reality tell a completely different story. The Gladstone Hospital services an area of over 60,000 people and records 600 births in a year. It also services Calliope. That is why this week I tabled a petition with 2,885 signatures. It was launched by the federal member for Flynn, and given

the member for Gladstone continues to fail in his advocacy on this matter, I was more than happy to take on this fight. The petition calls on the Premier and the Minister for Health to deliver adequate maternity services, resourcing and funding to the Gladstone Hospital. I thank the nearly 3,000 people who signed it. Having met a number of them personally, I know the passion they have for their community and their concerns about the need for local maternity services.

Saturday marks 100 full days since Biloela went on bypass, with not a mention by the Minister for Health of when it will reopen. Next week, Gladstone surpasses 150 days and the member for Gladstone is still taking his ministerial paycheque after claiming he will resign. He can prove to his community that he was not just offering lip-service and honour his word. If he and the Minister for Health are serious about the safety of mothers in Queensland, they need to outline a plan with clear dates on the return of services. All Queenslanders deserve local health services.

### **Lytton Electorate, Acknowledgements**

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (6.28 pm): What an honour it is to be the final speaker in the adjournment debate for 2022. I am really proud to be the member for Lytton.

**Ms Grace** interjected.

**Ms PEASE:** We do not have an adjournment debate tomorrow. I am sorry about that, but I will get back on track. 2022 has been a great year. It has had lots of highs and some lows. I will begin by acknowledging some of the people from my electorate who have passed away. They were great community members. I acknowledge Paul Green, a great footballer, and Bob Jackson, a great Labor Party man. We also lost the wonderful Lenore Vela, who was a great community worker and a wonderful foster carer, and John Wakeley. My good friend Wayne Holmes is very poorly in hospital at the moment and I wish him well.

I acknowledge all of the great hardworking teachers in my community. A number of them are retiring at the end of this school year and I want to acknowledge a few of them. I know there will be more and I am sorry I will miss some. I acknowledge the wonderful Liz Williams who has taught in the high school system for 42 years. She has taught at Wynnum State High School for 25 years or thereabouts. Liz has taught many students and is now teaching the children of student she taught initially. I was fortunate to be invited to Liz's send-off. Many teachers were there and I was so proud to be in a room of such dedicated and hardworking teachers who have cared for and done so much for generations of children. They are our future and they are in good hands. I am very sad to see Liz going. I also acknowledge Anne Roylance from Wynnum State High School. Anne has brought wonderful music and joy to the community. Kim Hutchins has gone on long service leave. I think Kim has been at the school since 1985. She has done wonderful things in educating our young people. All of those teachers have left an amazing legacy, as has David Cockburn from Iona College. David was a great teacher at that school. I give them all a very heartfelt thankyou.

I also want to thank my electorate staff without whom I could not do my job. They are very much respected in my community. They are hardworking, kind and dedicated people. I thank them for everything they do. I thank Jo, Nicola and Hugh as well as the others who come along to help such as Brenda, my sister Maureen and Catherine who volunteer in the office. I thank them for the great work that they do. I also acknowledge all the hardworking staff at Parliamentary Services because they do an amazing job in looking after us. I thank the attendants, the parliamentary security and the catering staff. They really do an amazing job. Mr Clerk, you should be very proud of the hard work they do and of how dedicated they are to their jobs and to looking after us all. Margaret, I wish you good luck. We will miss you. You have done a great job.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Bush): Hear, hear!

The House adjourned at 6.31 pm.

### **ATTENDANCE**

Andrew, Bates, Bennett, Berkman, Bleijie, Bolton, Boothman, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Camm, Crandon, Crawford, Crisafulli, D'Ath, Dametto, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Frecklington, Furner, Gerber, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Hart, Head, Healy, Howard, Hunt, Janetzki, Katter, Kelly, King A, King S, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Lauga, Leahy, Linard, Lister, Lui, MacMahon, Madden, Mander, Martin, McCallum, McDonald, McMahon, McMillan, Mickelberg, Miles, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Mullen, Nicholls, O'Connor, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pease, Perrett, Pitt, Powell, Power, Pugh, Purdie, Richards, Robinson, Rowan, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Simpson, Skelton, Smith, Stevens, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Watts, Weir, Whiting